

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

TIDWORTH AREA BOARD (19th March 2012)

Community Area Transport Group Update

Purpose of the Report

1. To update the Board on the work of the Community Area Transport Group and the current financial position.
2. To obtain the Board's approval for transport schemes to be taken forward in 2012/13 financial year
3. To obtain the Board's agreement to the C Class Roads to be put forward for Speed Limit Review in 2012/13.
4. To obtain the Board's agreement to the Speed Indicator Device (SID) deployment programme for 2012/13.
5. To recommend that the Board delegates responsibility for future discussions and decisions on the allocation of the SID to the Community Area Transport Group.
6. To note and agree responses from the Board to the issue of the contentious HGV signs erected in Devizes.

Introduction:

The Community Area Transport group meets on a quarterly basis to discuss and propose transport schemes for the Community Area.

At the last meeting on 12th March, the Group discussed the following matters

- spend in 2011/12 and balance of funding remaining
- funding carried forward to the next financial year
- the new allocation of funding for the 2012/13 financial year
- the central pot of funding available for major schemes
- the schemes to be delivered in the next financial year
- The C Class roads to be put forward for Speed Limit review
- the programme of Speed Indicator Device deployment
- the response to the issue of the contentious HGV signs in Devizes.

Funding

The CATG has £1,200 to be carried forward into the next financial year. The indicative allocation of funding for the next financial year is £11,757 making a total of £12,957 for local transport schemes in 2012/13.

There will be a further £250k in a central pot for area board's to bid into to fund schemes that cost more than their allocation or where there are funding shortfalls from other sources (e.g. Town and Parish Councils and developer funding).

Schemes proposed for 2012/13

The CATG proposes that £5950 is allocated to the Cadley Rd, traffic calming and footway scheme which has a shortfall of £7950, subject to the Parish Council funding the additional £2,000.

The group deferred a decision on a scheme to provide a bus stop on either the East or West of the A345 at Harefield Crescent, Netheravon, pending up to date costings being provided. The CATG is minded to fund the West side which will cost more than the East and has requested funding from Netheravon Parish Council for fund or part-fund the Eastern side. This information will be available for the next Area Board meeting in May. In principle agreement for this scheme is sought from the Area Board.

C Class and Unclassified Roads Speed Limit Reviews:

CATG's have been requested to recommend two C Class or unclassified roads for speed limit assessment in 2012/13. The Group decided that the C32 (Amesbury to Enford) and C9 (Perham Down to Tidworth) should have their speed limits reviewed. The former will require Amesbury CATG and Area Board to prioritise the C32 for the work to be undertaken as the whole route will need to be assessed. It was also agreed that the C9 should be reviewed due to its accident rate and Tidworth Town Council's offer to fund gateways at a cost of £10K.

SID allocation:

From April 2012 responsibility for fixing the SID deployment programme is devolved to Area Boards who have one Sid to be deployed in their Community Area.

Best practice is that a SID should not be deployed to a particular site for more than 14 days at a time. It is also recommended that it does not return to the same site within 12 weeks so that it remains effective.

A SID should only be placed at a site that meets the criteria and has had a metrocount to test the speed of vehicles. However the final decision on the deployment of SIDs rests with Area Boards who can make a recommendation to deploy a SID in other areas on the recommendation of the CATG.

Where a metrocount has provided data for a site that meets the criteria for speedwatch the Area Board encourages the local community to set up a Speedwatch Scheme.

There are 9 sites in the Tidworth Community Area put forward by the Area Board in November for speed level assessment and possible SID deployment, however not all the data has yet been returned.

The CATG therefore proposes that all the following sites are provisionally put into the SID deployment programme for subject to possible review when speeding data has been received.

- C32 Enford
- Two sites on A338/A346 Collingbourne Ducis
- Two sites on A338/A346 Collingbourne Kingston
- Bulford Road, Kennet Road, Ludgershall Road, Tidworth
- Wellington Academy

New sites can be added to the programme as they come forward and meet the criteria set.

In order to manage this process efficiently into the future, the CATG further proposes that responsibility for future discussions and decisions on the allocation of the SIDs is delegated to the Community Area Transport Group.

Contentious HGV signs at Devizes

In response to the issue of the contentious HGV signs and Devizes directing traffic through villages in Tidworth Community Area, the CATG proposes that the Board approves the sending of the letters attached at appendix A, one from the Chair of the Area Board in response to the current consultation; one from the Chair of the CATG raising concerns on how the signs were erected in the first instance. The group discussed the various options and agreed that the signs in Devizes are removed and that Option 2 (1) in the report be supported.

Recommendations:

1. That the Area Board notes the CATG funding position, the balance carried forward to 2012/13 and the allocation for the new financial year.
2. That the Board approves the allocation of £5950 to the traffic calming scheme at Cadley Road, Collingbourne Ducis, subject to the Parish Council funding the remaining £2,000 required.
3. The Board approves in principle funding for provision of a bus stop at Harefield Crescent, Netheravon, subject to new costings being provided, to be formalised at the next Area Board.
4. The Board agrees the C32 and C9 roads are put forward for Speed Limit Review
5. The Board agrees the SID site deployment programme for 2012/13 as detailed above.
6. The Board delegates future decisions on SID deployment to the CATG.
7. The Board approves the sending of letters as attached at Appendix B regarding the contentious HGV signs at Devizes.

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Appendix A

From: The Chairman of the Tidworth Area Board.
To: Councillor Dick Tonge, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport.
Copy to: David Thomas, Wiltshire Council.
Subject: HT-009-12- Advisory Over-height Signing for Heavy Goods Vehicles at Devizes.
Date: 19th March 2012

Dear Mr Tonge,

Tidworth Area Board, at its meeting today, considered the above report and has the following comments on the two options set out in that report. We have a close interest in this issue because the A345 road runs through parishes in our Community Area.

1. Option 1- to maintain the current diversion with changes to signing as appropriate.

Advantages.

None.

The reason for the erection of these signs appears to be that it would reduce the flow of Heavy Goods Vehicles through Great Cheverell (Mouchel report para 4.5, page 13).

The Wiltshire Council Over-height Vehicle report dated 30th September 2011, paragraph 3.1, page 11, concludes about this option as follows:

‘ While there may be a reduction in over-height vehicles travelling between Devizes and the A303 using Great Cheverell, local over-height vehicles are likely to continue to use the existing diversion route. The remaining 75% of vehicles which are not over-height but pass through Great Cheverell as part of their journey will also remain on that route.

It will be concluded therefore that this option would provide a minimal reduction in the number of HGVs travelling through Great Cheverell, and a such is unlikely to fully alleviate the concerns of Great Cheverell Parish Council. Of the five legitimate over-height movements recorded it is considered that only two may be influenced to take a signed alternative route. In terms of return on investment this proposal cannot be justified given the extremely low impact it is likely to have.’

Disadvantages.

- a. The Mouchel report, page 10, estimates an increase of 15% in HGVs along the eastern diversion route. The A342 east of Devizes and the A345 south of Rushall are already heavily used by HGVs and any increase in that traffic would have serious effects on the communities that live along that route. As you are already well aware, the increase in the traffic on the A345 has already been drawn to your attention on previous occasions. That road is unsuitable for the amount of HGV traffic that already uses it, and the residents on that road are very concerned about the road safety situation. They view this increase in traffic with great concern and alarm, and see no reason why they should be obliged to have the problems of Great Cheverell dumped on them, thereby making their bad situation even worse.

b. The new signs in Devizes are very unsatisfactory for the following reasons:

- (1) The sign at the junction of the A342 and the A360 reads words to the effect: 'HGVs for Salisbury via A342', with no mention that this supposed to apply only to vehicles over 13' 6". An image of that sign is below. We believe that this sign, and another similar further east, positively encourages all HGVs to believe that their normal route to Salisbury is via the A342/A345, not just those that are over-height.



- (2) The large sign outside Le Marchant Barracks in Devizes directs HGVs for Salisbury down Windsor Drive, past Nursteed Primary School. This is dangerous because children going to the school have to cross Windsor Drive from west to east, and are already at risk from traffic on that road. It has been pointed out that there is a pedestrian tunnel under Windsor Drive which is supposed to reduce the risk of children being killed or injured by traffic on Windsor Drive. Unfortunately this only reduces but does not eliminate the risk. Councillor Howard was present recently on a normal school day from 0835hrs to 0905hrs and observed that while slightly over half of the children used the tunnel that morning, a large number including those approaching the school from the north, did not use the tunnel and crossed the open road.

2. Option 2- to revert to the original diversion through Great Cheverell with changes to signing as appropriate.

Advantages.

- a. No diversion of additional HGV traffic to the eastern route via the A342 and the already overloaded and unsuitable A345.
- b. No risk to the children of Nursted Primary School.
- c. Low cost (option (1) below) compared to the signs in Devizes and to the south where the A360 joins the A303.

It is appropriate to mention here two options set out in the Wiltshire Council Over-height Vehicle Review dated September 2011. These both fall within the scope of this consultation because they involve 'changes to signing as appropriate'.

- (1) The first of these options is at the top of page 13, and suggests a weight restriction in Great Cheverell to remove all HGVs over 7.5 tons from the village with the exception of those which require legitimate access. Vehicles over 13'6" could be dealt with either by an alternative local diversion or be given an exemption from the weight restriction to allow continued use of the existing diversion route through Great Cheverell. The data collected suggests that the majority of HGVs using the route through Great Cheverell are not over 13'6" and therefore this option is likely to offer a significant reduction in HGV numbers through Great Cheverell while maintaining a diversion route for vehicles over 13' 6".
- (2) The other option set out in the Over-height Vehicle Review is the Split Direction Diversion Route at pages 11 to 13. This also has great merit and is well worth further investigation .

Both options would require full consultation with Great Cheverell and with Market Lavington Parish Councils.

Disadvantages.

Option (1) above- none, except that this option would still see the very few vehicles over 13'6" continuing to use the road through Great Cheverell while the larger number of vehicles under 13'6" would be diverted away from the village.

Option (2) above- site investigation would be required about minimal carriageway lowering at the West Park Farm rail bridge at Ledge Hill. If required, this would involve some cost which could not be estimated until the site investigation has been completed.

Over- height HGV traffic would be directed past Lavington School in West Lavington. This may have some road safety implications at the school, but probably no more serious than at Nursted Primary School mentioned above.

Conclusions and Recommendations.

1. The existing new signs in Devizes are likely to be ineffective, and were erected in October against the advice contained in the Wiltshire Council Over-height Vehicle Review dated September 2011.
They should therefore be removed.
2. Tidworth Area Board recommends Option 2 (1) above, that is to revert to the original diversion through Great Cheverell but to change the signage to impose a weight restriction of 7.5 tons through that village. There should be a signed exemption for HGVs requiring legitimate access to the village, and for vehicles over 13'6". This would mean that vehicles over 7.5 tons and under 13'6" would use the A360 via the Chocolate Poodle bridge, and those very few vehicles over 13'6" would divert through Great Cheverell.
That is the best option and should be adopted after the removal of the signs in Devizes and consultation with Great Cheverell Parish Council.

Tidworth Area Board trusts that these comments and recommendations are helpful, and would be pleased to discuss any points arising from them.

**Councillor Christopher Williams,
Chairman of Tidworth Area Board.**

19th March 2012.

From: Councillor Mark Connolly,
Chairman of the Tidworth Community Area Transport Group.
To: Councillor Dick Tonge, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, Wiltshire Council.
Copy to: Dr Carlton Brand, Service Director.
Subject: Advisory over-height signing for Heavy Goods Vehicles at Devizes.
Date: 13th March 2012.

1. Signs have been erected at Devizes that have caused great concern to the communities on the A 342 and the A345 between Devizes and Amesbury, and you have issued consultation document reference HT-009-12 dated 17/02/2012 to which the Tidworth Area Board will be responding very shortly.

2. Tidworth Community Area Transport Group (CATG) met yesterday and resolved to draw the following matters to your attention and to request an explanation and/or an apology for the following apparent failures on the part of the Council's Department for Strategic Services- Highways, Streetscene and Passenger Transport:
 - a. The erection of advisory signage in Devizes to divert south bound over-height vehicles away from the A 360 south of Devizes onto an eastern route via the A342 and A345 was completed without any consultation with the communities along that route. I draw your attention to the fact that on page 11, paragraph 3.1 of the Wiltshire Council Over-height Vehicle Review, Great Cheverell dated September 2011, it states:
'The diversion of HGVs along the eastern route would have an impact upon communities on the A345 and A342, such as Upavon and Rushall. These communities will need to be consulted upon with regard to the potential increase in HGV traffic.'
It would appear that not only has Wiltshire Council chosen to ignore the advice contained in its own report, issued before the signs were erected, but also chosen not to consult with those affected by the diverted traffic. Mr Parvis Khansari has written that although the Council was not legally obliged to consult, 'one could argue that the Highways Authority should still have consulted.'
Tidworth CATG considers that under these circumstances, an apology should be made to the Tidworth Area Board. This will be conveyed to the Parish Councils concerned.

 - b. The Over-height Vehicle Review September 2011 sets out recommendations at paragraph 5, page 14. At the head of that paragraph it states:
'That the signing of an advisory route for over-height HGV's using the A345 and A342 should not be pursued'
Please explain why it was that Wiltshire Council chose to ignore its own report and carried on with the erection of the signs in Devizes.

3. There are three other matters that I draw to your attention :

- a. The Over-height HGV Review recommends on page 14 that the provision of an over-height diversion through Market Lavington be discussed locally to establish the acceptability of this proposal. The consultation that you have instituted offers only two options, neither of which includes the Market Lavington option. Does this mean that a decision will be made on which of those two options to adopt without considering the Market Lavington option, despite the fact that this may be the best course of action? The Tidworth CATG requests an answer to this question, and comments that if the Market Lavington/ Broadway option is not explored before a final decision is taken the consultation will be flawed and incomplete.
- I would add here that officers have drawn attention to the fact that under the Market Lavington option diverted over-height HGVs would pass Lavington School in Market Lavington. Tidworth CATG points out that under the diversion set up in Devizes, HGVs are diverted past Nursteed Primary School down Windsor Drive. That school can be approached from the west via a tunnel, but from a survey made by a member of this Group it is the case that many children approaching the school from the north do not use the tunnel and are at risk from the additional HGV traffic when crossing the road to the school. Furthermore, many parents delivering their children park their cars on Windsor Drive opposite the school and those children are at risk from passing traffic. The conclusion is that the level of risk at Nursteed Primary School is probably as great as in Market Lavington, and there is no valid reason not to explore the Market Lavington option as soon as possible.
- It is appreciated that there is an issue about the height of the railway bridge near West Park Farm as described on pages 11 and 12 of the Over-height HGV review, and we suggest that this be investigated as soon as possible.
- b. The A342 and the A345 are busy roads, and as Wiltshire Council is aware from traffic counts the amount of HGV traffic has increased substantially in recent years. Any additional HGV traffic is most unwelcome, and will cause the condition of those roads, in particular the A345, to deteriorate still further.
- c. The information on the new signs in Devizes is inappropriate in that some of them appear to divert ALL southbound HGV traffic via the A342 and the A345, and for this reason most or all of them should be removed anyway regardless of the outcome of the consultation. Details will be given in the Area Board's response to the consultation, and the Tidworth CATG requests that the signs be either covered or removed pending the outcome of the consultation.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,

**Councillor Mark Connolly,
Chairman of the Tidworth Community Area Transport Group.
13th March 2012.**