

Minutes of the Meeting of the Strategy Committee Held in the Community Office at 8pm on Tuesday 27th April 2010

Present:

Councillors:

David Tindale – Chairman
Ian Hill – Vice-Chairman
Rhian Woods
Barry Adby
Tony Williamson
Roger Beattie

Officer:

Kristina Tynan

Members of the Public: 1

31/10 Apologies for absence

Angie Paterson, Charles Rowton-Lee, Angie Paterson, Ted Backhouse, David Shannon.

32/10 Minutes of the Strategy Meeting held on 23rd March 2010 received by Council 13/4/2010 to be signed as a correct record.

Resolved: That these minutes are a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

33/10 Declaration of Interests

There were none.

34/10 Matters Arising

Watlington Speaks – the small informal meeting with representatives of the Parish Council and representative from the Watlington Speaks Committee to discuss ideas for the best way forward to a Full Parish Plan will take place as soon as possible.

35/10 Short Discussion Items

SODC – Further Assessment of Air Quality in Watlington – *Paper was attached to the Agenda.*

David Tindale reported that he has read through this document which is very technical.

The problem with the centre of Watlington is that it is mostly terraced with very few breaks in the housing. It was thought it was difficult to see how this paper will move things on. The recommendations in the paper are for SODC to undertake the following actions, in respect of the findings for the statutory objectives relating to annual mean nitrogen dioxide.

1. Retain the existing AQMA and undertake consultation on the findings arising from this

report with the statutory and other consultees as required.

2. Extend its monitoring into Brook Street to check the findings of this report and amend the AQMA, as necessary.
3. Use the results of the source apportionment work in this report to identify potential actions that will enable the Council to work towards improving air quality.
4. Maintain the current NO₂ monitoring capability within the Watlington AQMA.

It was noted that HGV's are not the main culprit just that emissions are worse when they are standing. If all traffic in the centre of town was free flowing there may be less of a problem. There was a suggestion that possibly Vehicle Number Plate recognition equipment could be used to identify vehicles potentially in breach of the weight limit. It was also noted that the date included in this report is over 15 months old. Mention was made of the OCC Relief Road which is in the 2016 plan.

Resolved: That we contact SODC regarding what they see as the next step on this issue and ask for their comments regarding the possibility of moving the Industrial Site to the MOD site, which would stop the necessity of a lot of the HGV's entering the centre of the town.

2. Management Plan Review for Aston Rowant National Nature Reserve – They would like to know the views of Watlington Parish Council – *Paper was attached to the Agenda.*

Resolved: That we support their 5 aims:-

1. The reserve should continue to have open public access and free public events.
2. The reserve should first and foremost be a facility for local people to enjoy.
3. Priority should be given to retaining the unspoilt character of the landscape.
4. Continued effort should be made to integrate the nature reserve with local community groups and facilities such as the local Churches and Schools.
5. Natural England should continue to see opportunities to expand the nature reserve and increase the accessibility of the local area.

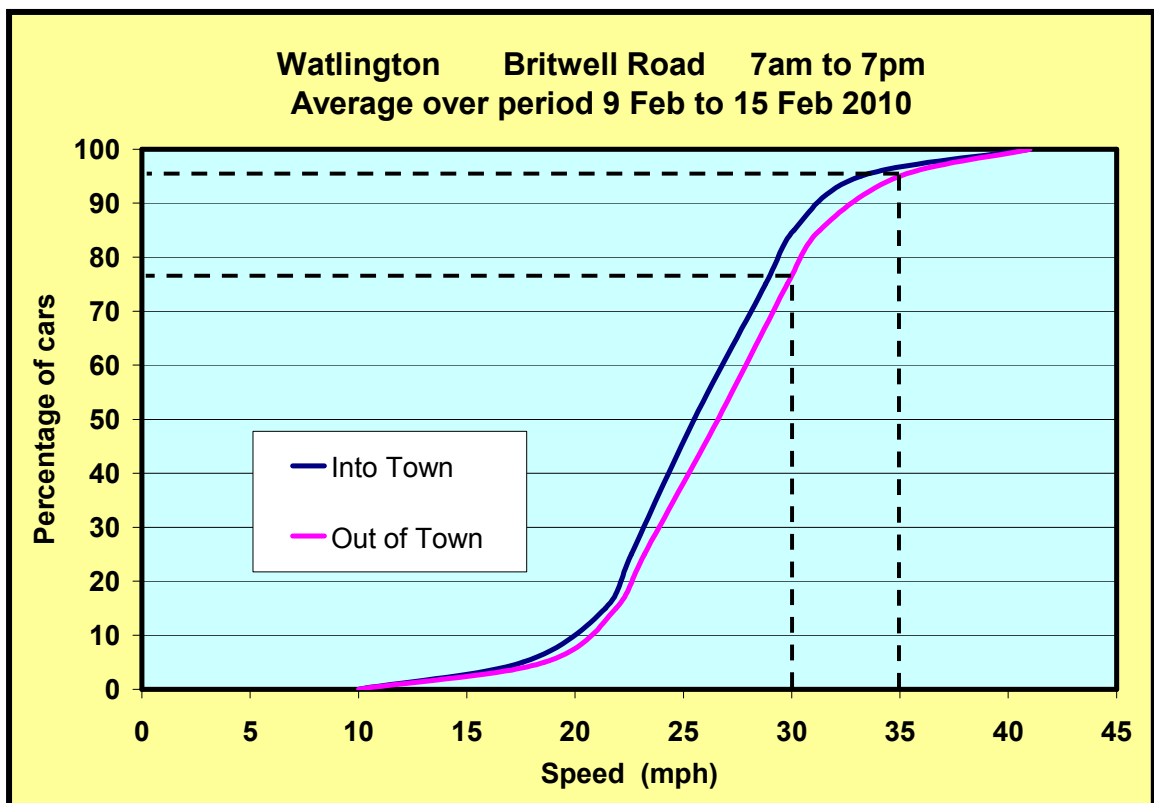
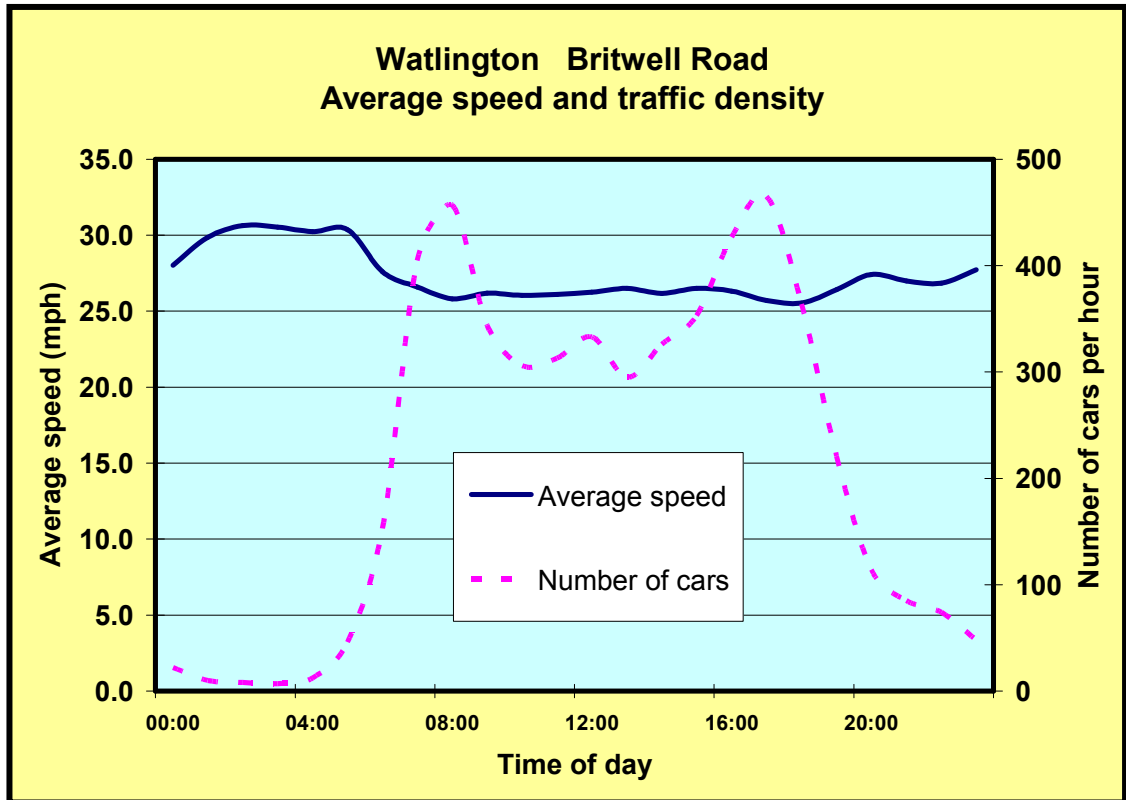
36/10 Main Topics for Discussion

1. Survey Traffic data from Britwell Road and Christmas Common (OCC) – A presentation given by Ian Hill and David Tindale

Following complaints from residents about speeding on the Britwell Road and on the dangers to pedestrians near the Goggs. WPC asked both the Police and OCC to monitor speeds. The police have done several sessions using a speed camera and OCC placed a speed monitor box in this area which records speeds of all cars entering and leaving the town for 24 hours a day for a period of 1 week (9/2/10-15/2/10). Monitoring was also done at the same time at Christmas Common. It was very interesting to look at the 24 hour pattern of speeds. The results are quite striking. The data shows that for Britwell Road that 80% of cars are doing less than 30mph and 95% of cars are doing less than 35mph. The average speed is 27 miles per hour, which confirms the Police figures. Although it can be argued that the presence of uniformed police will itself reduce average speeds, this will not be the case with the technology used for the OCC monitoring which consists of a small box mounted alongside the road and is completely unnoticeable to drivers.

It was suggested that the impression of speed of the passing traffic results from how close the traffic is to pedestrians and the lack of space for getting further from the traffic because of the narrowness of the pavements. It was stated that in one area the white lines were removed from the middle of the road and this was very successful – Peter Ronald, OCC Traffic Engineer did suggest this for Britwell Road but it was not implemented.

At Christmas Common 65% of cars were doing 35mph or less. It was stated that it is incumbent on people to obey the speed limit. It was noted that the Neighbourhood Action Group has speeding in a rural area as coming up as the main issue in these areas. Graphs are over the page.



Thanks were given to Ian Hill for his work on this issue.

Resolved: That we put an article on this information into the Watlington Times. David Tindale and Ian Hill to draft it. That we also ask people to write to us telling us what their basic fears are as it is clearly not speed alone that is the problem.

2. Gates to the Entrances to the Town – This has been discussed by the Operations Committee at their April meeting.

A survey had been done of all the gates and their condition and feedback has been received from residents and the Police. The Business Association have suggested that they sponsor sleeves on the gates in which advertisements could be placed. OCC have also suggested putting the Watlington signs on the gates. These issues to be discussed once the gates are renovated. It was commented that the gates marked the entrance to the town and may alert drivers to entering a 30mph area.

Resolved: That we agree to keep the gates in situ, apart from the one by the Care Home on Hill Road and the middle gate in Christmas Common. Quotations to be sought on repairing and repainting the ones to remain. This to be an agenda item for the May meeting when costings are known.

3. Watlington Distinctiveness – Update

Nothing further to report at this time.

37/10 Items for Future Meetings

Refer to Forward Plan – latest update given out at Full Council March Meeting.

New items to be added:

May – Gates, Watlington Distinctiveness

Future items: NERC Act – Presentation by Watlington Environment Group.

38/10 Correspondence

Mrs Davies – Church Street(formally gas works) – copy of letter sent to SODC – Attached

Resolved: That we urge SODC to come to a conclusion on this issue.

39/10 Any Other Business to note – Items to be notified to the Clerk in advance of the meeting.

Watlington in Bloom – Re-launch of this group on Wednesday 28th April – It would be appreciated if some Councillors could attend this. There will be a presentation by the Chairman of Thames and Chiltern in Bloom. Everyone who responded positively to this question in the Watlington Speaks exercise has received an invitation.

Keith Lane – Tony Williamson reported that he had visited Keith Lane and that he now has some movement back in his legs. He stated that he is very happy to see visitors and suggested that if any Councillors have a bit of time to drop in and see him.

Toilets for the Recreation Ground – Due to fall levels in the car park it is longer possible to put up a temporary toilet block in the Recreation Ground. It would therefore be a much better idea to put in a permanent toilet. It was agreed that the Youth Club and Pavilion Committee draw up a plan and obtain some ideas for costings. It was noted that the Football Foundation would need to be written to.

SODC Grants – They have grants up to £400,000 to be applied for.

It was thought it may be appropriate to apply for a grant for the proposed toilets in the Recreation Ground if the timing is right.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.49PM

