

## CALL-IN SUB COMMITTEE

3 NOVEMBER 2004

Chair: \* Councillor Mitzi Green

Councillors: \* Blann (1) Osborn  
\* Jean Lammiman \* Thammaiah

\* Denotes Member present  
(1) Denotes category of Reserve Member

[Note: Councillors Bluston and Mrs Kinnear also attended this meeting to speak on the item indicated at Minute 39 below].

**PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL****PART II - MINUTES**33. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

**RESOLVED:** To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:-

<u>Ordinary Member</u>	<u>Reserve Member</u>
Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan	Councillor Blann

34. **Declarations of Interest:**

**RESOLVED:** To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members present in relation to the business to be transacted at this meeting.

35. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

**RESOLVED:** That (1) all items be considered with the press and public present; and

(2) in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, this meeting be called with less than 5 clear working days' notice by virtue of the special circumstances and grounds for urgency stated below:-

Special Circumstances/Grounds for Urgency: Under Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 22.6, a meeting of the Call-in Sub-Committee must be held within 7 clear working days of the receipt of a request for call-in. This meeting therefore had to be arranged at short notice and it was not possible to publish the agenda 5 clear working days prior to the meeting.

36. **Minutes:**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2004, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

37. **Protocol for the Operation of the Call-in Sub-Committee:**

**RESOLVED:** That the protocol be noted.

38. **Protocol for Handling Decisions Referred Back by the Call-in Sub-Committee:**

**RESOLVED:** That the protocol be noted.

39. **Call-In of Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder Decision: Proposed Pelican Crossing in Station Road South of its Junction with Gayton Road, Harrow:**

Members considered a decision of the Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder dated 18 October 2004 to introduce a pelican crossing in Station Road, Harrow, and to remove the restriction preventing taxis from turning right from Gayton Road into Station Road, which decision had been referred to the Sub-Committee under the call-in procedure. The Sub-Committee received the notice invoking the call-in procedure, the record of the Portfolio Holder's decision, and the report to the Portfolio Holder on which the decision had been based. A statement from the Portfolio Holder was also tabled at the meeting.

The decision had been called in on two grounds: inadequate consultation with

stakeholders prior to the decision, and the absence of adequate evidence on which to base a decision.

A Member representing the signatories to the call-in notice was invited to put the case for the call-in of the decision. She clarified that the call-in related only to the introduction of the pelican crossing, not to the removal of the right-turn restriction for taxis. With regard to the grounds for the call-in, she stated that it appeared that consultation had only been carried out with businesses and not with residents. She also felt that there was inadequate evidence for the decision as the street audit which had identified the need for the crossing had taken place in 2001, and there did not appear to have been any more recent investigations into this issue. In addition, she felt that there was no evidence to suggest that other options to improve safety and access for pedestrians at the southerly entrance to the town centre had been explored.

Upon being invited to respond, officers advised that consultation on the crossing had been undertaken with a number of bodies, as detailed in paragraph 7 of the report to the Portfolio Holder and paragraph 5 of the Portfolio Holder's statement. The practice with regard to pelican crossings was to consult statutory consultees, such as road user groups and the emergency services, and all premises within 50m to 100m of the proposed crossing; it was those premises which would be directly affected by the effects of a crossing, namely the restriction of parking, the noise of the beeping, and the congregation of pedestrians at that location. In this case, there were no residential properties in the vicinity of the crossing and the premises consulted had therefore been businesses. That notwithstanding, officers had sent the consultation papers to the local residents' association, but had had no reply.

With regard to the evidence for the decision, the street audit which had identified the need for the crossing had been carried out in 2001, but there had also been a technical assessment to justify the proposal which was much more recent; the surveys undertaken as part of that assessment had been carried out in 2003 and 2004. Consideration had also been given to other options: it had not been considered acceptable to do nothing to improve safety or pedestrian facilities; a zebra crossing had been considered inappropriate as this could result in longer delays for traffic and vulnerable pedestrians may have had difficulty in establishing precedence over traffic; and a signalled junction had been considered unnecessarily complex.

In response to Members' questions, further details of the organisations and premises which had been consulted were provided. There was some concern that local schools had not been consulted, and also that the report to the Portfolio Holder gave the impression that consultation documents had been sent to individual residents. It was reiterated that all the premises which would be physically affected by the crossing were businesses; for this reason only the local residents' association had been consulted. It was also pointed out that if officers were required to consult users of the road on which the crossing would be located, it would be difficult to determine who should be consulted and who should not.

The Member representing the signatories to the call-in expressed concern that the crossing may cause traffic to back-up in front of properties in Grove Road. Officers considered, however, that while traffic may back-up that far occasionally, it would not happen very often as the volume of traffic on Station Road was not that great. The Member also queried why it had not been proposed to site the crossing in Gayton Road. It was advised that the location of the crossing had been dictated by sight lines - motorists would not have had sufficient forward visibility of the crossing if it had been situated elsewhere in the vicinity - and that it was also ideally situated for the route that most pedestrians wanted to take.

A Ward Member who was present commented that he would have liked to have received more detailed information about the proposal, along the lines of that produced for other traffic schemes, and also suggested that the consultation could have been wider, for example to include residents of Gayton Road. He added, however, that over the years a number of members of the public had asked for a pelican crossing to be introduced at that location.

The Sub-Committee discussed the validity of the grounds for the call-in. Members felt that there was adequate evidence for the decision, and that the proposal had been well researched. It was also noted that there had been no objections to the proposed crossing, and that anecdotal evidence suggested that it would be welcomed. However, while the reasoning behind the consultation process was recognised, it was suggested that the consultation could have been slightly wider to ensure that the views of road

users were represented. Members also felt that the consultation could have been more creative, for example to include the use of one-off surveys of pedestrians at the location of the proposed crossing, the community noticeboards, notices on lamp-posts or the local library. In addition, it was suggested that more detailed information could have been sent to Ward Members.

It was therefore agreed that the grounds for the call-in be rejected and the decision be implemented. In order to address the issues around consultation, it was also agreed that the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel be requested to consider whether, for proposals subject to traffic orders in the town centre, the consultation process should be widened, different methods of consultation should be employed, and more detailed information should be provided to Ward Members.

**RESOLVED:** That (1) the grounds for the call-in be rejected and the decision be implemented; and

(2) the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel be requested to consider the changes to the consultation process recommended above for proposals subject to traffic orders in the town centre.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 6.09 pm, closed at 7.14 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MITZI GREEN  
Chair