
Economic & City Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee

29th September 2009

Report of the Head of Civic, Legal & Democratic Services

Interim Report of the Water Lane CCfA¹ Task Group & General Update

Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the first meeting of the Water Lane CCfA Task Group and the outcome of the Executive Member for City Strategy Decision Making Session on 1st September 2009, Scrutiny Management Committee (Calling in) on 14th September 2009 and Executive (Calling in) on 15th September 2009.
2. The Committee are also asked to consider their way forward regarding this CCfA.

Background

3. At a meeting of the Economic & City Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 12th August 2009 Members were asked to consider a CCfA submitted by Councillors Scott, King and Douglas in relation to traffic issues at the junction of Water Lane and Clifton Green, Westminster Road, The Avenue and Clifton Green.
4. After due consideration of the Topic Registration Form Members decided to progress the topic to review and they selected a three Member cross-party task group to work on this.
5. The Committee also set the following focus for the review:
 - i. To explore the immediate solutions for the traffic problems faced by residents in Westminster Road and The Avenue.
 - ii. To explore whether further improvements could be found in this area and whether any lessons could be learnt to assist in the implementation of further schemes in the city.

¹ Councillor Call for Action

Work undertaken and Information Gathered to Date

6. At a meeting of Full Council on 9th July 2009 residents of the area presented two petitions regarding traffic issues in the Water Lane area of the City.
7. The task group met for the first time on 18th August in order to prepare the Committee's comments on a report being prepared by the City Strategy Department regarding the Westminster Road Petitions. These comments were shared with the whole Committee (via e-mail) prior to being submitted to the Executive Member for City Strategy. The comments are attached at Annex A to this report and the Report to the Executive Member for City Strategy is attached at Annex B to this report [annexes to this report are available on the Council's website].
8. The report, including the Committee's comments, was subsequently presented to the Executive Member for City Strategy at the Executive Member Decision Making Session held on 1st September 2009.
9. Officers updated the Executive Member for City Strategy that the speed cushions in Westminster Road had been reinstated that very afternoon and the white lining on the road was due to take place the following day (2nd September).
10. Councillor Scott, one of the Clifton Ward Councillors prepared an additional document which was circulated at this meeting (Annex C refers) and Councillor King, another of the Clifton Ward Councillors spoke to this at the meeting. Two local residents also spoke at the meeting and confirmed that the speed cushions in Westminster Road had been reinstated but were not to the same specification as the ones removed. Both residents requested the Executive Member to consider a point closure, as they believed this to be the most viable solution to the problems currently being experienced by local residents.
11. The minuted decision from that meeting is as follows:
 - i. The course of action detailed in Options A and B of the report be approved which will allow:
 - a. Further surveys to be undertaken once the road humps on Westminster Road have been replaced and the results reported to a future Decision Session meeting
 - b. Progress the introduction of a 20 mph limit and undertake a review of the School Travel Plan
 - ii. Options G and H in the report be given further consideration as part of the reporting of the above;
 - iii. That the option of introducing build outs or chicanes as a method of controlling both traffic speed and volumes also be evaluated;
12. The three Clifton Ward Councillors still had concerns and 'called in' the decision giving the following reasons:

- That the Executive Member misdirected himself in:
 - Failing to follow the representations of local Councillors
 - Failing to follow the representations of the residents of Westminster Road
 - Not deciding on Option G - Point Closure of the street.

13. The Decision was referred to the Scrutiny Management Committee (SMC) who had the option of confirming the Executive Member's decision or referring the matter back for re-consideration.

14. SMC convened on 14th September 2009 and made the following minuted decision:

'That Option B be approved and the Executive Member's decisions be referred back to the Executive (Calling in) for reconsideration, with a recommendation that they be amended to:

(a) Include a further sub-paragraph (c) under resolution (i) to read as follows:

'Approval of Option H and consultation to be carried out with residents with the aim of reporting the results to the Executive Member on 1 December, or at the same time as the results of the further surveys.'

(b) Replace the words 'Options G & H' in resolution (ii) with the Words Option G'

15. At an Executive (Calling In) meeting held on 15th September 2009 the Executive agreed to accept the recommendations of the SMC (Calling In) held on 14th September 2009. The original decision was, therefore, revised to read as follows:

'That the Executive Member agrees:

(i) To approve the course of action detailed in Options A and B in the report, which will allow:

- a) Further surveys to be undertaken, now that the road humps on Westminster Road have been replaced, and the results reported to a future Decision Session meeting;
- b) The introduction of a 20 mph speed limit to be progressed and a review of the School Travel Plan to be undertaken;
- c) Approval of Option H and consultation to be carried out with residents, with the aim of reporting the results to the Executive Member on 1 December, or at the same time as the results of the further surveys.

(ii) That Option G in the report be given further consideration as part of the reporting of the above.

(iii) That the options of introducing build outs or chicanes as a method of controlling both traffic speed and volumes also be evaluated.”

Consultation

16. The task group have consulted the following persons so far:

➤ Officers within the City Development and Transport Department

17. Councillor Scott, the Ward Councillor who originally registered this topic has indicated that he would be happy if part of the CCfA be put on hold until after the report is presented to the Executive Member for City Strategy on 1st December 2009 (paragraph 15 of this report refers). The part in question is detailed in the focus of the review set out in paragraph 5 (i) of this report. He would still wish for the task group to proceed with work on the second focus point of the review (paragraph 5 (ii) refers).

18. As the review progresses it is envisaged that many more people will be consulted.

Options

19. Members have the following options:

- i. To review the need to continue with the CCfA in light of the revised Executive Member decision and if they are minded to proceed with the CCfA then;
- ii. To agree/amend the draft remit set out at Annex D to this report

Analysis

20. Information in paragraphs 6 to 15 of this report details the events in connection with the CCfA thus far. In light of the Executive Member's revised decision Members may wish to consider whether this decision (paragraph 15 refers) in any way affects this Committee's original wish to proceed with the CCfA. Should Members choose to still proceed with the CCfA then they will need to agree a remit.

21. At a meeting of Economic and City Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 12th August 2009 Members agreed the focus of the review (Paragraph 4 of this report refers) but did not discuss a defined remit and key objectives. Whilst the information in paragraph 4 was sufficient to enable the task group to undertake the urgent preparation of comments in relation to the report being presented to the Executive Member for City Strategy, it is important that a clear remit is set before the review progresses any further.

22. A draft remit has, therefore, been prepared and is attached at Annex D to this report for Members to agree or amend, as they feel appropriate. It is advised that the Committee set a tight and focussed remit with clearly achievable key objectives to ensure clarity for the task group and the best outcome for the review.
23. Councillor Scott has expressed his views at paragraph 17 of this report. In light of this and the draft remit at Annex D to this report, Members may like to consider which parts of the remit they would like to work on first and which to leave to a later date (after 1st December).
24. If Members agree to the continuation of the review, the Task Group would need to spend their next meeting scoping and timetabling the review and in light of the nature of the problems being experienced this should probably include a site visit and a meeting with local residents.

Corporate Strategy 2009/12

25. Although this topic does not directly fall in line with any of the themes in the Corporate Strategy 2009/12, the Scrutiny Committee still has an obligation to address the issues raised within the formally registered CCfA.

Implications

26. **Financial** – There is a small amount of funding available within the scrutiny budget to carry out reviews. There are no other financial implications associated with the recommendations within this report; however implications may arise during the course of the review.
27. **Human Resources** - There are no Human Resources implications associated with the recommendations within this report.
28. **Legal** – There are no direct legal implications associated with the recommendations within this report; however a local resident has mentioned the Land Compensation Act as a potential issue in this matter and this will need further investigation as part of any review.
29. There are no known equalities, property, crime & disorder or other implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

Risk Management

30. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy there are no risks associated with the recommendations in this report; however risks may become apparent as any review progresses.

Recommendations

31. Members are recommended to:

- i. Consider whether the CCfA is still 'live' in light of the decisions that have been made since the last full meeting of this Committee and if so;
- ii. Agree/amend the draft remit at Annex D to this report

Reason: In order to progress this review.

Contact Details

Author:

Tracy Wallis
Scrutiny Officer
Scrutiny Services
Tel: 01904 551714

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Quentin Baker
Head of Civic, Legal & Democratic Services
Tel: 01904 551004

Report Approved

Date 17.09.2009

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

None

Wards Affected: Clifton Ward

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

- Annex A** Task Group Comments to the Executive Member
Annex B Report to the Executive Member (1st September 2009)
Annex C Comments prepared by Cllr Scott for the Executive Member
Annex D Draft Remit

Membership of Task Group

Councillor Holvey
Councillor Potter
Councillor D'Agorne