

Subject: Army and Navy Taskforce

Meeting Date: Monday 10 December 2018, 9am, County Hall Chelmsford

Participants:

Cllr Kevin Bentley
Cllr Dick Madden
Vicky Ford MP
Cllr Roy Whitehead
Cllr Jenny Chandler
Cllr Peter Sadowsky

Apologies:

Cllr John Spence

Notes

1 **Introductions from Cllr Kevin Bentley (KB)**

2 **Presentation**

The Taskforce was presented with three possible approaches. It was emphasised that no options have been designed and further exploration of ideas would continue.

Ideas brought up by the Taskforce included enlarging the roundabout, a through-about and a third park and ride for Chelmsford.

Next Steps

We follow the Department for Transport (DfT) requirements even when not applying for DfT funding because it is a robust process.

The next steps of the Taskforce are to:

- Agree objectives for the junction
- Present communications strategy at the next meeting.

3 **Discussion**

Cllr Dick Madden (DM) asked if any of the ideas been modelled?

It was noted that some had been looked at in previous studies dating back to 2010 however we would not rely on that and would carry out new studies with up to date data.

DM noted that it should be an objective of the Taskforce to ensure the free flow throughout Chelmsford is enhanced and developed. It has been a pinch point for many years.

DM also cautioned that some of the ideas may move the problems down to the next roundabout (Odeon Roundabout).

Cllr Roy Whitehead (RW) noted that the Army and Navy would improve capacity toward the Odeon Roundabout however this is not included in the ideas. **RW** suggested a double junction strategy. He also suggested to investigate the option of having a flyover between Van Diemens Road and the Chelmer Valley Road.

Meeting Minutes

KB stated that if we only continue building roads for more cars we will be back in the same situation soon. We need sustainability, possible bus lane/park and ride/electric vehicles. Thinking of the long-term future.

The **Taskforce** was told again that nothing had been eliminated and that certain ideas may come up against engineering issues. The ripple affect across the whole of Chelmsford of any idea is a key consideration.

Vicky Ford MP (VF) set out her thoughts following the presentation.

VF stated that doing nothing is not an option.

VF noted that when the flyover was closed in the summer it caused significant delays across the city.

Other observations were:

- Would like a better idea of how long we have before we come up with a solution.
- Would prefer to “think big” and long term. Not just for the next decade but for future decades.
- Believes we do need to add capacity. Not encouraging individuals to use more cars, however, increase in housing in the area will bring more cars.
- Need additional sustainable transport anyway – not as an alternative to extra capacity.
- Unlocking the Army and Navy junction is key to adding capacity to all Chelmsford network, and the wider region. This is the key pinch point.
- We should think of the bigger picture – don’t be put off by the longer delivery dates or potential third-party requirements – if we need to do that for the right solution we should.
- Any solution must involve an inclusive communications strategy. Using inclusive solutions which don’t leave areas of the city feeling excluded.
- A through-route has really improved the capacity in Harlow – but is there enough room to achieve this?

KB agreed with inclusivity of the project and trying to take a long-term solution. **KB** noted that when we go to the public we need to be clear what we are trying to achieve and why.

This conversation needs to start early, as soon as we have agreed what we want to achieve.

KB stated that this issue is about the whole city and beyond – the growth of surrounding areas is also part of the issue not just Chelmsford.

VF raised the topic of funding.

VF referenced the Large Local Majors Fund which is there to bid into beyond 2020.

VF requested that officers to draft a letter of key points to make to the minister which would include - key options, size of the project, key costs. **VF** could then establish where we could apply for funding.

Cllr Peter Sadowsky (PS) observed that the “magic roundabout” in Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire worked very well and could be a consideration. **PS** also shared a concern about patronage of Chelmsford’s Park and Ride.

Meeting Minutes

Cllr Jenny Chandler (JC) endorsed the need to cater for increased traffic. Cars are not going to go away especially with the new developments, we cannot just use sustainable measures.

KB agreed we need to look at the issues of more cars coming with more houses.

VF agreed with a combination of new infrastructure and sustainable transport measures was needed

It was noted to the **Taskforce** that any capacity improvements may have to be replicated all over the city, however this is unlikely. It was also noted that the Army and Navy's use as a through-route for traffic could be relieved by other concurrent schemes such as; the Chelmsford Bypass, the Chelmsford City Growth Package, and Beaulieu Station. These developments have the potential for a change in habits and new routes.

DM noted that during school holidays the traffic in the area moves much better.

It was acknowledged that this is due to an 8% change in traffic and that is all that is needed for the traffic to flow and relieve congestion.

VF noted that the Chelmsford area is currently building 20% more houses than we have at the moment so how does this connect with the 8% change you say is needed. Because of this we will need greater capacity.

The date of the next task force will be set for the end of January/beginning of February.