

Dear Sally,

Thank you for your email concerning the motion agreed at the Area Board on 19<sup>th</sup> April and shown at Appendix A.

The highlighted section in the email to Westbury Town Council shown at Appendix B explains what is happening with regard to the evaluation of schemes across Wiltshire, work has started and there are now nearly 70 being considered. It will be at least April next year before this process has been completed and priorities suggested jointly between Wiltshire Council and the Local Enterprise Partnership. These priorities will then be the subject of a Cabinet paper when a decision will be made on the use of funding available. As Councillor Scott mentioned at your Area Board in the current economic climate Government would be looking at schemes that dealt with the economy. A Westbury By Pass may or may not be a priority. I am sure that members of your Area Board will be aware that other communities have equally strong views on their schemes and, in consequence, the evaluation has to be objective and transparent.

As far as the identification of a route and a public consultation on whether it should be to the North or South is concerned it is our view that it is far too early for this to take place and that when it is carried out it will have to be objective and address the criteria used in evaluating schemes. If it is not carried out with these objectives in mind it will have little value. Also it would not be good use of resources to carry out such a consultation if the scheme was not a priority. Therefore we suggest that any public debate about the route is left until after the Cabinet meeting that agrees priorities.

If your members have any questions on this matter I'd be pleased to answer them.

Yours sincerely,

R L Tonge

Cabinet Member Highways and Transport

**Westbury Area Board 19<sup>th</sup> April 2012**

**Westbury Area Board supports the motion that,**

Westbury needs an A350 bypass as soon as possible, not least because heavy traffic flows along the A350 are expected to continue to grow for a wide range of reasons.

Westbury Area Board calls on Wiltshire Council's cabinet, Wiltshire Strategic Economic Partnership and all other relevant stakeholders, as soon as reasonably possible, to restart substantive discussions and relevant technical work to:

- a) identify an appropriate and practical route that will obtain planning permission under the new national and local planning regime currently being introduced, and;
- b) set out a vision and practical timescale for the implementation of an A350 Westbury Bypass that will both remove long distance traffic from the town and help to improve journey times along the local A350 corridor taking into account the likely timing and potential sources of funding including possible developer contributions from development schemes that would benefit from better A350 north-south connectivity.

**Extract from the draft minutes**

Jane Scott explained that at the enquiry the Inspectors had detailed that the usage of the road was not exceptional for a primary route, that the cost and the environmental impact outweighed need and also the Inspectors did not see a strong economic benefit. She explained that she thought that in the current economic climate Government would be looking at schemes that dealt with the economy. She went on to make clear that the Westbury Community needs to have a conversation about what should be done before the harder work is taken on by the Council.

The Chairman explained that her major concerns were financial and that the Council had started to consider over 50 potential major transport schemes ranging in cost from £1m up to +£30m such as Westbury bypass. Each of the schemes would initially be evaluated using a recognised Department of Transport appraisal tool and then prioritised for discussion with the Local Enterprise Partnership. She proposed that the motion should be deferred but this was not supported by the rest of the Area Board membership.

Cllr Cuthbert-Murray supported the motion, emphasising that he did not support either the Eastern or Western route, but that a discussion did need to happen.

Alan Creedy Head of Service Sustainable Transport explained that work regarding the issues surrounding Yarnbrook was ongoing. Growth on that side of Trowbridge was developing and access would be required to the new development. However the developer would be paying for this.