



EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD BY ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE

In accordance with (The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020)

Present: Councillors;

Tony Allen, Annette Dunning, Peter Dutton, Anne Fleming, Karen Prime, Jill Reece, Maureen Took, David Wollweber (Chair).

In Attendance: Nick Rees (Town Clerk, County & District Cllr Tony Goldson

Minutes

1. Apologies: Cllrs; R Lewis, D Thomas, J Wagner
2. Declarations of interest: To receive declarations for pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests: Cllr K Prime for a general interest in the Thoroughfare.
3. Feedback on the Road Closure implemented on 20/07/20: To consider the feedback obtained from businesses and residents for the temporary road closure in the Thoroughfare and Bridge Street. Cllrs Dunning and Reece had both conducted a questionnaire; Cllr Reece had asked 31 shopkeepers and 30 pedestrians over the last week and Cllr Dunning had asked 96 different people including many cyclists over the past two weeks. The result was that the overwhelming majority were in favour of the current temporary road closure and would also support an extension of the road closure for a further 21 days. It was noted that the Clerk had not managed to speak to the residents but it was agreed that this would be undertaken as soon as possible.
4. Road Closure extension options for the Thoroughfare and Bridge Street.

The TTRN will initially be in force for 21 days (20th July – 9th August) but can be extended by a further 21 days. During this period, the Town Council will have to consider what restrictions it feels will be necessary once the maximum period for the TTRNs has expired. The options are:

- a. Extend the Road Closure. It was RESOLVED that the Council would ask for an extension of the temporary road closure for a further 21 days until the 30th August.
- b. Remove the current temporary restrictions; Monday to Saturday 10am – 2pm. This option was not considered.

The Clerk explained that the next two options would need to be considered before the end of the second temporary road closure period, i.e. before 30th August. It was unclear how either option would work in practice but Carl Ashton - Transport Policy and Development Manager for Suffolk County Council had indicated that a longer extension or permanent change to the traffic order would involve changes to the signage only and it would not be manned. It would therefore be left to drivers to adhere to the restrictions and hopefully East Suffolk Council and/or the Police would enforce it. Alternatively, the Clerk had since obtained options on an automatic bollard system and also an automatic barrier system, both being capable of being operated via fobs. The latter option could be hired for £37.50 per day after an initial set up cost of £3,750 or could also be purchased for £20,625. The

automatic bollard could be purchased for approximately £10k but there would be groundworks costs to add on top which would probably double the cost. Cllr Goldson had suggested that training could be given to volunteers to provide the necessary certification for gatekeeping duties however Cllr Dunning had already looked at this option and the training was currently unavailable. The Council considered the following options:-

- c. If the Town Council is content that the scheme as implemented under the TTRN should continue as is (or with modifications), the County Council will promote a TTRO (Temporary Traffic Regulation Order) which lasts up to 18 months.
- d. However, if the Town Council wants to make the TTRN arrangement permanent, the County Council could promote an Experimental TRO which also lasts up to 18 months. During that period, the experiment would be monitored; the County Council would consider any comments within the first 6 months and decide if it becomes a permanent Order.

There followed a debate about whether the restrictions could be made permanent in practical terms and whether this was an opportunity to look at improving the Thoroughfare in the longer term or whether this was merely the necessary actions to enable safe shopping due to the Covid-19 epidemic and that it should then revert back to normal. The favoured option on the night (but no vote was taken) appeared to be extending a temporary closure for a further 18 months and then reviewing it at the end of that period. It was clear that the Council needed to obtain more feedback on this proposal and it was especially important to consult with all the residents as this would affect their properties. It was RESOLVED that the Council would undertake the necessary consultation and then arrange for another extraordinary meeting at the end of August to decide on these options. Cllrs Dunning, Prime, Reece and the Clerk would arrange to carry out the consultation between them.

5. Signage: To review whether the current signage provided by SCC Highways is adequate. The Clerk reported that as there had been two separate road closures running at the same time this had caused some confusion. However, since the road closure at the other end of the Thoroughfare had now been cleared away the diversion signs now made more sense. However, there was still a lack of signage to forewarn drivers of the temporary road closure at Bridge Street and no signage to show that deliveries could be made via the Thoroughfare car park despite several emails requesting this by the Clerk. It was then RESOLVED that the Clerk would ask for these signs again and if they were not supplied he would purchase them directly from another source. It was unclear whether the Town Council technically had the necessary authority to position the signs on the highway but it was agreed this was a necessary action to take under the circumstances.
6. Correspondence: The Chair reported that he and the Clerk had visited the park to look at suitable locations for a new communal seating area and also to consider any different options for lighting times in the park. This matter was not considered at the meeting but the Chair invited councillors to visit the park as he would be interested in their views.
7. Items for the Website/Noticeboard/Newsletters/Library. The news about the agreement to extend the temporary road closure for a further 21 days would be posted on the usual media outlets.

The meeting was closed at 18.53pm