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MEETING	TRAFFIC CONGESTION AD-HOC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE	19 NOVEMBER 2007
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS MERRETT (CHAIR), HOLVEY, HUDSON (VICE-CHAIR), MOORE, SIMPSON-LAING, POTTER (SUBSTITUTE)  MR M PAGE (CO-OPTED NON-STATUTORY MEMBER) MR M SMITH (CO-OPTED NON-STATUTORY MEMBER)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS MORLEY AND PIERCE

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### 23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda.

Councillor Merrett declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 4 (Interim Report) as an honorary member of the Cyclists' Touring Club and a member of Cycling England.

Councillor Potter declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 4 (Interim Report) as she was Chair of Governors at Tang Hall Primary School and her daughter attended Burnholme School.

Councillor Simpson-Laing declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 4 (Interim Report) as she was treasurer of an out of school club.

### 24. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2007 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair with the following amendments (amendments in italics).

Under the heading 'Accidents on the Highway', the first line of the second paragraph be amended to read:  
'*Some* Members felt that the Police were taking a *different* approach and were closing roads more frequently and for longer after accidents.'

### 25. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

## 26. INTERIM REPORT

Members considered a paper on 'School Travel – The National and Local Picture' (Annex B to the report), which informed them that nationally, more than one in four trips to school are now made by car. In urban areas in term time, around one in five cars at 8.50am are taking children to school. One out of every four cars on the road in the morning rush hour in York is on the school run.

Members felt that there were huge variations in the modal split with some urban schools having a very low usage of cars and others having a much higher use. Some Members suggested that the variations might be linked with income and whether the parents were working. It might be the case that those children whose parents had a lower income were the ones that were most likely to walk to school.

Logistical problems with parents having to get children to two different schools were also thought to be a material factor in why so many people were driving their children to school.

Some Members suggested that more secure cycle parking for children, parents and staff could encourage people to cycle to school. The Assistant Director of City Strategy reported that £650k was being spent per year on improving safer routes to school and this was an ongoing piece of work.

It was noted that the private schools were not included in the data provided.

Members considered an example of a school travel plan (Annex D to the report) and noted that one of the problems flagged up was 'crossing major roads'. Members felt that in terms of safety and perceptions of safety this was a high priority point and therefore upgrading of crossings was very important. Some Members thought that a soft marketing approach might have an influence on persuading people to set off earlier so that they could walk rather than drive with their children to school. The benefits of involving parents in cycle training for their children was noted. It was also realised that children tended to be older when they went to school by themselves and parents needed to be reassured that the routes to and from schools were safe.

Members considered an 'Overview of Cycling in York' (Annex E to the report). This briefed Members with an overview of cycle usage, cycle infrastructure, various targets and monitoring processes, measures to promote cycling, cycling policy, future initiatives and cycling's contribution to reducing congestion. The Assistant Director of City Strategy reported that next year they would be looking at a programme for cycling on Clifton Bridge, Moor Lane Bridge and a route to the back of the hospital. Many of the bridges in York were very narrow and therefore problematic when trying to implement safe cycling routes. They were also looking at revisiting schemes that had already been introduced and felt that the cycling provision near York Railway Station still needed some more work. There

were also issues with the pedestrian crossings in this area and these would be investigated at the same time.

Members discussed the conflict between cyclists and pedestrians in certain areas across the City and there was agreement that it was safer for cyclists and pedestrians to be separated. The project Manager (Transport and Safety) said that the design of shared facilities was very challenging. The promotion of considerate behaviour was also thought to be beneficial where shared facilities were being used. Discussions were had regarding specific places around the City where the design for cyclists/pedestrian schemes was thought to need improvement.

Some Members thought that cycling facilities needed to be attractive to cyclists and this was very high priority when trying to create good cycling in the area. The Chair believed that we should be pushing York to lead the way and aim to become a European Cycling City.

Discussions were had around car free developments and the need for a major reinvigoration of the cycling strategy. It was important to engage developers in terms of design for cyclists and pedestrians.

The Assistant Director of City Strategy informed Members that all developments over a certain size had to have a green travel plan but it was understood that as circumstances changed the travel plan did not necessarily change with them. There were well established companies and businesses in the City that did not have a green travel plan and this could possibly be having an effect on traffic congestion within the City; maybe more so than the school run. Members discussed the difficulties of getting into and out of the City using public transport either very early in the morning or very late at night.

Mr Page mentioned an academic document entitled 'Making Cycling Irresistible: Lessons from the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany' by two highly respected authors, John Pucher and Ralph Buecher. They had collected a wealth of information on why cycling was more popular in some other parts of Europe and how that success may be replicated in the UK. The document can be found at :

[www.policy.rutgers.edu/faculty/pucher/irresistible.pdf](http://www.policy.rutgers.edu/faculty/pucher/irresistible.pdf)

Members discussed pedestrian routes throughout the City and noted that some places, such as Clifton Moor, were not pedestrian friendly. It was also noted that some of the pavements in the City were very narrow and were often full forcing people to walk in the road.

It was noted that work was still ongoing to provide a revised remit for the consultants in relation to objectives (vi) and (vii).

Members received a briefing paper on consulting residents on the draft recommendations. This set out the following two options:

- Option one:** Talkabout Workshop Session (2.5 hours – evening session)
- Option two:** Talkabout survey and On-line residents survey

Members felt that neither of the options were viable and thought that they would not provide a wide enough range of public views. As an alternative it was suggested that a survey be published in either 'YORCITY' or 'Your Ward' magazine. The Scrutiny Officer agreed to investigate the costs associated with the alternative options suggested.

Members were also reminded that their feedback was still required on the table of identified findings, solutions, impacts and draft recommendations.

RESOLVED: That Members recommend that:

1. The findings recognised in terms of school travel, cycling, pedestrians and green travel plans be added to the Table of issues/Findings, Identified Solutions, Possible Impacts and Draft Recommendations.
2. The Scrutiny Officer, Chair and Vice Chair liaise regarding how and where the residents' survey will be published.

REASON: To ensure full consideration of all the objectives.

Councillor D Merrett, Chair

[The meeting started at 6.05 pm and finished at 8.10 pm].