

25/6/1976

P/L 35/150 (1)

Mr B Duddy

32 Engr Regt Gp
BFPO 801

Londonderry 61051

Tac/0035

25th June 1976

See Distribution

MINUTES OF THE LONDONDERRY CITY CENTRE LIAISON COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD IN THE ARMY CONFERENCE ROOM, RUC STRAND, AT
1830 HRS ON WEDNESDAY 23 JUN 76Present:

Lt Col A C D LLOYD RE	- CO 32 Engr Regt Gp (Chairman)
Supt W M JOHNSTON	- Dep Comd RUC Div 'N'
Mr L HASSON	- President Londonderry Chamber of Trade
Mr R FERRIS	- Londonderry Chamber of Trade
Mr B DUDDY	- Waterloo/William St Traders Association
Mr W FERRIS	- Ulsterbus
Mr J HUGHES	- Roads Dept
Major W I C DOBBIE RE	- OC 30 Fd Sqn RE
Major R W L WRIGHT RA	- BC 14 Lt AD Bty RA
Major D F KRUGER RE	- 2IC 32 Engr Regt Gp
Major D P EARLAM RA	- 2IC 16 Lt AD Regt RA

Apologies were received from Mr V ARTHUR, Chamber of Commerce

ACTIONOPENING REMARKS

1. The Chairman thanked all members for coming to the meeting and introduced the new members. Mr HUGHES was from the Roads Department and his advice would be particularly welcome in later discussions. 16 Lt AD Regt RA were shortly assuming military responsibilities for the area and Majors WRIGHT and EARLAM were taking over from Majors DOBBIE and KRUGER respectively.

ITEM 1: MATTERS FROM THE LAST MEETING

2. The Chairman drew the attention of members to the minutes of the last meeting. He said he would like to review progress on the various decisions taken but suggested that paras 4 and 5 of these minutes should be considered as separate items. This was agreed.

3. Traffic on Craigavon Bridge and Quayside. The new system of opening extra lanes of traffic at the Checkpoints on these roads at peak hours was now in operation. There was general agreement that it was working well and traffic flow had improved accordingly.

4. Danger of Accidents at Strand Road/Clarendon St Junction
Major DOBBIE said he had been in contact with Inspector HETHERINGTON and plans were in hand to open a new exit gate on the western side of Strand Road. This would ease congestion caused by pedestrians trying to enter and exit at the same time through the existing checkpoint, and avoid the present dangerous practice of allowing pedestrians to exit through the vehicle gates. It was suggested that a second exit gate on the eastern side of Strand Road would further reduce congestion and Major DOBBIE agreed to investigate this.

OC 30 Sqn/
BC 14 Bty

A move of the bus stop was also considered and Mr W FERRIS agreed to look into this.

Ulsterbus

5. Opening Times of Custom House Gate (P 8B). The Chairman said there was a request for this to be kept open for further $\frac{1}{2}$ hour from 2330 - 2400 hrs although all recognised the manpower problems. Major EARLAM said he would put this suggestion to his CO on his arrival who would no doubt consider its feasibility.

16 Lt AD Regt

6. Butcher Gate Checkpoint. The Chairman said that the tarmac had now been laid and it was a slight improvement. However several members did express concern at the steepness of the construction which would be particularly dangerous in winter time. It was agreed that the only satisfactory solution was a complete reconstruction of the checkpoint and this would entail a detailed study.

16 Lt AD Regt

7. Delays at Letterkenny VCP. The Chairman said he had given the necessary instructions to this checkpoint and he had himself seen no more long queues. It was suggested that the removal of the traffic lights would allow a more free flow and would avoid the delay between one vehicle being cleared and the next being called forward for checking. This was agreed and the Chairman said he would arrange for the lights to be switched off for an experimental period.

32 Engr Regt

8. Ferryquay Gate. This was now closed between 0100 and 0700 hrs to vehicles and pedestrians entering the Walled City. A turnstile allowed pedestrians exit facilities between these hours. Members said there had been no adverse comments on this arrangement. The Chairman said the exit turnstile might be moved to New Gate for security reasons as it could be observed from Hawkin Street Armoury. Members could see no objection to this and it was agreed a study should be made.

16 Lt AD Regt

ITEM 2: COMBINATION OF WALLED CITY AND STRAND ROAD SECURE AREA INTO ONE ZONE

9. Mr HUGHES explained the present plans for traffic when the Quay Road Scheme was complete. He said that, given the right conditions, the first section would be open to traffic within two months. Several suggestions were then put forward for the position of new barriers to enable the present two secure areas to be combined into one. The main problems were the continuing one of manpower which eliminated the possibility of extra checkpoints and the location of the 'Soak'. After discussion it was agreed that the Army should draft a proposed scheme to form a basis for discussion at the next meeting. This meeting could be held on the ground if it was felt this would assist in reaching a satisfactory decision.

16 Lt AD Regt

ITEM 3: ACCESS FOR BUSES INTO THE WALLED CITY

10. This still presented security problems concerned with the checking of passengers if they were still allowed to be set down within the Walled City. It was pointed out that there was no history of bombs being brought into the city by bus. The Chairman agreed to reconsider the proposal but the decision would have to be made by higher authority.

32 Engr Regt

ITEM 4: POINTS FROM MEMBERS

11. Mr HASSON had a number of points:

a. Castle Gate. He asked for a 24 hour exit turnstile and entry by day at this point. The Chairman said he doubted if the manpower cover would allow this but he would ask 16 Lt AD Regt to consider the request.

32 Engr Regt/
16 Lt AD Regt

11. Cont'd

b. Shipquay Place. There was still congestion at this checkpoint and no apparent action by the checkpoint commander to control this and speed up searches when necessary. The Chairman said he would give the necessary instructions for this to be done.

32 Engr Regt

c. Signing. He suggested that the present traffic signs were inadequate. Mr HUGHES agreed to look into this and investigate the possibilities of improving the signs in the City.

Roads Dept

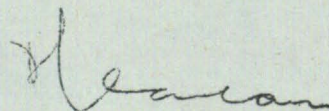
d. Bridge St Derelicts. He said there were not only unsightly but also in a dangerous condition to life and health. They were also used as a hang out for the less desirable members of the community. It was known that Spruce Up had legal problems in carrying out the work but The Chairman said this was an important point and he would follow it up on his channels.

32 Engr Regt/
16 Lt AD RegtITEM 5: VALEDICTORY

12. Both Mr HASSON and Mr R FERRIS expressed thanks to the Chairman and members of 32 Engr Regt Gp for the co-operation and progress that had been achieved during their tour of duty and wished them well for the future. This was endorsed by all other members of the Committee. For his part The Chairman thanked the civilian members for supporting the Committee which he felt had resulted in the elimination of many misunderstandings and had shown positive results. He would commend it to his successor Lt Col K G WILBY RA.

ITEM 6: NEXT MEETING

1. It was agreed that either 21 or 28 Jul 76 would be a suitable date for the next meeting at 1830 hours. Which date was chosen depended on the progress of follow up action on ITEM 2 and Major EARLAM said he would notify all members of the date finally chosen.



D P EARLAM
Major RA
Joint Secretary

Distribution:

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Mr B Duddy
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