

Questions, Answers and Actions -Adur County Local Forum – 18 November 2021

In Attendance:

County Councillors:

Kevin Boram, Emma Evans, Angus Dunn, Andy McGregor.
Apologies from Carson Albury.

Residents:

Lee Cowen, Joss Loader, Sarah Hadwen, Barry Hillman, Alwyn Evans, Tony Wallington, Susan Saunders, Catherine Arnold, Ian Jones, Carla Nisbett, Brendan Whelan, John Haffenden, Geoff Hodgson, Jane Holt.

Question 1 from Alwyn Evans:

Why after various road maintenance, utility work etc are so many road signs and similar furniture left around the public highways and footpaths. Metal frames, cones and abandoned signage are left for weeks. These are trip hazards to the partially sighted and hazards to the disabled let alone general public or animals etc. Even after reporting them, it takes weeks for them to be cleared. I am sure many council employees drive past these signs daily but do not report them. They are dangerous to the environment and create hazards and deprivation to the locality. Several signs have been on Holmbush roundabout for two years despite numerous reporting to WSCC. Even the grass cutter cut around them to as not to disturb them. Look around the locality and it is evidence that that Adur Council do not care how these areas look. Surely must authorise the first place ten of these signs and a date for their removal. Yet no one inspects these sites and ensure signage has been collected or needs to be collected.

Response to Question 1:

I would like to reassure you that officers have collected signs and frames when resources are permitting. It is noted that the majority of signs and frames that have been left are done so as this area is a key diversion route when National Highways (formally Highways England) close Southwick Tunnel on the A27, which they do fairly frequently.

They do tend to place the frames well in advance of the closure and they can be tardy on removing them when finished, which may be as they anticipate they will be closing the road again in the future.

West Sussex County Council (WSCC) has contacted National Highway over this, however we have yet to receive a response. The more residents that contact them over this issue will hopefully prompt them into action. They can be contacted at <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/>. It is likely National Highways have placed more traffic management since your earlier contact. If you believe this to be abandoned or surplus to requirements and is causing you an issue, we

would recommend you contact them directly to ensure you receive a direct response, alternatively we would gladly look further into this if you could either inform us of the enquiry reference number or report them [online](#) or via Love West Sussex.

The Area Highway Manager did offer to meet Mr Evans to discuss this further.

Question 2 from Tony Wallington:

My question is in two parts:

1a: What is WSCC's current plan to alleviate the constant traffic flow in both directions along the A259 towards, into and from Shoreham-by-Sea?

1b: If there isn't a current plan, hundreds of Council tax payers here are entitled to ask: "why not?"

Response to Question 2:

The Chairman, Cllr Kevin Boram confirmed that the Shoreham Town Centre Transport Study report identified a number of potential interventions to tackle pre-existing issues and mitigate the impacts of future development.

There are also plans to install new cycleways and paths. Highways are also reviewing the bus stops and the rope tackle roundabout.

The [West Sussex Transport Plan](#) is available on the website for residents to view.

Question 3 from Susan Saunders:

The latest consultation West Sussex carried out with regard to a permanent cycle way in Upper Shoreham Road finished over three months ago. When will West Sussex publish the results and what is the planned action? The Council's own website on 'Think Green, Think Health, Think Active Travel' states: 'Many have discovered the benefits of active travel choices, such as walking and cycling, for more journeys in their local area, or simply getting outdoors and being active every day. These are really positive changes, and we want to encourage residents to continue to make journeys greener, healthier, safer and more active.' These are very worthy words but how and when will they translate into action?

Response to Question 3:

A meeting was held on Monday 15 November where our Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport discussed the final Shoreham Consultation Report with key local stakeholders, the MP, local members and the Leader of Adur Council.

The Chairman, Cllr Kevin Boram, confirmed this was a very detailed consultation review and views are still very mixed. There is strong support for a cycle route on Eastern Avenue and Middle Road.

The consultation results will be made public on the WSCC website very soon.

Cllr Angus Dunn added that he was frustrated at the lack of progress on cycle lanes but that a model shift was needed to reduce congestion and pollution. He confirmed that all the Adur County Councillors were committed to moving things forward.

Question 4 from Ian Jones

With both the secondary schools in the Adur unlikely to be able to satisfy local demand for places (and that's before the additional dwellings being planned in Shoreham and Lancing are populated) are there any plans to increase the number of places in the local area (apart from the potential increase at Sir Robert Woodard)?

If there are no plans to increase provision, what plans are likely to be put in place to ensure that pupils unable to attend a local school are able to travel to another school and what consultation safely and conveniently will there be with affected parents? Have other local authorities been contacted to see if any assistance could be offered?

Lastly, what up to date data is used to determine what local demand will be? Has local GP data been considered on an annual basis and could this information be made available through a suitable channel such as the schools forum?

Response to Question 4:

The Chairman, Cllr Kevin Boram confirmed that WSCC produces a Planning School Places Report each year and the 2021 version can be available [online](#).

Arrangements for meeting the secondary demand across Shoreham & Lancing, where the two secondary schools share the catchment area, is that discussions are underway with Sir Robert Woodard Academy about how the accommodation can be adapted or added to so that increased pupil numbers can be accommodated. Pupil projections do not suggest further accommodation needs to be provided to meet pupil demand although the numbers will be regularly reviewed.

Question 5 from Carla Nisbett

I am a parent and a resident of Southwick. Last October 2020 I approached Councillor Stephen Chipp to ask advice about requesting a zebra crossing (from The Cricketers Pub across to the playground area in Southwick Green) and also a lollipop person during term time to help children cross the road to/from the bottom end of Church Lane (opposite The Green). These are key access points for parents and children travelling to/from school as well as pedestrians gaining access to and from Southwick Square amenities.

There are currently no pedestrian crossings surrounding The Green. The speed of the local traffic (especially during busier periods like school drop off/pick up times and rush hour) coupled with vehicles parked along the roadside obstructing view, means that it is not always possible to cross the roads surrounding The Green safely. I feel that this current situation is an accident waiting to happen.

In November 2020 I received over 300 messages of positive support on the ['Southwick Together' Facebook Page](#) and ['The New Shoreham By Sea' Facebook Group](#) for my request for two safer crossing routes. Since then, I have obtained written support from the Head at Glebe Primary School (I can forward a copy of her backing email) and support from Eastbrook Primary School and Church Lane Nursery. I also have photographic evidence showing the need for these two crucial crossing points to be made safer.

I have spoken with Councillor Dunn, Councillor Chipp and Councillor Baine but after one year of trying to take this request further, I have had no concrete answer or success yet, despite their efforts to help me.

The West Sussex Plan 2017 - 2022 quotes " it is only right that children are at the centre of everything we do" it also states "our ambition is that West Sussex will continue to be a great place to grow older. One that has the support networks to help people to remain independent for longer." - how can this statement be true if local residents, both young and old, cannot cross The Green safely to get to school or to the shops?

The Adur & Worthing Councils Public Health and Wellbeing strategy documents 2018-2021 recognise that " The Councils have a key role in ... creating the opportunities and networks for communities to walk and cycle safely". The document points out that it wants communities and individuals to "set the agenda" and that The Council "need to work with [the local communities] to help define local problems and search out local solutions". It notes that exercise and "day to day interactions with people" is good for our physical and mental health, "our relationships, our education, our training, our work and to achieving our potential". As a county/country we recognise the damage lack of exercise (and being able to get out and about) has had on the physical and mental health of our young and old people alike. In addition, both Adur and Worthing "have significant numbers of older people, more than a quarter of whom say they are moderately or severely lonely".

I believe it is now more crucial than ever to be able to cross the road safely! So my question to you is "when can we expect to see safer crossings around Southwick Green to enable residents of all ages to walk securely around their local community?"

Response to Question 5:

Communities can identify highway concerns and apply for a [Community Highway Scheme](#). These schemes are generally more costly and complicated than a TRO such as: traffic calming features, town/village centre enhancements, cycling facilities, crossing facilities, speed limits/zones, junction improvements. It should have the support of the wider community and the local county councillor. All requests will be reviewed and ranked. Only requests that score sufficiently will be prioritised for inclusion into a future Annual Delivery Programme which is approved by the Cabinet Member each year. The closing date for applications is July each year. The application form is on the website with guidance. Since this process has been in operation, we receive between 40-60 applications per year, and we are typically able to prioritise 15-20 per year depending on budget and scoring.

Cllr Angus Dunn confirmed he had spoken to Highways about this and in the first instance he would arrange a site visit for himself, the Highways Manager and Ms Nisbett to look at possible solutions.

Question 6 from Catherine Arnold:

How confident are our councillors that the model for school place planning is accurate, it does not include any children living in 1 bed flats as it assumes this scenario doesn't take place. How does WSCC regularly test this theory, does it conduct surveys. With a deficit of -183 spaces determined from an FOI from WSCC for secondary spaces in Adur for 22/23 school year, what are your plans to secure secondary school spaces, given the limited expansion of Sir Robert Woodard?

Response to Question 6:

The County Council's School Place Planning model is a software system used by several other local authorities and recognised by the Department for Education and is reviewed annually to incorporate the latest data received on births and pupil movements across the area. Therefore, there is no reason to suggest the school place planning projections are not as accurate as they can be. However, the impact of the Pandemic and Brexit over the last 18 months has yet to fully reveal itself as we expect there will be some variations due to unexpected pupil movement, but we are constantly updating our data sources using Office of National Statistics data and inputs from the Schools Census at least twice each year.

The County's view on the child product from 1 bed flats is that the Average Child Product is the adjusted education population multiplied by the average amount of children, taken to be 14 children per year of age per 1,000 persons for houses and bungalows (average figure taken from 2001 Census). For flats and maisonettes, the average number is five children per year per 1,000 persons. § Child Product = Adjusted Population x 14/1,000 (or 5/1,000 for flats)

The adjusted education population for the child product excludes population generated from one-bed units, sheltered, and 55+ age-restricted housing, and social-rented housing on a district-by-district basis according to supplementary planning guidance, as a nil child product is assumed for these dwellings. Further details are given [here](#).

Arrangements for meeting the secondary demand across Shoreham & Lancing, where the two secondary schools share the catchment area, is that discussions are underway with Sir Robert Woodard Academy about how the accommodation can be adapted or added to so that increased pupil numbers can be accommodated. Pupil projections do not suggest further accommodation needs to be provided to meet pupil demand although the numbers will be regularly reviewed.

Question 7 from Brendan Whelan Representing the Inland Waterways Association:

For many decades slipways have been a Cinderella issue. On the one hand every public report state that they, and more general access to the River Adur, should be promoted. In reality, the issues get pushed aside for short term political expediency. Disappointingly since the last Adur Forum I haven't had any feedback, or further information, on the issues that I raised. Please will collectively ensure that this time there is a response.

My points were:

1. I raised the issues surrounding the proposed changes at Stowes Gap and noted that Council policy is that access to the Adur should be improved during all developments. Please will you let me know how it is proposed to improve the access to this ancient slipway.
2. Similarly, I queried why the plans for a possible slipway at Silver Sands haven't been discussed. Please will you arrange for discussions to be opened.
3. Specific questions have been raised with both WSCC and ADC e.g., has infilling at Stowes Gap ever been authorised, was there any public consultation on changes (and if so, what were the comments), various dates have been given for a road closure order - what actually happened and, again, was there consultation.

We certainly aren't experiencing open government and I ask that you try to improve access to the River Adur for leisure purposes. This will acknowledge the history, provide much needed leisure facilities and protect the rights for future generations.

Response to Question 7:

The Chairman, Cllr Kevin Boram detailed the following response from WSCC Principal Rights of Way Officer, Nicholas Scott:

To my knowledge as part of proposed development of Sussex Yacht Club there is a proposal to divert a Restricted Byway (RB3157) under s.257 of the Town and Country Planning Act. This process is a Local Planning Authority function but as Highway Authority we are consultees.

I have been in discussions with the District Council about this for some time where I have set out the requirements for a Restricted Byway so these could be considered as part of any diversion under s.257 TCPA. In our role as Highway Authority, we need to make sure a suitable width route is provided as any diversion proposal but I understand there is public discontent with any proposals as it is seen as an action to prevent lawful public access to the waterside. This is certainly not our intention in this but as long as any route provides the suitable characteristics for its legal status and it begins and terminates at a similar location to the original route then we have very little ground for objections.

This situation has been further complicated by the fact that the existing legal line of RB3157 has not been available for many years, so people have been using different routes to get to the water's edge however it has been explained to them whether this route was available or not historically it is still the legally recorded line of RB3157, therefore needs to be legally diverted to accommodate the development of the Yacht Club.

I have this week been contacted by a concerned individual who believes the Definitive Map recorded the line of RB3157 incorrectly when drawn up and I have explained the process of how they can challenge this and this is dealt with by my legal services colleagues.

Members agreed that a co-ordinated approach was needed and asked Monique Smart, Democratic Services Officer, to ensure that everyone was connected so that this could be taken forward.

Question 8 from Geoff Hodgson, Ship Street, Shoreham

In 2014 West Sussex County Council commissioned Parsons Brinkerhoff to produce a report on Shoreham Town Centre. It was very detailed report on the traffic problems in Shoreham. They made recommendations which they considered were deliverable. They divided their recommendations from 2014 to 2020 into short term medium term and long term. The executive summary stated that the study recommended options to mitigate the impact of proposed developments. Why then some seven years later have the recommendations not been fully carried out as the developments are going ahead and the traffic problems have increased?

Response to Question 8:

The Shoreham Town Centre Transport Study report was published in 2014 which identified a number of potential interventions to tackle pre-existing issues and

mitigate the impacts of future development. The proposals were categorised into short, medium and long term, based largely on their complexity and cost. All the proposals were subject to funding, consultation and, where necessary, further business cases and technical work. Following engagement with local County Councillors after completion of the study, the priority locations for interventions were identified as Shoreham A259 High Street and the A259/A283 Norfolk Bridge junction roundabout.

Further technical work and engagement with County Councillors has taken place on these schemes in preparation for delivery through the County Council's Annual Delivery Programme. In doing so, concerns have been raised about the deliverability of relocating / consolidating the bus stops and impacts on other parking in the High Street. As these concerns are fundamental to the scheme, it has been concluded that the High Street scheme is undeliverable, and it has therefore been removed from the Annual Delivery Programme.

Proposals for the Norfolk Bridge junction are currently being developed. Due to the limited highway space available, the impacts on congestion are likely to be limited. Therefore, we are revisiting the options to see whether another option may offer greater benefits overall such as reducing the impacts of traffic on other users. Once this work is complete, it is anticipated that consultation will take place with local stakeholders to inform the next steps. If there is local support for a scheme to be implemented and it is deliverable and will provide value for money, then it will be included in a future Annual Delivery Programme for implementation. It is anticipated that the scheme will be funded, at least partially, using developer contributions which are typically paid once development has taken place, so the timing of implementation is likely to depend on when these contributions are paid.