

STRATEGIC PLACEMAKING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

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REST (Pages 3 to 7)**

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CENTRE (Pages 8 to 12)**

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Enquiries

Please contact Roslyn Tidman, Overview and Scrutiny Officer on 01908 254589 or Roslyn.Tidman@milton-keynes.gov.uk.

This agenda is available at <https://milton-keynes.cmis.uk.com/milton-keynes/Committees.aspx>

Item 6b(ii)

I'm sorry I've missed the boat on this one but we have had a discussion with all councillors and views in brief are as follows - if it's not too late.

Waste Recycling: Inadequate throughput, poor organisation of local process, poor phone access, poor online access; resulting in long forward bookings, frustration and potentially increased fly-tipping.

Fly-tipping: noticeable, increased incidence; generally good response from MKC.

Litter: noticeable increase in litter levels. We recommend MKC-led campaign is needed to raise public awareness of the size of the problem, the cost of dealing with it and to increase vigilance.

Refuse collection: MKC is to be congratulated for maintaining an excellent service throughout the crisis, apart from the green bin hiatus.

Regards,

Julian Vischer
Clerk to Old Woughton Parish Council
PO Box 7575, MK11 9GR

Sorry for the delay in our response.

We would like to offer our praise to MKC waste team on their continued waste collections, and highways team to provide the white lining during COVID19.

There has been an increase in the amount of graffiti disfiguring public areas around the parish since lockdown and fly tipping has been horrendous across the parish, which may have been exasperated by the closure of the tips.

If we have another similar crisis, we would like to see waste tips that the public can use kept open to enable people to dispose of their waste, which has increased from residents who are now all at home.

Kind Regards

Sally McLellan PSLCC
Town Clerk
Wolverton & Greenleys Town Council
Serving the communities of Wolverton, Greenleys, Old Wolverton, Wolverton Mill, Stonebridge, Hodge Lea and Stacey Bushes.

Scrutiny Report



09 July 2020

Emergency Closure – Temporary Place of Rest

Name of Scrutiny Committee	Strategic Placemaking
Report sponsor	Stuart Proffitt Director Environment & Property
Report author	Davina Millership Head of Highways Davina.millership@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Exempt / confidential / not for publication	Yes / No
Council Plan reference	Ref number / Not in Council Plan
Wards affected	CMK

Executive summary

On Monday 30 March 2020 Highways received a request from the Team Leader Emergency Planning with regards to assisting with the setting up of a facility in Milton Keynes as a Temporary Place of Rest in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The request was to plan for road closures at Avebury Boulevard and Elder gate to isolate the Planet Ice facility. The process from notification to erecting the closure including the formal emergency process was undertaken within 24 hours of the request by the Highways Service.

Communications with regards to Covid-19 was handled by Corporate Communications although Highways Communications Officer assisted when requested to manage journalists on site.

Key Issues

- Emergency Planning requested at 11.59 on 30 March 2020 that the Highway Service enabled controlled access to the Temporary Place of Rest by virtue of road closures. The road closures had to be in place by 31 March 2020 – within 24 hours
- Additional resources were also requested to aid management of the Planet Ice facility internally.
- Corporate communications advised that there was to be no mention of the reason for the closure in the traffic orders so the wording of the notices referred to emergency access to Planet Ice only.

Progress to Date (if applicable)

The only way to put in place a road closure with 24 hours' notice was to use an Emergency Closure under section 14 (2) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act. This order allows the road to be closed for 21 days after which to position would be assessed and if necessary, a further order could be made to extend this for another 21 days.

The process for an Emergency Closure was used and there was insufficient time to update the Highways Register which was issued on 2 April 2020. All MKC Councillors and Parish/Town Councils were notified by email on 30 March 2020 and given the link to the on-line roadworks information one.network formerly roadworks.org.

The detailed traffic management drawings to support a formal legal emergency closure of this section of the highway was arranged on 31 March 2020 appropriate signage and barriers were erected in accordance with Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual – Traffic Safety Measures and Signs for Road Works and Temporary Situations. In addition to this there were further requirements that the section of the highway closed off was encircled with Heras fencing and that the fencing was covered in black sheeting.

On 23 April 2020 the Emergency Road Closure was extended by a further 21 days in order for the roads to remain closed and to allow sufficient time to put in place a Temporary Order under Section 14(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act which would remain in place for a further 6 months.

All orders were notified by email as follows:

- 1) 30th March 2020- email informing all MKC Councillors and Parish/Town Councils of the initial emergency notice

- 2) 23rd April 2020- email informing all MKC Councillors and Parish/Town Councils of the second emergency notice
- 3) 30th April 2020 & 7 May 2020- emails informing CMK Councillors and CMK Town Council of Temporary Orders to remain in place for 6 months under section 14 (2).

Lessons Learnt

- The process from notification to putting in place the closure including the orders was carried out within 24 hours.
- Notifications included Councillors, Parish & Town Councils, bus operators and emergency services. All advertising, drafting of notices were in accordance with legal requirements and signing/guarding was in accordance with regulations. Nothing would have been done any differently.
- It would have been more appropriate to have used a Temporary Traffic orders instead of Emergency Orders however there was insufficient notice given for these to be advertised in the MK Citizen.
- If there was more notice it would have been easier to have managed the setup of the facility however there was not enough time, and everyone did the best under difficult circumstances.

List of Annexes

none

List of background papers

none

EMERGENCY NOTICE

THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF MILTON KEYNES
NOTICE PURSUANT TO SECTION 14(2)
ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF MILTON KEYNES
(LOWER FOURTH STREET AND AVEBURY BOULEVARD (PART),
CENTRAL MILTON KEYNES) (EMERGENCY CLOSURE) 2020

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN by the Council of the Borough of Milton that with immediate effect, that because of danger to the public, no person shall cause or permit any vehicular access to and along those parts of Lower Fourth Street and those parts of Avebury Boulevard and its north-west vehicular accessway between Grafton Gate and Witan Gate in Central Milton Keynes.

The emergency closure is necessary to accommodate the temporary COVID-19 testing facility on Avebury Boulevard, allow visitors to the facility to queue along the Boulevard and accessways and to stop vehicles from jumping the queue.

Whilst the above closure is in place the alternative route will be via Grafton Gate, Midsummer Boulevard and Witan Gate (and vice versa).

The closure may continue in force for 21 days under the provisions of this Notice.

If the danger to the public is not alleviated within 21 days, the closure may continue under the provisions of a further Notice for 21 days and thereafter an Order made under Section 14(1) of the above Act, for up to a maximum of 18 months, if necessary.

There will be no exemptions from the provisions of this notice. Access will be maintained to all adjacent properties wherever possible for the duration of the closure.

Any person committing a breach of the order will be liable upon prosecution to such fine as prescribed by the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

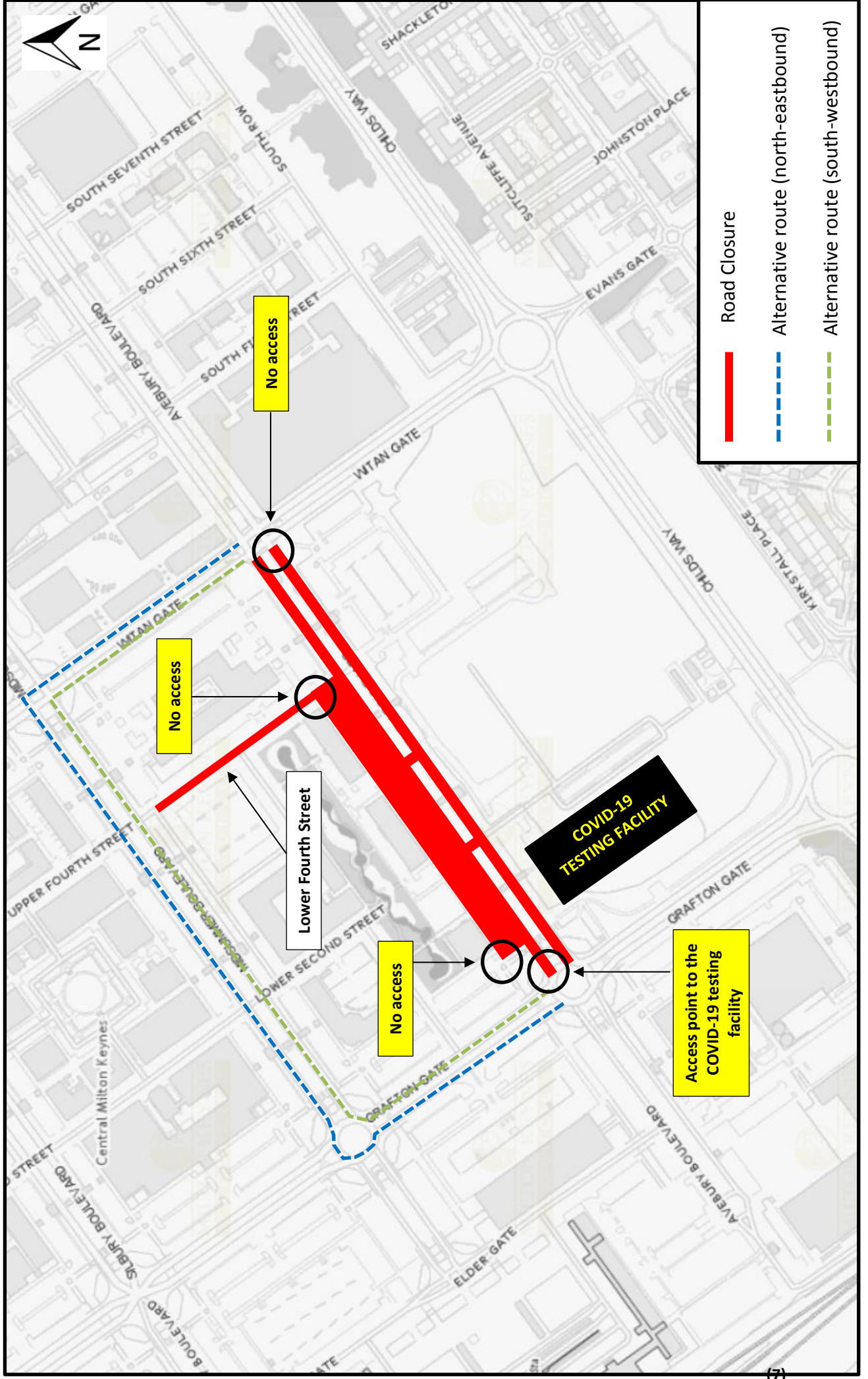
24th April 2020

Synergy Park
Chesney Wold
Bleak Hall
Milton Keynes
MK6 1LY



Davina Millership
Head of Highways

**THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF MILTON KEYNES
(LOWER FOURTH STREET AND PART OF AVEBURY BOULEVARD, CENTRAL MILTON KEYNES)
EMERGENCY CLOSURE 2020**



Scrutiny Report



09 July 2020

Emergency Road Closure – Covid Testing Centre

Name of Scrutiny Committee	Strategic Placemaking
Report sponsor	Stuart Proffitt Director Environment & Property
Report author	Davina Millership Head of Highways Davina.millership@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Exempt / confidential / not for publication	Yes / No
Council Plan reference	Ref number / Not in Council Plan
Wards affected	CMK

Executive summary

The Council and health partners were aware that Milton Keynes was going to have a drive through test centre but was not told when it would open or where it would be. MK Citizen confirmed that the site opposite the former Toys R Us car park on Grafton Street will be up and running on Monday 20 April 2020. This is MKDP land.

Highways were alerted to serious traffic congestion and queuing on 24 April by Thames Valley Police who requested that the Highway Service intervened to control traffic. The Highways Service implemented an emergency closure and traffic diversion signage and in the interest of keeping the testing facility operating Highways Duty officers and Senior Highways Managers continued to support, advise and guide Deloitte's staff to ensure that traffic was managed adequately.

Key Issues

- The Council including Planning and Highways as well as health partners were not consulted on the location of the MK Testing Centre or the appropriateness of the site.
- The Highways Service were concerned about the adequacy of signage and possible impacts of queuing and asked MKDP who owned the site was asked for contact information for their tenants (Deloittes).
- On 24 April following Government announcements and publicity advising that Key Workers could turn up to the centres without booking, long queues for the testing centre began to form creating congestion and traffic disruption.
- Thames Valley Police contacted MK Highways in the afternoon of 24 April and requested urgent intervention. Highways immediately reacted and installed signage and introduced closures that afternoon.
- On Saturday 25 April all MK Councillors and Parish/Town councils were informed of the emergency order by email including emergency services and bus operators. The closure was also added to one.network.
- Highways Duty Officers and Senior Highways managers provided direct support, advice and guidance on Friday 24 April and over the weekend.
- Deloittes did not improve the signage and eventually responded to requests to provide a Traffic Management Plan on 9 June. They have been advised that their plan is inadequate.

Progress to Date (if applicable)

On 21 April, the Director of Environment and Property asked Head of Highways to inspect the signage and contact Deloitte's who were responsible for the Testing Centre. MKDP provided some contact information and a site check of the testing centre raised some immediate concerns about existing signage/cones placed by Deloitte's staff as well as the potential for queuing to block the traffic signalled junction at Witan Gate/Avebury Boulevard. The traffic however was low and the facility did not appear to be operational.

On 22 April, the booking system for MK Testing centre was advertised as not working however key workers were being advised to turn up without an appointment.

On 23 April Deloitte's were asked by Head of Highways (HOH) about their booking arrangements, anticipated daily numbers of those to be tested, arrangements within their site to manage queuing and the adequacy of their signage. The Deloitte

contact was unaware of how their booking system worked, traffic management arrangements or detailed arrangement on their testing site. Deloitte's advised Highways that they would be testing around 400 people a day however they reported the following day in excess of 800 people were being tested.

On Friday 24 April, in the afternoon, a number of reports were received from Thames Valley Police (TVP) and MK Highway inspectors that there was major disruption with cars backed up on Avebury Boulevard. TVP contacts called the Highways Service with a direct and urgent request to intervene. Highways inspectors immediately sourced temporary signage, sought approval to close the roads and Ringways were despatched with additional signage to effect an immediate diversion and a number of hard and soft road closures.

The closures were placed at Witan Gate/Avebury Boulevard, Avebury Roundabout onto Avebury Boulevard and Lower Fourth Street/Avebury Boulevard. There was a signed diversion from Witan Gate via H6 back to V6 Grafton Street to allow more queuing capacity.

Effectively Avebury Boulevard was used in both directions outside the testing centre for queuing traffic to the Testing Centre off South Second Street. There was at any one time four lanes of queuing traffic, two in each direction with all the crossover points along Avebury Boulevard closed off. Bus operators and emergency services were notified on Friday 24 April. See Annexe 1 for a map showing closures and the Emergency Traffic Order

Highway Officers worked overnight on Friday to produce the required documentation for the order and on Saturday 25 April at 8am, the Emergency Closure orders were emailed to all Councillors, Parish and Town Councils, bus operators and the emergency services. It was also loaded up onto the on-line roadworks site.

The Head of Highways (HOH) contacted Deloitte's again to discuss the situation and raised concerns about the adequacy of the arrangements. HOH requested a traffic management plan to be submitted for approval showing the appropriate signage to be put in place in accordance with Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual. The HOH also requested that appropriately experienced and full-time traffic marshalls to be permanently deployed on site. Deloitte were unaware of their Health and Safety responsibilities and HOH had no choice but to continue to deploy Highways duty officers to guide Deloitte's staff and provide regular reports. On Friday 24 April, Saturday 25 April and Sunday 26 April the HOH continued to raise concerns with Deloitte and requested additional signage and made repeated requests for plans to be sent through for her approval. Deloitte declined offers to have additional signage fabricated by Highways and assured HOH that they would put a plan in place and fabricate the appropriate signage.

On Sunday 26 April, Highway duty officers were posted again all day to provide guidance and advice and to report back to HOH. Sunday morning the HOH was advised by telephone that Deloitte's booking system had again overbooked slots and warned of worsening queue lengths. The Highways Strategic Asset Manager attended a meeting on site on Sunday with Deloitte's to discuss how to facilitate an area for a pop-up mobile test facility and arranged for Ringways to provide signage. After the signage arrived, Deloitte advised they could not arrange the mobile facility. The Strategic Asset Manager then remained on site and provided additional cones and signage and the Highways Duty officer managed queuing by utilising nearby parking areas as holding/stacking areas.

On 27, 28 and 29 April HOH repeated requests for Deloitte to submit a comprehensive traffic management plan to be put in place with appropriate signage. HOH again offered to manufacture the signage. The queuing on site began to become manageable and HOH commissioned the traffic management plans at her cost and sent them to Deloitte's who again gave assurances to manufacture the signage and put them in place.

Friday 1 May, traffic was light and queues reduced and it appeared that Deloitte operations on site were under control however the signage on site was not clear and was not regularly maintained. Highway inspectors were asked to inspect the signage which were often left fallen over and poorly maintained. HOH raised this with Deloitte.

Monday 4 May HOH arranged for another site inspection which confirmed traffic and queuing was light. The additional signage was not in place and Deloitte's contact stopped responding to emails.

5 to 29 May HOH chased Deloitte and asked for assurances that they had appropriately qualified traffic management staff in place and insisted that MKDP include this as a requirement of the lease being drafted between the parties. HOH decided to remove the closure because the traffic was light and queuing under control. HOH chased Deloitte to recover the costs of Ringways signage however they advised that they had no contractual relationship with MK Council and was not responsible for costs incurred. MKDP were then approached to recover costs.

9 June Deloitte sent their Traffic Management Plan to Head of Highways asking for approval.

HOH has since advised that it was not satisfactory and has given reasons. HOH is currently pursuing recovery of contractor's costs from MKDP.

Lessons Learnt

- The Highways Service reacted immediately to reports of congestion and traffic queuing putting in place closures, emergency orders and diversion signing.
- Notifications included Councillors, Parish & Town Councils, bus operators and emergency services. All advertising, drafting of notices were in accordance with legal requirements and signing/guarding was in accordance with regulations. Nothing would have been done any differently should the situation happen again.
- Deloitte/MKDP benefitted by having the Council's resources to manage the traffic congestion caused by their facility. If any other facility caused similar disruption, there would be little tolerance from the Police, and they would have been compelled to cease operations and to submit traffic management plans. The Council however wanted to support the testing centre in their work.
- Highways Duty Officers and Senior Management showed immense personal dedication and commitment to ensure that there was support for the operations of the testing centre.

If there are any lessons to be learnt they are related to MKDP and Deloitte:

- MKDP should have consulted Planning and Highways on the location of the Testing centre. It was wholly inappropriate to use the highway to queue traffic while waiting to be tested. Deloitte had not signed their lease, and this was still being drafted by MKDP. This may have been an opportunity to involve the Highway authority. The traffic management arrangements could and should have been discussed with the Highway authority prior to the Testing Centre being opened.
 - Deloitte should have properly planned and prepared prior to opening this facility. Deloitte's on site staff were unprepared for setting up a testing centre: their booking system was problematic, those in charge of the testing site had no influence or communication with those running the booking system, the onsite staff appeared to have little expertise in traffic management.
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List of Annexes

Annex 1- Map showing emergency closures and Emergency Traffic order

List of background papers- none

Item 6d

I have done some research on the issues regarding the set-up of the testing station and the queuing issues on the road network in the immediate vicinity.

We currently have two Unique Reference Numbers (URN's) that relate to the testing station both on Friday 24 April;

URN 629 came in at 13.19hrs and gave a report of traffic building up around the car park at South Second Street the location of the test centre, the caller indicated that there were 18 vehicles out on the road queuing to get in.

URN 635 came in at 13.21 and was unrelated to any information regarding the traffic issues surrounding the site.

I had a call (voicemail) from an officer on that Friday afternoon requesting that I take a look because the queuing was causing an issue with drivers not realising there was a queue to get into the testing station itself.

I attended the testing station location that afternoon and saw that the only Traffic Management was some coning immediately opposite the site on the gap within the central refuge stopping vehicles turning into the site from the general direction of the train station, at this time there were no cars queuing into the site and the odd car stopping for information and then leaving.

I spoke to one of the three white male staff who stated that the station was not open at the moment, I asked about the coning and he stated the council had been and were going to sort it all out as they had just left.

I then phoned Paul Harrison from the Highways Department at Milton Keynes Council relaying the unsafe status of the inadequate Traffic Management at the site and the need for advanced warning of queuing on the approaches so drivers were able to make an informed decision on their route. There was also a need to ban some of the turning movements to further avoid queuing from the direction of the train station which also would need to be signed accordingly.

I have checked with our Operations Department covering the pandemic and I understand there was no previous warning of this site and the need for adequate Traffic management to manage the traffic in close proximity for queuing and the impact it would have on the surrounding network itself.

Attached is the e-mail containing the Emergency Order notices for the testing site sent out at 10.50 hrs on Saturday 25 April 2020 by Paul Harrison.

Kind Regards
Neil

Neil Biggs

Traffic Management Officer Dip ASM MIHIE
Hampshire Constabulary & Thames Valley Police Joint Operations Unit,
Milton Keynes Unitary and Buckinghamshire.