

AT A MEETING of the REGULATORY COMMITTEE B – SCHOOL TRANSPORT
APPEAL PANEL held at The Solent Hotel, Rookery Avenue, Whiteley on 7 February 2011.

PRESENT:

Councillors: J. Porter (Chairman), F. Pearce, R. Price

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

That Councillor J. Porter be appointed Chairman for this meeting only.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that, where they believed they had a personal or personal prejudicial interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting, they should, normally at the time of the debate, declare their interest and, having regard to the circumstances described in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the County Council's Code of Conduct, consider whether to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with paragraph 12 of the Code.

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

3 DEPUTATIONS

Deputations were received from two local members. Councillor Allgood spoke in support of the appeal as he believed the County Council should err on the side of caution. Councillor Woodward spoke in support of the appeal as he believed the busy roads were dangerous for children, particularly when coupled with the fact that at points you have to leave the pathway to pass other pedestrians.

4 SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEAL: WEST OF WHITELEY, TO ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CE PRIMARY SCHOOL, TITCHFIELD COMMON

The panel considered the report of the Director of Environment (Item 4 in the Minute Book) on the walking route between the West of Whiteley and St John the Baptist CE Primary School, Titchfield Common.

Having previously walked the route that morning accompanied by officers from the Environment Department, the appellant, a Governor at the school and two local members, the panel carefully considered the evidence and concerns expressed by the appellant. They paid particular attention to safety factors along the route inspected, expressing specific concerns about the following points:-

- The heavy traffic from the motorway to the crossing at Botley Road.
- The heavy traffic along Bridge Road.
- The height of the barrier going over the motorway.
- The volume of traffic approaching the junction of Lower Church Road and Hunts Pond Road.

- The linked double roundabout at this junction, where it was difficult to predict what the traffic would do.
- The variety of behaviours members observed by cars at the double roundabout.

Members felt that parental vigilance would be necessary at all these points of concern, to ensure the safety of the child. The panel agreed that it would be unsatisfactory for a child under the age of 11 to be unaccompanied on this route, as it would be difficult for them to maintain the levels of concentration required. However, they felt with parental supervision the safety of the child would not be compromised, as at no points, does the route run counter to LARSOA guidelines. For example, there are adequate crossing points along the route, adequate lighting and at no point does the width of the pathway go below 1 metre.

The panel therefore concluded that the route between the West of Whiteley and St John the Baptist CE Primary School, Titchfield Common is available accompanied, but is not available unaccompanied. The panel noted that because of this decision separate consideration would be given by the Children's Services Department to any parents or carers who are unable to accompany their children by virtue of individual circumstances.

RESOLVED:

That the walking route between the West of Whiteley and St John the Baptist CE Primary School, Titchfield Common is available accompanied, but is not available unaccompanied.