

Notes from a Community Roadwatch Meeting Regarding The Road Calming Scheme For Ramsey Forty Foot

also at: www.roadwatch.org.uk/cambs/rffproject

Held at: Ramsey Forty Foot Village Hall on 1st August 2017 at 14:00.

Those present:

Scott Parsons—CCC Highways Project Manager

The Mayor of Ramsey – Cllr Doug McIlwain

David McCandless – MD CRW(UK) CIC – **Chair**

Colin Silvester – Ops Director CRW(UK) CIC – Meeting Notes Secretary

Cllr Adela Costello – County Cllr for RFF & Deputy Mayor & RFF Resident

Cllr John Palmer – District Cllr & Ramsey Town Cllr

Cllr Peter Reeve MBE – Project Initiator, District Cllr & Ramsey Town Cllr

Cllr Lisa Duffy – Co-Project Initiator & Mayor of Ramsey 2012 & Ramsey Town Cllr

Mark Hollis— RFF VA Chair

Gary Cook—Ramsey Town Clerk

- Dave McCandless (DM) opened the meeting by welcoming all and thanking them for taking time out for the good of the village.
- DM explained that the idea of the meeting was to clear up confusion in the minds of Town Cllrs and clarify what comprised the project and who would be paying for it from established funding or covering the costs of any overspend or extras that have been bolted on to the original scheme to satisfy the aspirations/suggestions expressed by the residents in the northern part of RFF where traffic activity across the village hall, pub, bridge and intersection created cause for grave concern.
- Scott Parsons (SP) confirmed that he did not, as yet, have the revisited costings for the whole project from the new CCC Contractor but expected them soon.
- DM Explained Part 1 had not changed in detail and that the previous CCC contractor 'worst-case-scenario' estimates showed it almost £2k over budget. DM was offering the Town Council the opportunity to cover that shortfall **if it happened**.
- DM Explained that Part 2 comprised the extras that 2 residents at the Public meeting had asked CCC/CRW to consider adding to the Project without diluting Part 1. The CCC 'worst-case-estimate' of extras was between £3-£5k (not including a TRO at £1000 and a Road Safety Audit at £1400 if carried out as a separately).
- DM was offering the Town Council the opportunity to cover the full cost (up to £5k) of Part 2 so that full advantage could be taken of the mandatory Pt 1 TRO etc costs.
- SP confirmed that The Project in its entirety (Parts 1 and 2) had been sent for Road Safety Audit—no problems foreseen at this stage.
- Cllr McIlwain stated that whilst he accepted the logic and savings of incorporating Part 2 into the Project, he thought that 'a gun was being held to head' of Ramsey Council to provide funding for Part 2 and cover the excess costs of Part 1.
- DM explained that the offer and first refusal to cover any excess for Part 1 was made to the Town in case it felt it would like to support those residents by ensuring at least a full, effective, CCC-endorsed scheme was installed in Ramsey Rd South. CRW had a Plan B and another financial backer to ensure Part 1 would be non-dependent on the Town, should the Town decline to cover any extra once the final costs were known. The success of Part 1 did not depend on funding from the Town but it would have been comforting to know that it would ensure Part 1 succeed in its entirety without having to seek other funding & declare those sources to residents.

- DM explained that Part 2 was not part of the original CRW plan because no significant levels of persistent speeding had been detected there either by Speedwatch (from 2011) or Roadwatch (since 2016) and that CRW was in the business of addressing speeding. That said the public meeting on 20 June had agreed that the CCC should explore the possibility of incorporating some measures and taking advantage of the TRO/Safety Audit costs BUT NOT at the cost of diluting the original measures in the southern part of the village. Consequently, with Part 1 estimating a possible overspend, CRW thought it would offer the Town the opportunity to support the village's expectations and aspirations and cover the full cost of the Part 2 scheme at a worst-case-scenario estimate of between £3-£5k. Everything now really rested on the new estimates and on whether the Town wished to support CRW in its efforts to address speeding in RFF and satisfy its aspirations.
- SP stated that the new contractor was in place. He had requested the new costings as a priority and they could end up higher or lower than the originals.
- Cllr Palmer thought that the SID should **not** stay in Ramsey Forty Foot as SIDs lost their effectiveness after a short while even if moved around the same village. DM stated that national experience of SIDs in Dorset and Rutland, and his own since Oct 16, did not come to the same conclusion although a TfL Survey in London did come to that conclusion for that particular city's non-rat-run environment.
- Cllr McIlwain criticised the CCC for coming up with a Scheme that overspent the declared budget. SP replied that a review of the process was underway and that he hoped that the new system would be an improvement.
- Cllr Reeve said that there had been precedents for being flexible about how to deal with costings as these were estimates. The extra measures had been added on only because residents demanded something be done for the North of the village despite the lack of empirical evidence to support such demands. DM stated that there was some sporadic speeding in the North but not serious or persistent.
- Cllr McIlwain asked if taking the cost of the SID out of the scheme would scupper it. DM stated that a SID was a proven traffic calming measure and should be retained on Ramsey Rd within the village especially to address proven high-level speeding in Ramsey Rd, South. It had been purchased by CRW using Windfarm funding specifically allocated for RFF and any other usage would need Windfarm sanction.
- SP stated officially that the installation of a SID is not mandatory to allow the installation of the other features proposed for RFF. *(Note: at the original CCC kerbside consultation with the village (in which Cllr Costello, as a resident, was included) they determined that a SID was an essential element **to tackle speeding** in Ramsey Rd South and that when that was achieved it could be used elsewhere in the area). DM agreed it is not a pre-requisite for the installation of other features.*
- Cllr Duffy inquired about the funding for the 'northern' part of the scheme as there seemed to be some confusion as to the exact amount the Town was being asked to contribute. Various Cllrs thought that the CRW paper presented at the last Council Meeting had been confusing, and possibly contained too much detail.
- Cllr Reeve explained that on the 'old' costings, the 'southern' scheme was about £2000 over budget. This could be overcome by omitting the gates. The 'northern' scheme might cost an additional £3k-5k not including a concurrent saving of £2400 in using the Part 1 TRO and Road Safety Audit. We await the new costings.
- There was considerable disquiet amongst the councillors that they did not have 'fixed' prices to go on. SP pointed out that even estimates were not fixed prices as not every eventuality can be covered. He was chasing Skanska for the costings and should have them soon to pass to CRW.

- Cllr Palmer was of the view that the SID was not an essential part of the scheme and should not serve ONLY RFF. He thought that it should be owned by the Town Council so that it could be used throughout the town and surrounding villages.
- DM disagreed and stated that the SID had been ordered for RFF and should remain in RFF for at least one year after which time the situation could be reviewed.
- Cllr Palmer pointed out that if the Town bought the SID, then the Part 1 overspend disappeared and Part 2 would be mostly covered with less for the Town to 'cover'.
- **DM asked for a two minute break so that he could consult with the other CRW director present and Mark Hollis as Chair of the VA about the SID purchase.**
- On their return, DM stated that CRW was prepared for Ramsey Town Council to buy, own, and operate the SID as long as it was used initially in Ramsey Forty Foot for an effective period of time (TBD).
- Cllr Duffy and Mark Hollis thought that it should primarily be used in Ramsey Forty Foot for a minimum of 6 months (*Note: that's still only 2 stints of 3-4 weeks on 4 lampposts agreed by CCC in the village*).
- Cllr Reeve thought that selling the SID to the Council would not create a problem of effective usage in RFF.
- Cllr McIlwain asked SP if the costings would be ready for a Council meeting on 24th August. SP stated that he thought that they would and will get them to the Project Sponsor (CRW) as soon as they become available. *Note: CRW will distribute to the Town Clerk in a covering letter clearly stating any request to the Town Council.*
- It was agreed to move forward on the assumption that, if CRW cannot meet the cost of the full scheme (which clearly it won't with just £20k), then those present would recommend to the Finance sub-committee for Full Council, that Ramsey Town Council should get behind Cllr Palmer's suggestion that the Council buys the SID for £3750 and operates it using its own volunteers that Cllr Palmer has already standing-by to do so.
- **Town Cllrs present confirmed that, if the new costings from SP showed that CRW could not cover the full cost of the whole project (which it won't), then if the Full Council agreed to buy the SID to offset any Full Project overspend, that this would open the way for the Finance Cttee on 24th Aug to recommend and the full Council to agree on 14 Sep 17, to underwrite any small additional funding required. CRW will accurately define that funding in its application to the Town within 24 hrs of receipt of the new contractor estimates.**
- **It was hoped that this 'cooperation' will serve the best interests of all the residents of Ramsey Forty Foot by enabling both the 'southern' and 'northern' schemes to proceed after Sep 14th.**
- *DM Note: There is a backstop date of 28 Dec for Project Pt 1 completion. Consequently, should Ramsey Town Council not have made a decision to independently support Part 2 or offset the cost of the Full Scheme by purchasing the SID from CRW, then CRW will be left with no option, having explored every pragmatic option, but to drop Part 2 and proceed with the original Part 1. .*

Colin Silvester

Colin Silvester CRW Director
Meeting Note Taker