

# Supplementary Agenda



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Date: 25 July 2022  
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## An informal meeting of **Scrutiny Committee members** will be held on Tuesday, 2 August 2022 at 7.00 pm **VIRTUAL MEETING**

This meeting will be live streamed. You can watch live at the following link  
<https://www.youtube.com/c/SouthandValeCommitteeMeetings>

**Alternative formats of this publication are available on request. These include large print, Braille, audio, email and easy read. For this or any other special requirements (such as access facilities) please contact the officer named on this agenda. Please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.**

Patrick Arran  
Head of Legal and Democratic

# Agenda

## Open to the Public including the Press

### 8. A34 diversions update

(Pages 3 - 21)

Officers will provide an update on progress regarding A34 diversions.

The papers are ordered as follows:

- A34 paper July 2022
- Maps 4, 5 and 6
- A34 previous paper from November 2021
- Minutes of the meeting in November 2021

# Scrutiny Committee



Report of Head of Policy and Programmes

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Wards affected: Wantage Charlton

Vale Cabinet member responsible: Cllr Debby Hallett

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To: SCRUTINY

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> July 2022

## A34 diversion routing

### Purpose of Report

1. This paper has been prepared following presentation of this topic (A34 Diversions) at Vale Scrutiny Committee held on 25th November 2021. At this meeting National Highways and Oxfordshire County Council were requested to provide further information so that it could return to Scrutiny in the future.
2. In summary, the Council made the following requests for further information is provided below:
  - a. Risk assessment of diversions, including details of factors and issues considered
  - b. Appraisal of various options – Diversions and others
    - i. With cost benefit analysis with justification
    - ii. Evidence to show that this has happened
  - c. Schedule of road closures over time – dates, times, purpose (particularly for the past 5 years)
    - i. Specifically in order to identify what may have changed in the past 3 years
  - d. When complete, a copy of review work undergone for A34 diversions, which was indicated would be undertaken in 1-3 years
  - e. Consideration of contraflow
  - f. Earlier versions of diversion documents and any supporting documents
    - i. Which identify dates of when they were in place
  - g. When did night-time working start?
  - h. Strategies in place to minimise disruption

3. Vale Officers and County colleagues have sought clarification and further information on these requests from National Highways via email and during meetings on a number of occasions following the scrutiny committee. Some detail has been provided by National Highways, which is set out in the “Findings” section of this Paper.
4. Vale and County Officers met with two A34 Route Managers in a meeting held by National Highways on 7 July 2022 which was later rescheduled to 12 July 2022, due to non-attendances within the National Highways team.
5. The rescheduled meeting included employees from National Highways in network planning and the diversions teams. District and County officers sought to gain more insight into the items of information requested during the scrutiny committee meeting.
6. Summary of Meeting discussions:
  - a. National Highways employees indicated that diversion routeing is decided on a case by case basis. Thus the diversion routes included in the Background Papers attached to this Paper are for emergency closures, as opposed to planned closures. Vale Officers requested that the risk assessment and routes for example closures be shared with us.
  - b. National Highways employees indicated that are happy to discuss alternative route options for the diversions.
  - c. In terms of gaining a schedule of historical closures, National Highways indicated that this information was not readily available or easily accessible by National Highways employees, with all works along the entirety of the A34 grouped in one place. This highlights shortcomings of the National Highways system in reviewing impacts of individual sections of the network, including to review of regularity of diversions in specific locations and subsequent impact on local communities.

- d. National Highways employees indicated that there was no schedule for review of the A34 diversions in the vicinity of Wantage. Vale Officers highlighted that justification for review of the routes in the Wantage area is generated by the identified impact on local communities inherently highlighted here.
- e. National Highways employees indicated that further details could be sourced from other colleagues within the National Highways team within the “Service Delivery” team, who were not present during the meeting. National Highways employees will be contacting these individuals and will arrange a further meeting for County and Vale Officers to discuss these requests for information further. National Highway indicated that one month was needed to arrange this meeting.

## **Corporate Objectives**

- 7. Engagement with Oxfordshire County Council and National Highways supports the Corporate Plan 2020-2024 theme ‘Working in Partnership’.

## **Background**

- 8. In 2019 the A34 was subject to a series of night closures due to a construction project on the A34 at that time. These closures, which often operated between 10pm and 6am, re-routed traffic on to the A338 and the A417.
- 9. There are three separate re-routing arrangements for the A34. The northern most extends between Botley Interchange and Milton, there is a short diversion extending between Chilton and Milton Interchange, and finally a southern diversion between Chilton and Beedon. The former and latter both pass through Wantage, resulting in a heightened exposure to re-routed traffic.
- 10. Further background information can also be found in the previous Scrutiny Paper and Committee Meeting Notes on this matter, as listed in the Background Papers.

## Findings

11. Responses received from National Highways thus far have addressed or partly addressed the below requests:

- e. Consideration of contraflow
- h. Strategies in place to minimise disruption

### *Contraflow Measures*

12. Highways England employees have confirmed that introduction of contraflow as a management strategy to avoid use of diversions would require significant time and cost to implement and National Highways do not consider it to be an appropriate measure to undertake maintenance and short term works for a highway. Their reasoning is set out below.

13. Initially, implementing contraflow as a strategy to manage vehicular traffic requires significant ground and central reservation works to safely allow vehicles to cross over onto the other side of the carriageway. The central reservation for many major roads, including the A34, is designed with reinforced barriers to deflect vehicles from encroaching into the opposing flow of traffic in the event of a collision. Accordingly, the surface materials are not designed or maintained in a way for vehicles to easily pass across them. The materials used are designed to support a central barrier, which is concreted into the central reservation surface, and is dissimilar to the material used for the driving lanes.

14. In strategic locations removable central reservation posts (socketed posts with a temporary terminal) can be installed to support the provision of contraflow, this initially requires road surface changes and central barrier work, as described above. It is estimated that the works to initially implement a contraflow would cost in the region of £200,000. Following this, further highway preparation before and after the closure is required to ensure drivers understand the road layout changes during the contraflow.

15. To set up a contraflow, to ensure drivers do not enter the pre-determined work area, a range of measures are used to ensure highway safety for both drivers and works teams. These measures typically take 2-3 nights of work to implement. This is typically undertaken at night time, which is deemed to be the least disruptive time as it will impact fewer vehicles per hour. The measures required to implement a contraflow include: installation of relevant signage informing drivers how the road layout has changed, introduction and removal of reflective / painted lines on the ground to ensure drivers do not follow the existing lane markings, installation of lighting to ensure clear visibility of signage as well as the new barriers introduced for the contraflow, and finally removal of the existing central barrier and installation of a temporary protective barrier in a manner that will ensure highway safety is maintained at all times. This process would then be repeated in the reverse order to remove these measures once the works are complete.
16. National Highways introduced overnight closures for highway maintenance and works in order to reduce the number of vehicles impacted by road closures, and thus reduce the number of vehicles which would travel along the diversion routes during the day. Implementing a contraflow would reduce capacity on the road network during higher demands during the daytime and encourage drivers to divert onto minor roads during peak times.
17. As set out above, the range of works required to initially implement a contraflow, as well as operate an established contraflow arrangement, are practical for works that require road closures which extend over multiple days and nights, owing to the 4-6 night preparation and removal requirements.
18. Therefore, the type of highway maintenance and work typically requiring use of overnight diversions would not warrant the implementation of a multi-day contraflow.

### *Strategies to minimise disruption*

19. National Highways have explained that when scheduling diversion routes, National Highways and Oxfordshire County Council seek to avoid public holidays or clashes with other major organised events. County Council have a road space booking team who coordinate works to ensure no scheduled local highway works conflict with diversion routes, when in operation, and ensure highway users have an alternative route to their destination, when required.

### **Retained requests for information**

20. Requests still requiring additional response / information from National Highways are as follows:
  - a. Risk assessment of diversions, including details of factors and issues considered
  - b. Appraisal of various options – Diversions and others
    - i. With cost benefit analysis with justification
    - ii. Evidence to show that this has happened
  - c. Schedule of road closures over time – dates, times, purpose (particularly for the past 5 years)
    - i. Specifically in order to identify what may have changed in the past 3 years
  - d. When complete, a copy of review work undergone for A34 diversions, which was indicated would be undertaken in 1-3 years
  - f. Earlier versions of diversion documents and any supporting documents
    - i. Which identify dates of when they were in place
  - g. When did night-time working start?

### **Other Considerations**

21. It is pertinent to highlight progress with planning applications at Crab Hill, Wantage. Outline planning permission (P13/V1764/O) was granted for 1500 homes, employment floor space, neighbourhood centre / community hub facilities, a primary school, park and recreational facilities, and road access connecting to A417 and A338 which was approved in 2015.

22. Since this time a range of full planning applications have come forward which have amounted to support for the delivery of the associated link road. The road for Crab Hill follows the intended safeguarded road route identified in the Vale Local Plan Part 1, known as Wantage Eastern Link Road (Appendix E, ref E9).
23. Both access junctions for the link road are under construction currently (for the A417 and A338), while the connecting road section between the two junctions is now fully funded, therefore the link road is in the process of being delivered. Once constructed this road may allow diverted traffic following the Milton and Botley Interchange diversion route to avoid the centre of Wantage, where a number of the properties affected by the diversions are located.

## **Conclusion**

24. There are a number of requests for further information which have not been addressed by National Highways.
25. Officers present will note down any suggestions made and potentially put these forward as a formal scrutiny recommendation to Cllr Emily Smith to liaise with the County Council.

## **Background Papers**

26. Maps showing A34 diversion routes:
  - Map 4 – Area 3 A34 Diversions Milton Interchange and Botley Interchange (A417 and A338)
  - Map 5 – Area 3 A34 Diversions Chilton and Milton Interchange
  - Map 6 – Area 3 A34 Diversions Bi-Directional Beedon and Chilton
  - Vale Scrutiny Committee Paper, 17 November 2021
  - Vale Scrutiny Committee Minutes, 25 November 2021

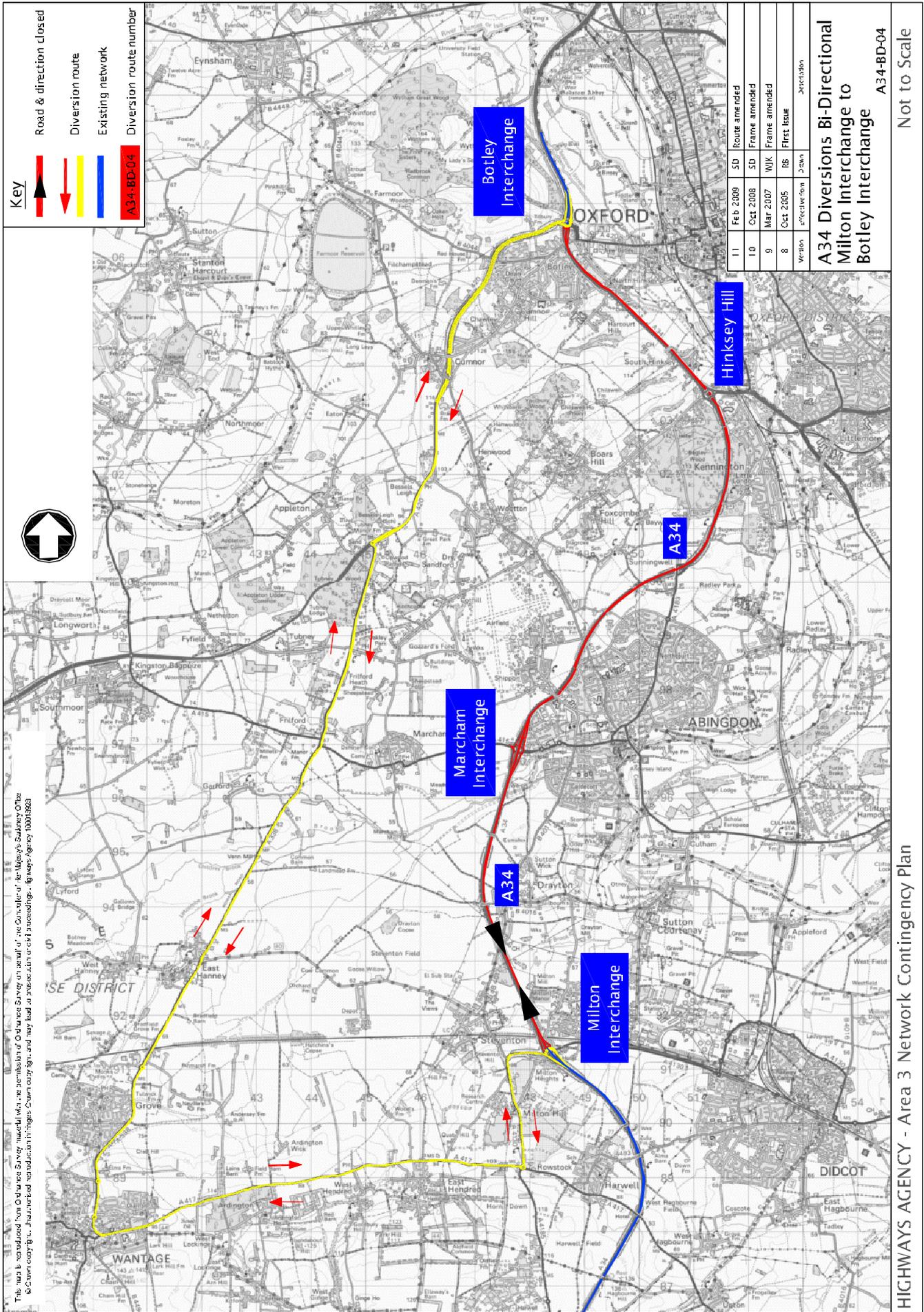
**Key**

- Road & direction closed
- Diversion route
- Existing network
- Diversion route number

11	Feb 2009	SD	Route amended
10	Oct 2008	SD	Frame amended
9	Mar 2007	WJK	Frame amended
8	Oct 2005	RB	First Issue
Version		2	Effective from 3 Jan 2009

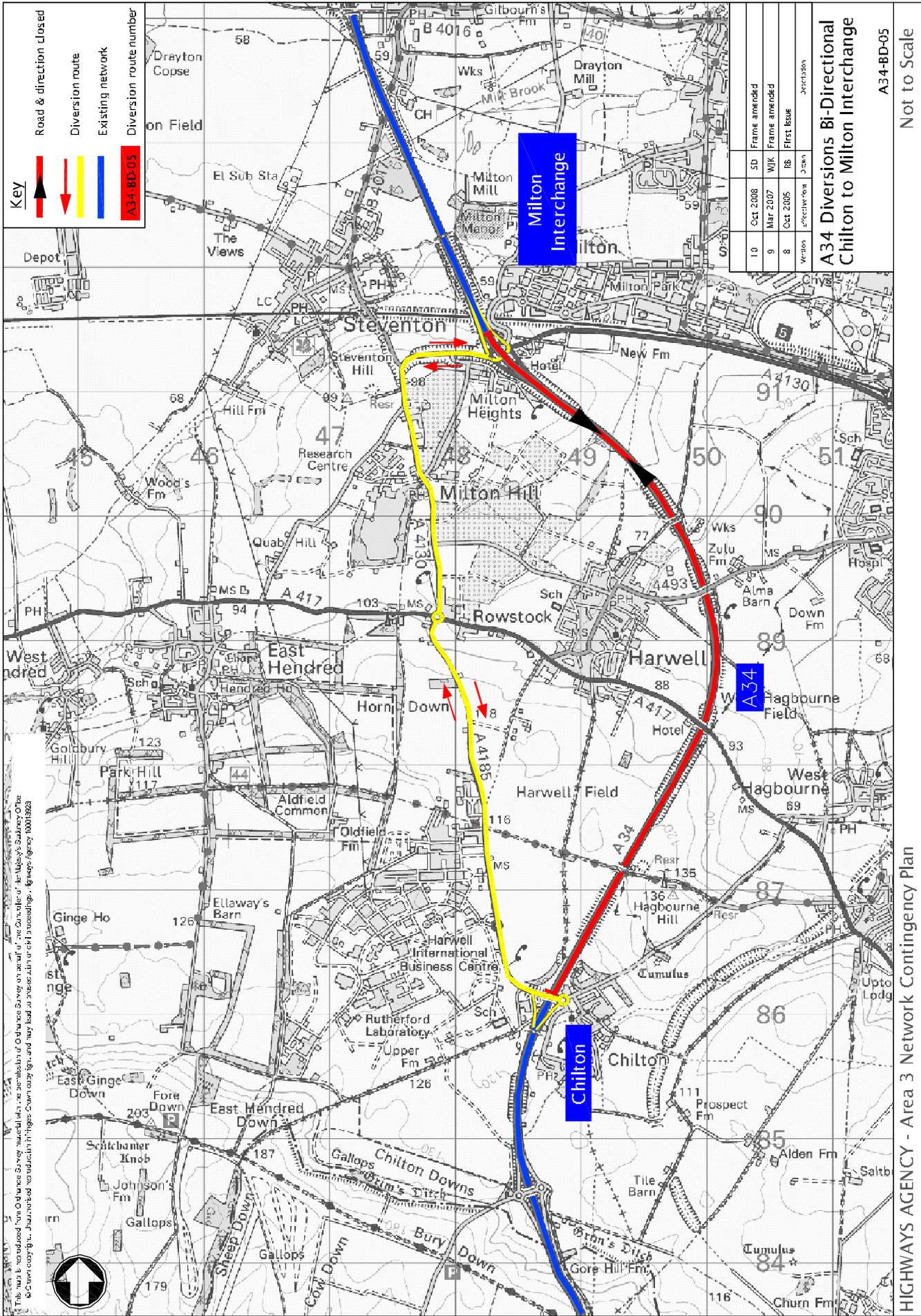
**A34 Diversions Bi-Directional Milton Interchange to Botley Interchange**  
A34-BD-04

Not to Scale



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HIGHWAYS AGENCY - Area 3 Network Contingency Plan



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HIGHWAYS AGENCY - Area 3 Network Contingency Plan



# Scrutiny Committee



Report of Head of Policy and Programmes

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To: SCRUTINY

Date: 17 November 2021

## A34 diversion routing

### Purpose of Report

1. This paper has been prepared in response to the motion agreed at Council on 19 October 2019 concerning re-routing arrangements for scheduled closures of the A34 in southern Oxfordshire. The purpose of this paper is to set out why the A34 is closed during night time hours and what these closures are for. It will also explain the process for reviewing diversion routes.
2. Setting diversion routes is not a responsibility of our Council, it is the responsibility of National Highways (previously Highways England) and Oxfordshire County Council. Representatives for National Highways and Oxfordshire County Council will attend scrutiny on 25 November to provide further information and answer questions from councillors.

### Corporate Objectives

3. Engagement with Oxfordshire County Council and National Highways supports the Corporate Plan 2020-2024 theme 'Working in Partnership'.

## Background

4. In 2019 the A34 was subject to a series of night closures due to a construction project on the A34 at that time. These closures, which often operated between 10pm and 6am, re-routed traffic on to the A338 and the A417. As a consequence of the impact of these closures, Council passed a motion. The motion as set out in the minutes of the Council meeting (19 October 2019) states;

*'Council notes that the re-routing arrangements for scheduled closures of the A34 in southern Oxfordshire are creating a totally intolerable blight on the lives of many of the residents of Wantage, Charlton Ward and further afield. These closures, which typically operate between 10pm and 6am, re-route traffic on to the A338 and the A417. In the 3 months to the end of October 2019 closures will have occurred on 25 occasions. Council further notes that the consequence of these arrangements is to divert very high volumes of traffic, much of it heavy commercial, from a Designated Primary Route to minor roads, occasionally single lane, not considered suitable for heavy traffic in built up residential areas. Residents of impacted houses report that this creates intolerable noise, sleep deprivation and vibration and structural damage to properties, as many of their homes are only a matter of feet away from the highway. Council is also aware that the diversions create significant road safety issues and that damage has occurred to Infrastructure and other vehicles.'*

*Council is aware that alternatives exist, including re-routing via a designated Primary Route or introducing a contraflow system on the A34 itself. Furthermore, Council is concerned that any future re-routing scheme may be ineffective due to increased use of satellite navigation systems which could risk the use of rat runs.*

*Therefore, Council requests that the Scrutiny Committee consider including this matter in their work programme, noting that Scrutiny has the power to invite parties such as Highways England, OCC, Thames Valley Police, Kier Group plc and Wantage Traffic Diversion Group to attend any such meeting.'*

5. Diversion routes are agreed by National Highways with Oxfordshire County Council. A copy of the plan showing the diversion route between Milton Interchange and Botley Interchange (A417 and A338) is attached to this paper (Map 4). Other maps showing the routes for closures between Chilton and Milton Interchange (Map 5) and for closures between Beedon and Chilton (Map 6) are also attached.

### **Why are A34 closures required?**

6. There are currently no major works scheduled to take place on the A34 that would require major night time closures. However, the A34 could still be subject to some night time closures. A key strategic route like the A34 will usually be resurfaced every 5-7 years. It should be expected that the route will also be closed for routine maintenance and cleaning, to sweep the road and collect rubbish such as tyres and repair damaged signage. The agreed diversion routes are also used when there is an accident on the A34 and closure is required.

7. The A34 is a key route for HGVs from the Midlands to the ports. This means that closures for routine maintenance are likely to be more frequent than for some other major routes on the network.
8. In addition to being a standard practice, full closure of the route during nighttime hours has a number of benefits. Complete closure allows maintenance workers to undertake their work in safety and complete it more quickly. Working during nighttime hours also reduces disruption during the daytime hours when the majority of traffic uses the route. Whilst the closure period is usually advertised as 10PM-6AM, if the works can be completed sooner and the route re-opened more quickly, then this will occur.
9. National Highways carefully considers the scheduling of any closures for routine maintenance. For example, bank holidays and any weekends where special events are expected are avoided. There is a Road Space Booking Team who co-ordinate this at National Highways. Most works will not be undertaken by a single contractor but rather a contractor with one or more sub-contractors. For example, one contractor may put out the traffic cones whilst a different contractor will undertake the works.
10. National Highways are aware that the commonplace use of satellite navigation means that drivers do not always follow the diversion routes and this is a challenge across the network. Some HGV vehicles use a sat nav that directs them to use the agreed diversion, however, easily available, and often free web based sat nav applications are now widely used and quite understandably, these can lead to drivers ignoring the agreed diversion routes.
11. The County Council and our Council have no powers to insist that drivers follow the diversions or any set route. The recent pandemic has increased demand for home shopping and consumer expectation is that goods will be delivered quickly. Often drivers are incentivised to complete journeys quickly and complete more deliveries, particularly those paid on an hourly basis. This can lead to increased night time traffic following a wider variety of routes.

### **Consultation on alternative diversion routes**

12. Diversion routes are reviewed by National Highways periodically. A wider nationwide study looking at diversions has recently started a review of diversion routes for the A34 area by area. This is not starting in Oxfordshire and it is anticipated that this area of the A34 will be looked at in the next 1-3 years.
13. Oxfordshire County Council has advised that there are few alternatives to the current diversion routes available to support works on the A34. Diversion routes will usually direct traffic down the next available A road. National Highways and Oxfordshire County Council advise that shorter diversions are preferable. The longer the diversion, the more likely it will be ignored and also a longer diversion that encourages significant additional mileage (for example, use of the M4) will increase carbon emissions.
14. The Council and residents are able to provide suggestions for alternative diversion routes although the decision around the specific route is not ours to make. A simple annotated route plan can be accepted for consideration by National Highways.

## **Conclusion**

15. Representatives from National Highways and Oxfordshire County Council are attending scrutiny to answer further questions relating to the process of how diversions are put in place and decided.

## **Background Papers**

Maps showing A34 diversion routes;

- Map 4 – Area 3 A34 Diversions Milton Interchange and Botley Interchange (A417 and A338)
- Map 5 – Area 3 A34 Diversions Chilton and Milton Interchange
- Map 6 – Area 3 A34 Diversions Bi-Directional Beedon and Chilton

# Minutes

of a meeting of the

## Scrutiny Committee



held on Thursday, 25 November 2021 at 6.00 pm  
at 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, OX14 4SB

The meeting was broadcasted online and can be watched here:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qfm110qLSUM>

### Open to the public, including the press

#### Committee members, present in the meeting room:

**Councillors:** Nathan Boyd (Chair), Jerry Avery, Hayleigh Gascoigne, Max Thompson, Eric de la Harpe, Ben Mabbett, Patrick O'Leary and;

**Cabinet members:** Councillors Debby Hallett and Bethia Thomas (both remote)

**Officers:** Harry Barrington-Mountford, Adrian Duffield, Adrianna Partridge (in person), Candida Mckelvey, Vicky Aston, Andrew Lane and Emma Turner

**Guests:** Alan Bennett (guest speaker, in person), Cllr Andrew Crawford (guest speaker, Council member in person), Keith Stenning (Oxfordshire County Council) and Greg Stone (National Highways)

*Note: Committee members and two supporting officers were present in person, with the option for officers and other attendees to join the hybrid meeting via MS Teams.*

### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors David Grant and Ron Batstone.

### 1. Declarations of interest

None.

### 1. Urgent business and chair's announcements

The Chair ran through hybrid meeting housekeeping. Chair decided to move the public participation item to the A34 item, so that the public speakers present could speak directly ahead of the item they were discussing.

### 1. Notes of the last meeting

The committee noted the notes of 12 October 2021.

### 1. Work schedule and dates for all Vale scrutiny meetings

The Chair will inform the committee of any changes as they occur, some items will be moved around. There may be an additional meeting in early 2022 to manage workload, to be confirmed. Chair added that meetings would be informal where possible over the winter, but some items will require a formal meeting. The format of each meeting will be confirmed in due course.

## **1. Public participation**

Chair confirmed that two public speakers were present in person to speak to item 7, A34 diversion rerouting. The speakers were Councillor Andrew Crawford, Ward member for Wantage, and Dr Alan Bennett, who was a representative of a local residents group, Wantage Traffic Diversion Group.

The speakers would speak at the beginning of item 7 after formal introductions, as permitted by committee.

Councillor Crawford, as a council member, was able to participate and contribute to the item with questions, and helping to answer any questions, as allowed by Chair.

### **1. A34 diversion routing**

Councillor Debby Hallett, as Cabinet member for Planning Policy, introduced the report that was written in the Planning Policy Team. The council had no responsibility for diversions however scrutiny committee were asked to review this as there was some negative impact on local residents who live on the diversion routes.

The report provided an introduction to the issue of night-time diversions and some maps of affected routes. The diversions were not under council control, but the committee may suggest alternative options to National Highways to review, and also Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), who have responsibility for the maintenance of routes. Two officers from these organisations were invited and present to help answer questions.

Councillor Hallett invited guest officers to introduce themselves. Keith Stenning represented Oxfordshire County Council, as the Head of Service for Network Management, and coordination of roadworks. Greg Stone represented National Highways (formerly Highways England), as Route Manager for the A34. He was responsible for current and future needs of the network.

Chair invited the guest speakers to speak. Firstly, Cllr Andrew Crawford spoke to the committee to express his disappointment in the rerouting, which impacted residents who live close to the road. He stressed that this was not about temporary and emergency rerouting but planned night-time closures.

He reported that 25 closures over 3 months on single carriageway roads were disruptive to residents, with a high volume of traffic and large vehicles such as HGV's using the diversion.

He asked scrutiny committee to consider what evidence exists to justify the rerouting. Why was contraflow not used? Councillor Crawford believed that a comprehensive risk assessment was required. There were concerns about road safety – dark roads, blind bends, parked cars. The added journey time for drivers may encourage speeding to make up time. What influence does OCC have to help?

Dr Bennett spoke to the committee. He represented 34 households, and a local group called the Wantage Traffic Diversions group. Dr Bennett felt frustrated by the lack of response from OCC and National Highways. The residents group had protested the night-time diversions, including contacting a local MP to write to OCC. He confirmed that the last 3 years had been worse, as a resident of the area for 26 years. His concerns were the impact on health, with consecutive nights without sleep from the noise and vibrations. The issues raised were sleep deprivation, noise, structural damage, irresponsible driving (mounting curbs, risks to pedestrians, high speed) on a single carriageway. Concern raised about the sub-contracting of tasks which was viewed as less efficient. Inconvenience of some residents needing to relocate to family / a hotel during planned

works, then potential loss of expenses where the works were postponed. Dr Bennett questions whether this was acceptable.

Chair welcomed the committee to ask questions of clarification of the speakers. It was clarified that Dr Bennett spoke based on living in the same home for 26 years, 11 feet from the road, of which the last 3 years were significantly worse in relation to this issue. The committee noted that contraflow systems were a suggested alternative. Due to the protest of the residents group, there was now some warning of diversion routes. Dr Bennett suggested that Sunday daytime diversions could be an option.

Greg Stone then spoke to the committee on behalf of National Highways. He informed committee that the routes were in place for many years and were last reviewed 2.5 / 3 years ago. He was unaware of any difference. He suggested that members could email him with suggested alternatives for consideration. He confirmed that the suggested Sunday daytime closure would not be enough for the maintenance works required on the route. He explained that night-time closures were chosen because of less traffic at night – they had a vehicle counting system ahead of diversions, and they wait for numbers to drop before putting out traffic management. Safety of staff was a priority, and coordination occurs as best as possible to minimise disruption. Multiple tasks were planned per closure, to maximise the efficiency and productivity of the closure.

Keith Stenning from OCC spoke to the committee. Night-time diversions minimise disruption, and there had been a lot of complaints about day-time diversions. Daytime traffic was a bigger problem. The diversion routes were long established and reviewing routes was a difficult problem. Using the next best A-road was the option, and these roads have become more built up over the years. We focused on reducing overall disruption, not the costs involved.

Councillor Crawford expressed disappointment and requested a risk assessment. It was answered that the diversion route team would need to discuss this with OCC. Contraflow could be discussed. Disruption was only if absolutely necessary. The volume of traffic has increased overall.

Committee considered that this was a difficult job and safety was of high importance in deciding the rerouting options. It was suggested that there was not enough information presented to scrutinise the options. Greg Stone suggested that he could provide some more information and gave a suggested timescale of 2 months.

Greg Stone confirmed there was no further major works over the next 3 months, beyond necessary maintenance / resurfacing.

A discussion was had about OCC's role, and it was confirmed that OCC's role was to support National Highways to find routes in order to maintain the A34. The strategic diversions were longstanding, aiming to find the quickest route back to a junction.

Chair added that updated maps would be very useful – how often are they updated / reviewed?

In summary, the committee felt that they needed further information, and Greg Stone had suggested a timescale to come back with more information. Committee considered that it was a complex decision for authorities to make, and that we needed to look back to before 2018, before the diversions were perceived to worsen, to find out what has changed so drastically.

The committee suggested the following information be provided / explored:

- Can a risk assessment be carried out? Discussion to be had with the relevant team.
- Cost benefit analysis of options, appraisal of options
- Mitigation strategies for routes
- Updated maps and related documentation in the decision making
- Previous history of diversions - what has changed?
- More information on contraflows as an option. It was suggested by guest officers that this wasn't always the safest or efficient option. Guest officers explained that different works

needed varying space to be carried out, and contraflow required closure of a longer stretch of road, and there were other time-intensive tasks related to it, such as removing and rebuilding part of the barrier. Tightly managed project budgets.

- When did the night-time diversions begin?

Chair closed the item by summarising that the next steps would be to allow National Highways to come back with more information, that committee could consider at a future meeting, within the next 3 months or so. Potential to start a task and finish group on this. We would work with the Cabinet member, being mindful that the responsibility doesn't lie with the council, however we can make recommendations to Cabinet, to ask them / the Leader to approach OCC councillors. It was confirmed that OCC Councillor Bearder would be notified by Keith Stenning.

**Resolved:**

1. For National Highways to provide further information where possible, as stated above, and
2. For scrutiny committee to review this at a future committee meeting, in order to make an informed recommendation to Cabinet, bearing in mind that council have no authority on this matter, and therefore Cabinet would be advised to liaise with OCC members.

Chair thanked all participants for the time and work on this matter.

## **1. Dalton Barracks Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

Councillor Debby Hallett, Cabinet member for Corporate Services and Transformation, introduced the report on the consultation on the Dalton Barracks Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The aim was to consider and implement any changes from the consultation and approve the SPD in early 2022. Andrew Lane was the lead officer present to answer any questions alongside the Cabinet member.

Chair reminded committee that this item was in reference to the non-coloured section of the map under point 6. Committee were asked to focus on that part.

Committee was reminded that an SPD expanded on and clarified the existing policies within the local plan. You cannot add or adjust affordable housing, this was within the local plan. It was confirmed that the results go to Cabinet, and this was scrutiny committee's opportunity to feed into the consultation. Committee were pleased that working alongside the MOD, the development for the area was aiming to be exemplar and sustainable. There was a push to encourage sustainable development by the officer team.

Andrew Lane was asked about scoping for the cycle lanes planned. A committee member raised the education provision, and Andrew Lane confirmed that primary education provision was planned on site for new developments, and secondary education may be off site. Details will become clearer once the application was submitted. At this stage, we were consulting on the SPD. There was mention of park runs, and the need for new developments to have unbroken path for exercising safely - Councillor Hallett would take this thought away to explore further.

All involved were thanked for their input.

**Resolved:**

Scrutiny Committee considered the content of the Dalton Barracks Strategic Allocation draft Supplementary Planning Document and fed back their comments to the Cabinet Member.

## **1. Planning enforcement statement**

Cabinet member for Planning, Councillor Bethia Thomas, introduced the report on the reviewed Joint Planning Enforcement statement, which included a new triage to increase efficiency and to help ease a backlog by prioritising cases.

Communications was a big part of this work – and will continue to feature.

There was discussion about a 'light touch' option for lower scoring cases. This would be considered, balancing this with the resource that may be needed to action this.

The committee were impressed with the streamlining. Councillor Thomas did reassure committee that this would be reviewed in one year, to ensure the new process worked well. It was a sensible and evolving process and not set in stone. The key was to ensure best use of officer time. The statement included harm assessment that made it clear what conditions trigger priority status.

Emma Turner and Adrian Duffield were also present to support the item. Emma Turner gave detail on the wider package, including the importance of communications. There would be planned FAQs on the website, website updates, changes to reporting papers (similar to the environmental health form). The team want to collate high quality information from residents that will assist in making the council planning enforcement service efficient and accessible.

Chair added that the councillor engagement session was very good, and he thanked all involved.

**Resolved:**

That scrutiny committee considered the content of the report including the new approach to triaging and feedback to the Cabinet Member for Planning.

The meeting closed at 7.56 pm

Chair:

Date: