

Draft Minutes of the Roads Committee meeting held Wednesday 11th October 2023 at 10am at the Town Hall.

Present Cllrs; Beavan (DB) – Chair , Davy (PD), Jarvis (RJ), Palmer (MP),

Also present, Town Mayor Cllr Flunder (SF) (ex officio) and Town Clerk (LB). Also, SCC Ward Cllr M Ladd (ML) and SCC Highways Engineer (WS)

Also present, 29 members of the public.

Agenda

1. **To receive apologies for absence** – Cllr Sutton.

2. **Declarations of interest:**

- a. To receive any declarations of Non-Registrable Interest regarding the agenda. Nil
- b. To receive any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest/ Other Registrable Interest regarding the agenda. Nil

3. **Chairs section -**

Cllr Flunder introduced the meeting. Also mentioned the Lionlink consultation dates, and how NSIPS might affect road networks.

Cllr Beavan advised the public that the cttee had no proposals – just options – and that they would not be doing anything if there was no need. The meeting was advised that the cttee will review the comments from the drop in and assess whether a survey is required.

4. **Analysis of main issues raised at the drop in sessions with regards to;**

Potential One Way system for Southwold High Street

The Chair advised that all comments had been collated and although not yet fully analysed into specific concerns, there were over 250 inputs provided over the 2 days and in the days since the drop in.

It is clear from the comments received that the idea of a One Way System did not receive general support and therefore this option will not be taken any further.

SCC Ladd advised that the main aim of any option was to ‘ improve traffic flow and improve safety’ – and noted that the general feedback was that the one way system option would not fulfil this aim.

The Chair thanked SCC Cllr Ladd and WS for all their help with the consultation and for all of the information that they had provided.

Potential ESC Parking proposal

The Chair advised that ESC had produced a plan about 4 years previous to create resident parking across the town. DB advised that the plan was too extensive and that there was no general support for such a scheme.

PD advised that the general feeling was that resident parking was a problem for 6 – 8 weeks of the year. I was suggested that the ESC scheme was unpopular and should be dropped.

Other members agreed – and advised that Reydon residents would suffer if there was no where to park because areas were designated for residents only.

Popular options;

The Chair advised that the overall comments suggested the popular options would be;
20mph

Improved signage to car parks etc

Safe pedestrian crossing somewhere in High Street

Consideration of STC survey of pavements throughout the town with regards to width for prams/ mobility scooters etc. East Street – width

MP advised that he had attempted to take his mobility scooter around the pavements throughout the High Street and surrounds – and advised that there were issues in specific places. Usually due to the retailers displaying wares on the pavement which narrowed their accessibility. It was considered that retailers should be encouraged not to take up pavement space on already narrow pavements.

Possibility of widening pavements in some places? This might mean losing some parking spaces?

A member of the public – shopkeeper – advised that the amount of things on parts of the pavement were an issue. As a shop keeper it was mentioned that insurance policies will only provide public liability cover for the very front of any shop frontage – and that some of the retailers therefore might not be covered.

A Boards / street furniture – WS advised that these should be licensed by SCC – but it was a matter of enforcement.

East Street – The Chair advised that East Street is a particular safety issue as the road at its narrowest is not wide enough for emergency vehicles etc and does not match the width required by SCC requirements. This means that vehicles have to mount the pavement at the narrowest part – which is also the busiest area for pedestrians and hence safety issues arise.

5. Public Section

The Chair invited the public to speak on matters to do with anything that they had heard – taking into account that the option of a One Way system and ESC Parking scheme were not going to be taken forward.

A member of the public suggested that pedestrianisation should be considered with no access for cars. DB advised that pedestrianisation will be covered.

A member of the public suggested that if there was to be a further meeting then all members of the community should be invited – the Chair advised that the public had been invited to have their say in many forms of comms – the only thing that had not been done was a door to door flyer. The member of public offered to help the delivery of information for any future notifications/ meetings/ surveys

- A member of the public asked whether, if there is a survey, would Reydon be consulted. DB advised that it would, although emphasised that any survey will not be a referendum.

- A member of the public asked whether a bylaw could be created for 'no parking on pavements'. Another member of public advised that sometimes vehicles have to park on the pavement to leave sufficient road width. WS suggested that enforcement would again be an issue as ESC do not have wardens in town 24/7.
- A member of the public suggested that the problem in finding a parking space was longer than 6 – 8 weeks - and that a parking scheme should be introduced.
- Parking solutions - DB asked that any examples of good solutions elsewhere be e mailed to the Town Hall.
- A member of the public suggested that motorists should be charged to park in town and that it was not appropriate to provide free parking to all.
- A member of the public (shopkeeper) advised that staff need to park free of charge – and that if they could not do this in car park they would just park along the roads. Another person advised that workers do not have the choice of public transport to Southwold so all have to drive in from various distances.
- A Cllr advised that ESC has much data available – the average dwell time of people to the town was 2.5 hours – and that there are spaces in the outer car parks all year, including the summer.
- SF advised that the Millenium and Common Trusts were asking now for donations for parking.
- SF advised that signage improvements could be made to lead people more directly to the car parks.
- A member of the public advised that the town had always had issues re parking - places like Stradbroke Road are narrow and there is not room for cars on each side. Some places such as Frinton still have free parking. Would support a process whereby carers could park outside houses at which they need to visit. Obstructions on pavements – STC did manage this themselves a few years ago by ensuring all retailers were aware of the A Board guideline. The Meeting was advised that if a retailer puts things on pavements which are more than 1metre away from their front wall, they should take out extra Public Liab insurance as normal cover goes up to 1 metre. It was suggested that STC might wish to inform all retailers of the guidelines again now.
- WS advised that there is min width of pavement requirements nowadays – but the legislation cannot be applied to older pavements as they were not built to that spec.
- WS – parking on pavements is a traffic offence – and police should be made aware as the police are the enforcers.
- Signage to car parks – a member of public suggested that it would be helpful to have the number of spaces which each car park has on signs - so that people could tell whether it is a small or large car park.

- Members were asked if they had considered ‘chicanes’ in High Street to slow traffic – and whether 20mph could be applied to all of Southwold.
WS advised that SCC Policy presently is to not approve applications for 20mph limits along A roads – except in ‘exceptional circumstances. ‘Exceptional circumstances’ include consulting the police as the average speed needs to be under 24mph.
ML advised that as SCC ward Cllr he had suggested several years ago that Southwold could be a whole town 20mph zone. He had spoken to SCC last week and SCC would consider a scheme for Southwold on its merits – and SCC 20mph Policy is now being reviewed. ML suggested that Southwold could put in an application and see what SCC come back with.
Speed data analysis has been carried out along the High Street already so the average speed should be available. The issue will be enforcement.
- DB advised the meeting that the PCSO used to be paid for by STC – and that maybe this was again an option? Or an ANPR camera?
- RJ suggested that as the number of visitors is increasing STC should still consider doing something from a safety perspective along High Street.
SF advised the meeting that the police do have a CCTV design team and they have been asked to advise STC on appropriate placements etc.
WS mentioned Community Speed watch – police can take data from the speed watch team and follow up. This does however rely on volunteers.
- A member of the public advised that often pedestrians have to go into the road along the High Street due to the number of dogs that are on the pavements.
- SF advised that a member of public had asked the cttee to consider; signage improvements/ charging for parking/ pedestrianisation of High Street.
- ML advised that one of the benefits of the One-Way Scheme would have been the ability to widen pavements. But could still install some courtesy crossings to provide safer places for people to cross. Pedestrianisation of H St would cause double the amount of displacement of vehicles to a One-Way System – and would be 24/7.
- ML advised that the key issues which SCC are now focusing on are;
East Street width
Passing width by old Doctors Surgery along York Road
- Discussion about the car parking along York Road and the lack of width there – and people walking in the road.

To conclude the Chair thanked all for their contributions and advised that if a survey is required this will come forward at some stage in the future.

6. **Update from SCC Ward Cllr Ladd** re Highways matters, including information on new SCC Contractor.
See above.
7. **Consideration of STC survey** of pavements throughout the town with regards to width for prams/ mobility scooters etc. See above.

8. **Other consultations open** for response;

- a. SCC - Views sought on Suffolk walking, wheeling and cycling routes. Consultation open to 23rd November 2023. Noted

9. To receive update on new Electric vehicle charger installations

It was mentioned that these should be coming on stream IN Gardner Road and Millenium car parks.

10. Date of next meeting. TBC.