

At a meeting of the PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on TUESDAY, 20TH MARCH, 2012 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Tye in the Chair

Councillors Curran, Ellis, Fletcher, T. Foster, Francis, E. Gibson, T. Martin, D. Richardson, Tate and Thompson.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Ball, Charlton, Copeland, Essl, M. Forbes, Howe, Kay, Lauchlan, Padgett, J. Scott, P. Watson, Wood and A. Wright.

Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on Monday, 20th February, 2012

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last Committee held on Monday, 20th February, 2012 (copy circulated) be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Report of the Meeting of the Development Control (Hetton, Houghton and Washington) Sub-Committee held on 28th February, 2012

The report of the meeting of the Development Control (Hetton, Houghton and Washington) Sub-Committee held on 28th February, 2012 (copy circulated) was submitted.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

2. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Washington Bus Link Improvement Schemes – Formal Objection

The Executive Director of City Services submitted a report (copy circulated) in relation to a previously deferred decision by the Committee on objections raised by Washington Hackney Operators to the published order for buses and pedal cycles for 9 bus links in Washington. The report was a revised submission to the objections.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Craig Wilkinson, Group Engineer, presented the report and advised that after discussions at the previous meeting, further discussions had been carried out with the Chairman of Washington Area Committee, the Head of Law and Governance and the Portfolio Holder for Attractive and Inclusive City. Following the discussions and consideration of the matters raised at the last Committee, the recommendation remained that the objections submitted should not be upheld, and the order be made as proposed. There had been extensive consultations and feedback from the community, and the proposals do not extinguish any existing rights for taxis..

Councillor T. Martin commented that a full discussion took place at the last meeting of the Committee and he took on board the points raised in relation to safety, but felt that as some people became older their reliance on taxis became greater as buses could be a more dangerous form of transport, especially for those with disabilities. Councillor T. Martin advised of instances where bus drivers would pull away from stops before the elderly had been able to acquire a seat and felt these concerns needed to be taken into consideration.

Councillor Fletcher commented that she agreed with the recommendations to prevent taxis from using the bus links.

Councillor Francis referred to Councillor T. Martin's concerns and advised that he had attended a recent meeting with bus operators where training had been discussed in relation to inconsiderate drivers.

Councillor Thompson commented that there was still access for vehicles either side of the islands, and the elderly were much safer if the links were left as currently operated. He felt the recommendation should be agreed, as the consultation and feedback from local residents had been very good and safety was paramount.

The Chairman commented that he was now satisfied with the level of consultation carried out on the scheme and moved that the recommendation be agreed.

3. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the formal objection received during the publication of proposals opposing the proposed bus link improvement schemes should not be upheld;

- (ii) the Executive Director of City Services be requested to instruct the Head of Law and Governance to confirm the making of the proposed order; and
- (iii) the objector be informed of the decision and any items not considered relevant to the objection would be given a formal response.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.

(Signed) P. TYE,
Chairman.