

AT A MEETING of the REGULATORY COMMITTEE B – SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEAL PANEL held at The Lismoyne Hotel, Fleet, on Thursday 25 October 2012.

PRESENT:

Councillors: M. Cooper (Chairman); J. Wall; A. Weeks.

1 **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN**

That Councillor M. Cooper be appointed Chairman for this meeting only.

2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that, where they believed they had a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter considered at the meeting, they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore, Members were mindful that where they believed they had a non-pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting, they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

There were no declarations of interest made by the members of the panel under this item.

3 **DEPUTATIONS**

No deputations were received.

4 **SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEAL: QUETTA PARK, CHURCH CROOKHAM, TO COURT MOOR SCHOOL, FLEET**

The panel considered the report of the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment (Item 4 in the Minute Book) on the walking route between Quetta Park, Church Crookham, and Court Moor School, Fleet.

Having previously walked the route that morning accompanied by officers from the Economy, Transport and Environment Department and the appellant, the panel carefully considered the evidence and concerns expressed by the appellant and concluded that the route was available both accompanied and unaccompanied.

Members were mindful of section 8 of the national guidelines for the assessment of walked routes to school, and they felt that the available route was safe for a road user behaving reasonably and responsibly. The panel's particular reasons for their finding were:

- The route was within 3 miles of the school (as determined by section 444(5) of the

Education Act 1996)

- The route was well lit, with good pavement along the majority of the route
- For a small section of the route at Wakefords Road where there was not a pavement, it was agreed there was step-offs and the road was lightly trafficked
- Where there was a need to cross the road there were sufficient gaps in traffic flow and sight lines to allow opportunities to cross safely

Members were content that the route provided was the shortest available route deemed safe by the County Council, and that it was still below the national limit of 3 miles for children of 11-16 to walk to school.

The panel were concerned about the stretch of pavement on Naishes Lane, approaching Sandy Lane, and requested that Highway Officers looked into the maintenance of the section at the earliest opportunity, with regard the cutting back of overhanging trees. The panel also insisted that should any stretch of pavement be affected by the construction work near to Naishes Lane, that they expect a full temporary, barrier footpath to be installed in its place.

Members did make clear that the decision was subject to the completion of the Puffin Crossing at Aldershot Road. Without the crossing, the route would have been found to be unavailable both accompanied and unaccompanied. Therefore, for the duration of time that the crossing was not in place, the appellant's child was to continue receiving bus tickets from the County Council.

However, the panel believed that in accordance with the national guidelines, there was a safe route available, and that a child was able to get to school safely. Therefore, they concluded that subject to the completion of the Puffin Crossing at Aldershot Road, the route between Quetta Park, Church Crookham, and Court Moor School, Fleet, was available accompanied and unaccompanied. Therefore the appeal was unsuccessful.

RESOLVED:

That subject to the completion of the Puffin Crossing at Aldershot Road, the walking route between Quetta Park, Church Crookham and Court Moor School, Fleet, is available accompanied and unaccompanied.