

AT A MEETING of the REGULATORY COMMITTEE – SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEAL PANEL held at the Basingstoke Country Hotel, Scures Hill, Nately Scures, Hook on Thursday 4 December 2014.

PRESENT:

Councillors: P. Latham (Chairman); C. Carter; K. House.

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

That Councillor P. Latham 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 WALKING ROUTE: CHALDON GREEN, BASINGSTOKE TO THE COSTELLO SCHOOL, BASINGSTOKE

The panel considered the report of the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment (Item 4 in the Minute Book) on the walking route from Chaldon Green, Basingstoke to the Costello School, Basingstoke.

Members were informed that:

- The route was within 3 miles of the school.
- The route had been assessed by a Road Safety Officer in accordance with the Road Safety GB Criteria.
- A traffic count had been taken at the time of the morning “rush hour” when children would be walking to the school.
- There had been one recent, minor accident on the route.

5 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED:

That the public be excluded from the meeting during the following items of business, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during these items there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest.

6 **HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEAL: CHALDON GREEN, BASINGSTOKE TO THE COSTELLO SCHOOL, BASINGSTOKE**

The panel considered the appellant's appeal reasons and understood the concerns raised about the safety of the walking route. However, having previously walked the route that morning accompanied by an officer from the Economy, Transport and Environment Department and the appellant, the panel concluded that the route was available accompanied, but also unaccompanied.

The panel's particular reasons for their decision were:

- Their experience of walking the route was that it was lightly trafficked, and this was supported by the traffic count carried out on 3 October 2014.
- The traffic that did pass during the walk was at low speed.
- Barton's Lane is a rural country lane, but had a 30 mph speed limit and good sight lines.
- Members concluded that where there was a need to cross the road, there were sufficient gaps in the traffic flow and good sight lines to allow opportunities to cross safely.
- Where the available footpath did narrow at the railway bridge on Swing Swang Lane, the volume of pedestrians was low, and would not necessitate pedestrian access onto the carriageway.
- The route was within 3 miles of the school (as determined by section 444(5) of the Education Act 1996) and the panel felt a child of the age attending The Costello School would be able to get to school safely using the route available.

Members were mindful of section 2 of the Road Safety GB Guidelines on the Assessment of Walked Routes to School and they were satisfied that the available route was safe for a road user behaving reasonably and responsibly. Members understood they were looking at the route to address the risk resulting from the inter-action between pedestrians and traffic and concluded that the risk was low.

RESOLVED:

That the walking route from Chaldon Green, Basingstoke to the Costello School, Basingstoke is available accompanied and unaccompanied.