West Itchenor Parish Council

Minutes of an extraordinary Meeting of West Itchenor Parish Council held on Thursday 21st July 2016 in Itchenor Memorial Hall.

Present: Mr G Colbourne, Mr C Mead-Briggs, Mr A Spencer (Chairman)
Mr C Watson

In attendance: Mrs C Smith (Clerk), Mr G Barrett (CDC), Mrs E Hamilton (CDC)
6 members of public

72/16C Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and suggested that the Council look at the plans one by one to see how they affect residents in Itchenor.

73/16C Questions/comments from members of the public.

A resident expressed concern that the plans were covering all traffic and if the overpasses were just for cars they would not need to be quite so high and that perhaps tunnels would have been better.
It was explained that it was not possible to put in tunnels as large areas were within flood zones 2 and 3 and therefore there was a danger that they would be unusable due to flooding in the winter months quite apart from the costs involved in maintaining them.

There was also concern that almost all of the options would create rat runs. There appeared to be an assumption that residents on the Peninsula only wanted to travel to Chichester, it did not look like it would be simple to get to Portsmouth or Brighton.

74/16C A27 Improvement consultation.

Councillors were reminded that the task was to look for the best outcome for residents and the village.

Mr Barrett gave an update on the traffic figures; 42% is through traffic, 10% local traffic and 48% vehicles travelling from outside of the area into Chichester or from Chichester to outside of the area.

<u>Option 1</u>
Shows Fishbourne having a graded flyover where it would be simple to get on and off the A27 at this point.
Both Whyke and Stockbridge will have no right turns coming onto or off the Peninsula. It was known that Highways England have not included traffic to West Wittering beach in the model. It was difficult to understand how people were going to get to the beach from the A27.
It was noted that westbound traffic having flown over Fishbourne would still have to stop at the Stockbridge and Whyke junctions. No consideration seemed to have been given to the Whitehouse Farm development with 1600 homes feeding into the Fishbourne junction.
The only way down to the beach will be through Apuldram.
No consideration seemed to have been given to the relocation of the Free School to the B2145 at Hunston just below the Whyke junction.
At the Bognor junction there would also be a graded flyover but again traffic travelling east would come to a stop at the Whyke and Stockbridge junctions.
It was suggested that the lights at Oving were important to allow traffic onto the Portfield estate. There was also need to take into account that permission had been given for a new supermarket and industrial estate on the Bognor Road.

The Portfield junction is mostly unchanged bar a new pedestrian bridge. It was noted that just north of this junction there was now a larger retail park and additional housing proposed.

It was agreed that Option 1 was unacceptable.

Option 1A

The main difference was the retention of the Stockbridge and Whyke roundabouts. There were no foreseeable gains for through traffic as it would still queue at the Stockbridge and Whyke junctions. There would be a small benefit in that any beach traffic would not be forced through Chichester or Apuldram. Given that there was not a great deal of difference to the current situation this option appeared expensive.

Option 2

It was suggested that option 2 was outside budget. Councillors were advised that the projected costs were just outside the median figure in the economic appraisal. This option had the second highest benefit to cost ratio.

This option included a new link road from Hunston to the Fishbourne junction. There was concern that traffic wanting to travel east would have to contend with going through North Mundham which was a narrow and windy route. It was noted that Highways England have not considered this aspect of the route.

There was some consideration as to how HGV's coming from Selsey would get onto the A27 under this proposal and it was felt that on the whole they would likely use the link road to get to Fishbourne before turning right onto the A27.

It was reported that the link road would sit on the boundary of the AONB and that the Conservancy were not keen for this option. There was a consensus that although perhaps not desirable the new link road would provide a benefit that outweighed any disadvantages of being close to the AONB.

There was still concern about how children would get to the new Free School in Hunston given there would be no direct access on or off the A27 at the Whyke junction.

A resident questioned why there were no options that involved the use of smart traffic lights. The response was that the technology was not yet that advanced.

Mr Barrett suggested that the link road may lead to additional housing. It was suggested that the link road was a greater benefit and that the land around it was in potential flood zones which may preclude any housing around it.

Option 3

Fishbourne roundabout becomes a hamburger junction controlled by lights. There are no right turns at both the Stockbridge and Whyke junctions. This was not considered acceptable for housing or the new school. The Bognor junction would be controlled by lights. No changes were planned to the Portfield junction despite new housing. It was suggested that with lights at Bognor and Fishbourne there would still be issues for vehicles travelling along the A27.

It was suggested that the economic analysis in the documentation destroys the case for option 3 although this was at odds with what is on the summary sheet.

Option 3a

This option had lights at Fishbourne, no right turns at Stockbridge and Whyke and a flyover at Bognor. The issues raise for option 3 were applicable to option 3a.

It was suggested that if the choice was simply one of the five options then option 2 was probably the best of the options presented.

Mr Barrett suggested that if people were encouraged to choose none of the options and state what their preferred choice would be then Highways England would have to go back to the Minister and that doing nothing was also an option.
Cllr Mead-Briggs responded that Highways England had a sum of money allocated in the budget specifically marked for this project. Government wants a ready to go project. If it is proposed that any of these options are changed the project simply won't go ahead.
Mr Barrett replied that they have been told the budget is £250 million. £20 million of this is coming from local councils. Therefore, Highways England budget is £230 million which is greater than the proposed budget for option 2. He reiterated the case for a northern bypass.
Cllr Mead-Briggs stated that they have put option 2 on the table and that other funds would be available. If it was not affordable it would not have come forward. Page 59 of the background documentation states why the norther bypass had been dropped.

Winding up the discussions on the options presented the Chairman asked whether the Parish Council wanted to make a recommendation to residents. It was agreed that it was appropriate for the Parish Council to take a leadership role; Councillors had taken considerable time looking at the issues in depth.

There was a suggestion that the Chichester District Association of Local Councils (CDALC) and Peninsula Forum meetings could look at the options and get a consensus from parishes on the peninsula. If all the parishes had come to the same conclusion then perhaps consideration should be given to relaying this to residents across the peninsula.

Consideration was given to supporting a proposed leaflet to go to all households on the peninsula. Mr Barrett reported that the majority of parishes had supported the proposal but that Selsey Town Council was being unresponsive. He highlighted the requirement for the leaflet to be neutral.
RESOLVED that the Parish Council would support the proposal to issue a leaflet to households on the peninsula at a cost to the Parish Council of £17.00

The Parish Council agreed that this was a complicated issue and that most people would not have the time to look at this in detail. If the Parish Council as elected representatives had looked at the proposals in detail and recommended Option 2 people may respond to this.

Mr Barrett advised that the District Council had now agreed to hold a workshop for officers and members where they would be able to put forward their views. The County Council was also going to follow this.

The Parish Council and residents were encouraged to attend the exhibitions and to ask questions.

There was support from residents at the meeting to put forward a recommendation. It was very important there is as much support as possible.

It was agreed that the A27 improvement consultation would be raised by Councillors at the forthcoming CDALC meeting.

It was agreed that the Parish Council would hold another meeting later in August once it was known whether there was a consensus from other parishes on the best of the available options.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the Meeting closed at 4.50pm

Signed_____Date_____
Chairman