



Scrutiny Transport Panel

Minutes of a meeting of the **Scrutiny Transport Panel** held in the **Ditchling Room, Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes**, on **Monday, 15 January 2018** at 10:00am.

Present:

Councillors P Gardiner (Chair), J Carter, N Enever, R O’Keeffe MBE and J Peterson.

Officers Present:

A Thatcher, Head of Planning

T Thom, Policy Planning Lead

J Victory, Scrutiny Officer

In Attendance:

One member of the public

V Carrick, A259 Action Group

L O’Connor, A259 Action Group

R Shepherd, A259 Action Group

Councillor S Catlin, Lewes District Council

Councillor D Neave, Lewes District Council

Councillor R Robertson, Lewes District Council

	Minutes	Action
5	Minutes The minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.	
6	Apology for Absence/Declaration of Substitute Member An apology for absence had been received from Councillor V Ient. Councillor R O’Keeffe declared that she was substituting for Councillor V Ient.	

7 Scrutiny Panel Review of Transport

The Scrutiny Transport Panel received an external report from the A259 Action Group, which informed the continuing debate in relation to the A259, and invited discussion relating to traffic surveys, improvements and alternative modes of transport.

The A259 Action Group tabled additional information at the meeting, and a copy of which is contained in the Minute Book.

A presentation was received from the A259 Action Group and the Panel's attention was drawn to the A259 Action Group's objectives, namely:

- (1) To highlight to Councillors and Council Officers the need to focus upon infrastructure improvements along the coastal strip from Brighton Marina to Newhaven; and
- (2) To ensure adequate data and options were available before any decisions were made.

Topics covered by the presentation included:

- The Big Petition which was presented to Brighton & Hove City Council, East Sussex County Council and Lewes District Council signed by over 17,000 people;
- Anomalies regarding congestion along the A259, and the lack of recent queue count/traffic count/turning count data, and the interpretation of it;
- Outdated baseline data and its effect on strategic planning assumptions and link/junction planning assumptions;
- Discrepancies between the Department for Transport's road capacity guidelines and actual bus lane data.
- Spare capacity on buses which exists in peak times despite the increase in bus usage.

Members' discussion included:

- Identifying anomalies in the Actual Vehicle Count on page 7 of the report, and enquiring why East Sussex County Council had not investigated those further.
- Enquiring as to whether there was any evidence of the community becoming dissatisfied with local bus services and using alternative modes of transport as a result of congestion. However, the A259 Action group informed members that bus operating companies considered information about passengers/routes to be commercially sensitive and therefore that information was not available to the public.
- If there was a way that the Transport Assessments which identify anticipated transport impacts of planning applications could be

investigated further by local members of Parliament.

- A request for more information with regard to what the National Planning Policy Framework defined as 'severe impact' to local infrastructure, and how that affected the perceived urgency of A259 improvements. Members noted that East Sussex County Council would be present at the next meeting of the Panel to offer clarification.
- Support for an economic and behavioural study into the A259, which could then provide a basis for constructive solutions regarding the congestion.
- A proposal by members that representatives of East Sussex County Council be invited to a future meeting of the Panel.

SO

Officers responded that:

- It was noted that a response could not be provided in respect of why East Sussex County Council had not investigated anomalies in the Actual Vehicle Count on page 7 of the report, as there was no representative from East Sussex County Council present at the meeting.
- The purpose of the planning application process was to make strategic allocations based on the evidence that was provided and scrutinised by experts. Members were reminded that they could attend public consultations in respect of the Local Plan Part 2, in order to view the efficiency of the scrutiny process.

Resolved:

1. That the Scrutiny Transport Panel extends an invitation to East Sussex County Council to contribute towards its discussion with regard to the A259.

SO

Reason:

To comply with the Scrutiny Panel's right to invite people outside of the Council to address the Panel, discuss issues of local concern and/or answer questions as stated in the Council's Constitution with regard to the Attendance by Others (Part 4, rule 15).

The meeting ended at 11:35am.

P Gardiner
Chair