

Leader

Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

www.westsussex.gov.uk

Cabinet Office
Ground Floor
County Hall
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 1RZ



7 January 2016

Dear Ms Oluwande,

A27 Chichester Improvement scheme

We are writing to you on behalf of West Sussex County Council to outline our concern regarding the proposed length of the public consultation that will take place on the A27 Chichester Improvement scheme scheduled for Spring 2016. Information has been published on Highways England's website which states that the consultation will run for 6 weeks. We feel, along with a number of concerned local residents, that this is an insufficient period of time to enable the completion of an effective consultation, necessary to substantiate any future decision on the A27 Chichester Improvement scheme.

The County Council has received a large amount of correspondence from local residents concerned about the likely consultation options and the process undertaken prior to its commencement. In addition, a recent meeting of the Chichester South County Local Committee was attended by a large number of local residents seeking to express their concerns to the County Council. We are acutely aware of the strength of local feeling and whilst the information that has recently been uploaded to the Highways England website is useful, the length of time it has taken to publicise this detail has unfortunately caused disquiet and anxiety within our communities. It has also led to a lot of rumour and speculation about what will be contained within the options when they are published. The consultation, once it is published, must seek first and foremost to address any misapprehensions relating to the proposed options.

We recognise that consideration must be given to the impact on the overall programme of extending the consultation. However, to enable the options contained in the consultation to be presented with coherence and clarity, we consider it will be necessary to extend the consultation period beyond the 6 weeks that are currently planned, particularly as the consultation is likely to take place over the Easter period. This will help to ensure that the options in the consultation are fully understood and that all local stakeholders have sufficient time to provide a comprehensive response to the consultation. Extending the consultation period will help you to ensure that a legitimate and robust decision is reached on the preferred scheme which is founded on the feedback received through the consultation.

For the reasons outlined above, we strongly urge you to consider extending the planned consultation to 12 weeks in line with the Government's consultation principles for complex or contentious issues and would welcome your thoughts on this in due course.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Louise Goldsmith'.

Louise Goldsmith
Leader

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John O'Brien'.

John O'Brien
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport