

Statement to Area Board 10.1.2013 re Transport

Does it make any sense to exclude the public from consultation on a Salisbury Transport Strategy while asking them to provide the transport related measures for an Air Quality Action Plan for Salisbury?

Both the Salisbury Transport Study Options Assessment Report produced in January 2010 and the Addendum produced in August 2011 indicated that the next step would be a stakeholder consultation, and that further work was required to refine the options and produce a Salisbury Transport Strategy, and this is confirmed in the adopted South Wiltshire Core Strategy. But now the minutes of the November 2012 Area Board meeting tell us that *“information on the Transport Strategy which was available on the Council’s website was quite complicated and technical. A new summary document was being prepared and would be shared shortly with the Councillors, prior to being published online.”*

The document referred to does not appear to have been published online yet, but versions of a “Salisbury Transport Strategy Summary” dated November 2012 have been circulated.

It seems we have now arrived at a Salisbury Transport Strategy without any of the further steps proposed in the Options Assessment reports – no further refinement of the options which had been promised and no public consultation. Furthermore we have a ‘summary’ document but no detailed document giving details of the measures which are summarised.

There are unanswered questions arising from this long drawn out and unsatisfactory process – for instance originally in January 2010 it was stated that 6 buses per hour were needed to serve the new strategic developments around Salisbury, why has this been changed to only 2 buses per hour? Does it make sense to spend £2.5 million on junction improvements to the south of Salisbury when there are now no strategic developments proposed to the south? Why is the city centre pedestrianisation promised in the first Salisbury Transport Plan a decade ago but never delivered not carried forward into the new plan?

With recent proposals such as the Maltings redevelopment and the closure of the bus station there is now even more reason to have a proper Salisbury Transport Strategy which encompasses the whole range of transport measures and infrastructure which are needed across the city, and to listen to what local people have to say about the possible options.

Furthermore the link between the Local Transport Plan including Salisbury’s Transport Strategy and the Air Quality action plan needs to be properly acknowledged. Traffic is the cause of Salisbury’s air quality issues and clearly transport strategies need to provide the strategic solutions. But Wiltshire have so far failed to deliver those parts of the Local Transport Plan which will do most to address air quality issues – Walking, Cycling and Smarter Choices strategies are among those which will allegedly be available for consultation shortly. Rather than working with the Sustainable Transport department to develop the details which might form part of an Air Quality Action plan the Public Health department are asking for members of the public to come forward and suggest measures which can be taken to resolve the air quality problems. SCCAP would be only too happy to work with Wiltshire Council officers and help to gather the public’s views on sustainable solutions to Salisbury transport problems. However these views need to contribute to the transport strategies as well as to the Air Quality action plan. It makes no sense to consider the two areas in isolation and to exclude the public from consultation on a Salisbury Transport Strategy while asking for their views on measures to resolve air quality issues.

Could we have some joined up thinking by Wiltshire Council which will deliver an integrated Transport Strategy and Air Quality Action Plan which incorporate local people’s views and which will help to provide Salisbury with the sustainable transport solutions which will be needed to cope with the growth of the city which is being planned?

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