

ROYAL BOROUGH OF GREENWICH

HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 14 OCTOBER 2021 AT 7.00 PM

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Members:

Councillor Bill Freeman (Chair), Councillors David Gardner, Christine May, Gary Parker, Aidan Smith and Matthew Clare

Officers

(Interim) Assistant Director Transportation; Head of Traffic Group; Senior Street Tree Engineer; Committee Services Officer

The Chair varied the order of business and took Item 6 after Item 4.

Item

No.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Peter Brooks, Mick Hayes, Sarah Merrill,

2 Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

3 Declarations of Interest

Resolved –

That the list of Councillors' memberships as Council appointed representatives on outside bodies, joint committees and school governing bodies be noted.

4 Minutes

Resolved -

That the minutes of the meeting of the Highways Committee held on 7 July 2021 be agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.

5 Petition for Street Tree Planting - Goldsmid Street, Plumstead

The Senior Street Tree Engineer gave an illustrated introduction to the report.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Senior Street Tree Engineer replied that funding would come from the London Authority. Officers were happy to work with organisations such as Trees for Cities and Trees for Streets; the issue was always not just planting but the maintenance thereafter. When choosing a street for planting they considered the amount of space on the footpath and where that was limited they chose a smaller species of tree. There was a company that do underground tree pits, which allowed the trees to live longer and they could be built out into the highway. Tree pits could have a built in reservoir which could connect with the drainage system so they could always have sufficient water. With regard to the use of build outs though they were the better option that meant the loss of parking spaces and residents did not want to lose parking spaces. While hedges were important they were even more maintenance than a tree, and could block access on footpaths if overgrown.

The Head of Traffic Group emphasised that while happy to engage with partners and the community and plant more trees they had also to consider the maintenance budget. The Head of Traffic Group advised that could look to have a strategy with regard to delivering generally in future but they did not have the capacity to do so at present.

Resolved -

That the proposed response to the petition as set out in the report, and that it will be reported to Full Council at its meeting on 27 October 2021 be noted.

6 Response to a Petition regarding illegal and dangerous driving in Vanbrugh Hill, Calvert Road and Annandale Road

The Head of Traffic Group gave an illustrated introduction to the report.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Head of Traffic Group indicated that TfL might look at the warning signs on the traffic lights at the junction, but it was not thought that introducing new traffic lights in that road was an option. He agreed that a modal filter would predominantly solve the issue. He replied that during the site visit undertaken by the Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport and the Assistant Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Skills (Transportation) certain areas were identified that could be improved or enhanced without the need to install a new crossing but putting in a zebra crossing might be the safest option to consider for the road. With regard to alternative funding sources it would be unlikely that they would use income from enforcement but there might potentially be some section 106 money from developments in the area to improve the road network.

The Committee was addressed by the lead petitioner. She felt that there were inaccuracies in the report and the presentation. She detailed the composition of the community, and related the problems that they faced in crossing the road, that it was now impossible to cycle, and highlighted the threatening behaviour of dangerous drivers. She explained that Vanbrugh Hill was now a racetrack with rat runners traveling at 40/50 mph on the wrong side of the road, with some turning off into Calvert Road and Annandale Road. She added that the HGV weight limit was not being enforced. The lead petitioner requested that

- a white line be put down the centre of the road
- there be an enforcement camera to enforce both the white line and the speed limit
- consideration be given to making it a no through road from Vanbrugh Hill to Woolwich Road after consultation with residents
- there be suitable signage
- the yellow box junction be repositioned.

The Committee was addressed by a resident in support of the petition. He had noted that Calvert Road was getting busier at certain times, with nearly all the vehicles turning off onto Trafalgar Road, which was indicative that it had become a rat run.

The Head of Traffic Group in response advised that when they met with the Police they would be talking about the white line. With regard to having a camera on the traffic lights, the position of the yellow box junction, and cycle route, that would be discussed with TfL. Officers would look at improving the walking facilities. An issue with signage was that as drivers were increasingly reliant on electronic maps they were following them rather than signs.

The Head of Traffic Group agreed to Officers holding a site visit with the lead petitioner.

Members discussed the matter. The Committee endorsed the Officers' recommendation but queried what could be done in the short term to support residents. Officers were asked to look at the short time allowed for crossing and lack of access for wheelchairs; it was hoped the crossing could be improved and replaced with a better one. It was noted that cycling was dangerous in the area and that there was an issue with lorries. Clarity was sought on what cameras were present, whether for speed or moving traffic traffic. It was recognised it was difficult to get enforcement cameras installed and it was suggested whether a dummy camera could at least be put up. It was acknowledged that while there was controversy around LTNs they were one possible measure to address car use. It was felt that the option of closing off Calvert Road and Annandale Road and having a modal filter on Vanbrugh Hill subject to consultation should be considered. It was suggested that they explore other alternatives as well such as build outs, chicanes and humps.

The Head of Traffic Group advised that the white line discussion with the police, and improvements of the existing features were all measures that could be done in the short term. The crossing time for pedestrians and a potential red light camera would be raised with TfL. Powers to deal with moving traffic contraventions had recently moved to the local authority.

Officers to provide responses to the following questions:

1. When is the analysis of the consultation responses expected to conclude?
2. What percentage of the consultation response was from Calvert Road and Annandale Road?
3. Is the weight limit still in place and are the cameras actually working to enforce it on Romney Road?

Action: DRES (Highways)

The Chair thanked the lead petitioner for bringing the matter to the attention of the authority. The Chair requested Officers to report back to the Committee at a future date on actions taken.

Resolved -

That the proposed response to the petition as set out in the report, and that it will be reported to Full Council at its meeting on 27 October 2021 be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.01pm

Chair