

**DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting of the Council for the hearing of deputations from members of the public. Each deputation may be heard for a maximum of five minutes following which one Member of the Council, nominated by the Mayor, may speak in response. It shall then be moved by the Mayor and voted on without discussion that the spokesperson for the deputation be thanked for attending and its subject matter noted.

Notification of one Deputation has been received. The spokesperson is entitled to speak for 5 minutes.

- (1) **Deputation concerning Tackling air pollution and congestion on the A259 from Brighton Old Steine to Eastbourne**

**Spokesperson Nigel Smith**

Supported by:

Rob Shepherd

Lynne Moss,

Damon Crane,

Sean Flanagan

**Ward affected: Rottingdean Coastal**

Councillor Pissaridou, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee will reply.



**(1) Deputation concerning Tackling air pollution and congestion on the A259 from Brighton Old Steine to Eastbourne****Spokesperson – Nigel Smith**

I have lived in Rottingdean for many years and am very familiar with bus and car travel along the A259 to the City. I am part of the A259 action group which is endorsed by Lewes District Council and East Sussex County Council. Together we are looking at ways to ease air and traffic pollution on the A259 between Brighton and Eastbourne - and address the growing delays to our vital bus services.

This stretch of road was recently named as a Major Road Network (MRN) by the Government. As such, the A259 is now eligible for funding from central Government to improve how it transports people and provides access to the Strategic Road Network and Rail Network.

Lewes District Council is funding a £50,000 survey of this stretch of road. This detailed piece of work will form the evidence basis of future funding bids.

I am here today because we have two main problems:

1. The surveyors need detailed and well-modelled information about the Valley Gardens scheme.
2. If the Valley Gardens phase 3 scheme ends up adding to local congestion, then this may undermine any bids for funds to improve our transport corridor.

I appreciate that Valley Gardens phase 3 is an issue that some of you are weary of - and that you want to just get on with it. However, put simply, the A259 Action Group is worried that our bids for funding will be jeopardised if the relevant bodies have the slightest concern about the calculations on which the VG3 plans are based.

Our consultants have already identified a number of errors in the business model for Valley Gardens phase 3. The queries they have are complicated and difficult for the non-expert to grasp. Four examples:

- The congestion "disbenefit" has been miscalculated. It should actually be £22m, possibly £26m, rather than £17million.
- The delay time given during the evening is too low, most likely as road widths were not factored into the traffic models and bus traffic has not been adequately assessed.
- VG3 does not tackle estimated "do nothing" congestion costs of c.£200m plus its associated carbon and Air Pollution.
- The benefits of VG Option 1 are difficult to reconcile with the data, raising suspicion that another accounting error of up to £4m is involved.

I hope you agree that we need to tackle congestion, delays, pollution and the high carbon footprint along the A259 corridor as well as in central Brighton.

To ensure that future funding of the A259 is not jeopardised, I am here to request that an independent audit of the source data and analysis that the Valley Gardens project is based on is undertaken, followed by open publication of their conclusions.

Ideally the Department for Transport should be asked to perform this audit.



## Supporting information Item 52 (1)

A259 Traffic from the Pier to the strategic transport hubs .... Brighton Station and the A23/A27

The VG3 Business Case summary (*see below*) sets out the current traffic congestion in the VG area (based on analysis from 2015 measurements on a number of key routes).

The key thing is *people* now experience 4-minute morning delays plus 7-minute evening delays (*Line 37 below*) and VG3 will increase these delays by almost 10% (*Line 43 below*). From the perspective of A259 people journeys, including ones to and from the strategic transport hubs, VG3 brings further unquantified delays at Dukes Mound and at the Pier. Whether the current bid for funding up to £50m to improve the A259's bus and other journey times will be successful, is questionable given that people experience such long delays, delays that VG3 will further undermine. Any uncertainty about the quality of the traffic models will add to this concern

*The VG3 traffic modelling is certainly not robust, particularly the treatment of bus journey times is dubious, as buses waiting for other buses to vacate bus stops appears not to have been considered, (which is significant problem at peak times) or the lane widths in key places, which affects capacities.*

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
30															
31															
32															
33															
34															
35															
36															
37															
38															
39															
40															
41															
42															
43															
44															
45															
46															
47															
48															
49															
50															
51															
52															
53															
54															
55															
56															
57															
58															
59															
60															
61															
62															
63															
64															
65															
66															
67															
68															
69															
70															
71															
72															
73															
74															
75															

The VG3 Business Case puts the cost of the extra congestion it causes at £17m (*Line 61 above*) on which basis the existing 11-minute delays are costing us over £170m (the delays are 10 times longer).

The A259 funding bid will be concerned at these economic costs being so high (its case will be built around reducing the economic costs of people's delays and improving public transport ...) and its evidence base will have to show existing bottlenecks like VG have been tackled as much as possible, so increasing the delays will need justification and the estimates will have to be robust.

In everyday terms – the DfT will see no point in improving people's journey times along the A259 if they simply run into a bottleneck around Valley Gardens, a bottleneck which is already serious but will get substantially worse, and worse by an estimated amount they cannot trust.

*The DfT is also likely to be concerned that the Carbon Footprint is being increased at a time when B&H is failing to meet its Transport Carbon Emissions Target and the NO<sub>2</sub> emissions on the South of East side of the AQMA are being increased when B&H is not confident of meeting these targets.*

It is therefore very important that

- The traffic modelling is opened to **independent** inspection before it is made available to the A259 study group.
- The traffic model is revisited to look for opportunities to **reduce congestion** and its impact on Public Transport and Carbon emissions and on journeys from the A259 to strategic hubs.
- A more robust model and traffic data is available for when the A259 study group needs it, including the new junctions on the A259 (Dukes Mound and the Pier)

Independent Inspection is vital. Like VG3 Business Case, the traffic modelling is very questionable, so having the same consultants revisit it and make the same assumption, will not improve its quality to degree needed, nor will it identify any big opportunities for improvement that were overlooked.

Note:

B&HCC and ESCC will find it hard enough explain to the DfT why at a time when A259 traffic volumes are decreasing, the A259 delays *including bus journey delays* are increasing. It will be very hard to win a bid for improvement if we add to the impression our house is not in order.