

**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT
 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
 21 JANUARY 2019**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M BROOKES (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors S P Roe (Vice-Chairman), Mrs W Bowkett, C J T H Brewis, Mrs J Brockway, R Grocock, R A Renshaw, A N Stokes and E W Strengiel

Councillors: R G Davies and Clio Perraton-Williams attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Steve Blagg (Democratic Services Officer), Michelle Grady (Head of Finance (Communities)), Paul Little (Highway Asset Manager), John Monk (Group Manager (Design Services)), Mandi Robinson (Team Leader), Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer) and Ethan Thorpe (Communications) (Strategic Communications Lead)

48 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

An apology for absence was received from Councillor B Adams.

49 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor S P Roe requested that a note should be made in the minutes that if any discussion about the North Hykeham Relief Road arose he would leave the meeting as his family owned land which was likely to be affected by the proposed route of this road (minute 51).

50 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 10 DECEMBER 2018

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 10 December 2018, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

51 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR AND LEAD OFFICERS

Announcements by the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT included:-

- The earthworks sub-contractor for the Lincoln Eastern Bypass had gone into liquidation and it was hoped to have a replacement in place as soon as

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possible. The main contractor, Galliford Try, would be carrying out some of the earthworks themselves to keep the contract moving and work on the rest of the contract would continue as planned.

- The Lincoln Transport Strategy engagement had started and members, particularly those representing the City of Lincoln, were encouraged to attend the consultation meetings.
- The submission of a letter and strategic case summary to Matt Warman MP (Boston and Skegness) to pass onto the Government for funding towards design work and the creation of a Business Case for the Boston Distributor Road.

The Chairman welcomed the submission of the letter to Matt Warman MP for the Boston Distributor Road and he encouraged members to get involved in the engagement process for the Lincoln Transport Strategy.

52 COUNCIL BUDGET 2019/20

The Committee received a report in connection with the budget proposals for the next financial year 2019/20, based on the four year funding deal announced by the Government as part of the 2016/17 Local Government Finance Settlement and the specific budget implications for the Highways and Transport activities.

Comments made by members and the responses of officers, included:-

- Had funding been allocated for the effects of the Lincoln Western Growth corridor particularly the need to construct slip roads and roundabouts in the Skellingthorpe Road and Birchwood Avenue areas of Lincoln? Officers referred to the on-going consultation in connection with the Lincoln Western Growth corridor and any financial implications for the Council would be considered in consultation with highways when matters became clearer.
- The Executive Councillor stated that the cost of any highway improvements associated with the Western Growth corridor project would be met by the developer(s).
- Reference was made to the recent announcement by the Government to provide funding to improve the national highway network and the need for the Council to be ready to submit a bid for funding. The Executive Councillor stated that the Council would be submitting a bid to Midlands Connect for funding at the appropriate time.
- What was meant by "Other Changes" in Table A of the report and a request that this should be explained in future reports? Officers stated that this referred to "house-keeping" changes which budget holders made when forming their budgets.
- The return to three rounds of safety grass cutting, two full cycles of weed spraying and a full cycle of gulley cleansing were welcomed and supported.
- The proposed increase in the Council Tax by 4.95% was supported.

RESOLVED (Councillor S P Roe abstained for the reasons detailed (minute 49))

That the report, comments made by members and the responses of officers, on the budget proposals for 2019/20, be noted.

53 UPDATE TO STREET LIGHTING POLICY FOLLOWING SCRUTINY
REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee received a report in connection with the Street Lighting Policy 2019, including actions included as a result of the Part Night Street Lighting Scrutiny Review. The report was due to be considered by the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT and the views of this Committee would be reported to the Executive Councillor.

Members' attention was drawn to the principal amendments incorporated in the updated Policy following the Scrutiny Review in connection with the Protocol for reversal of part-night lighting and Exemptions to Part Night Lighting.

Members' attention was drawn to an error on page 16, paragraph 1.2, bullet point 9 ("Annex 2 Exemptions to Part Night Lighting") – the word "physically" should be replaced by "publicly".

Comments by members and the responses of officers included:-

- Requests to turn the lights back on were more relevant to rural areas than urban areas.
- Specific cases were highlighted where street lights had been turned off and which were causing safety issues. In some cases, Parish Councils had requested that some lights should be permanently turned off and that Parish Councils should be asked if they had any lights which could be switched off permanently. Officers stated that requests had been received to switch off lights permanently but every visit to a light incurred a cost, so consideration was given when the lights came to the end of their useful life. Officers agreed that Parish Councils should be encouraged to make requests for lights to be permanently turned off. Once a light was switched off and removed the cost of reinstallation was considerable.
- Some lighting columns were of architectural interest; was there potential for community use? Officers stated that those lights switched off were outside of community areas and electricity suppliers did not like non-active equipment attached to their cable networks.
- Was District Councils' help sought to fund the cost of turning lights back on? Officers stated that there had not been any consultation with District Councils to seek their help to fund the cost of returning to part-night lighting.
- Was there an on-going cost of turning the lights back on especially if numerous lights were turned on? Officers stated that the one off cost for turning each light on detailed in the report also covered the cost of supplying electricity for the next twenty years and officers agreed to inform Parish and Town Councils of this information.
- How many LED lights had been installed? Officers stated that as part of the street lighting transformation project approximately 17,000 lights were converted to LED.

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- Officers stated that the removal of the lighting which had already been switched off for a couple of years on the A46 between Riseholme roundabout and Nettleham would be examined in consultation with the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership. Officers stated that approximately 850 lights across many roads in Lincolnshire had been permanently switched off.
- Officers stated that the Police always alerted the Council first if they had concerns.
- Officers stated that some District Councils had located dog and litter bins on some lighting columns which prevented use of the access to maintain the electrical equipment.
- Officers stated that the County Council took the lead in connection with any changes to lighting and communication with local authorities.
- The use of reactive lights should be investigated as this would help to deter crime and reassure residents. Officers stated that new light technology was being developed all the time. However, reactive lights could upset residents because they would be going off and on and also lights would have problems reacting to fast moving vehicles.
- Could the risk assessment procedure be explained before a decision was made to switch off lights? Officers explained the risk assessment process undertaken before lights were switched off, which included consultations with the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership, the local Parish Council and the Police.
- Some Parish Councils might have difficulty completing the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA). Officers stated that the pro-forma being developed for part-night reversal requests would include sections on completing the EIA.

The Committee supported the recommendations to the Executive Councillor.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the comments by members and the responses of officers on the report be noted.
- (b) That the Street Lighting Policy 2019, including the recommendations from the Part Night Street Lighting Scrutiny Review, in respect of the Protocol for reversal of part-night lighting and Exemptions to Part Night Lighting, be supported and submitted to the Executive Councillor for approval, subject to the County Council (in line with its duty as a Street Lighting Authority) ensuring that sufficient safeguards are in place within the protocol to enable future changes to the Street Lighting policy as required.

54 A46 DUNHOLME AND WELTON JUNCTION SCHEME

The Committee received a report in connection with seeking the approval of the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT to publish the necessary Side Roads Order and a Compulsory Purchase Order to allow acquisition of the land required for the construction of the new roundabout and junction alignment on the A46 Dunholme and Welton Junction scheme.

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Comments by members and the responses of officers, included:-

- Concern about the effect of the project on local businesses. Officers explained how the businesses would be accessed when the scheme was completed. The existing access and egress would be too dangerous for users if they remained open and the new accesses would be safer and might lead to an increase in trade. Officers stated that discussions would be held with businesses about signage.
- The project was expensive and it was suggested that the junction arrangement used at the Drinksey Nook junction on the A57 could be used for this scheme. Officers explained the cost of the scheme and that some of the cost would be met by a Section 106 Agreement. The scheme would be safer for motorists as the junction currently had a poor accident record and further major housing development was expected in the area which would lead to increase usage of this junction. The cost included reducing the height of the hill on the approach by approximately two metres.

RESOLVED (8 for and 1 abstention)

(a) That the comments by members and responses by officers be noted.

(b) That the Committee endorse the approach for the A46 Dunholme and Welton Junction Scheme detailed in the report.

55 PERMIT SCHEME ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

The Committee received the Annual Report 2017/18 in connection with the second year of operation of the Permit Scheme.

Officers stated that it had been a busy second year especially following a harsh winter which had led to the need for more road repairs.

Comments by members and responses by officers included:-

- It was noted that the situation had improved since the introduction of the Scheme. What were the Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued for? Officers stated that FPNs were issued for various issues, including, poor signage, administrative errors and failure to comply with the conditions.
- Some utilities had a monopoly of the market and therefore they could pass the cost of fines on to consumers. Officers stated that utilities were not allowed to pass on any costs incurred from FPNs.
- Officers stated that four companies, in the main, incurring FPNs. One company seemed to make returns to the same on more than one occasion. Officers agreed to provide in future reports details of the percentages of the total figure of the four companies involved in receiving FPNs.
- Complaints had been received from the public about signs being left on location with no one working on the project. Officers stated that the Council was working with the utilities on the need to improve communication with the public when such incidents occurred. Officers stated that if it was known that many people

would be affected by a road closure then it was important for the utility company to be on site for traffic management purposes.

- It was noted that there was a small financial deficit on the Scheme. Officers stated that the cost of the Scheme would be examined at the end of the three year trial period as the Scheme was supposed to be cost neutral.
- It was noted that the County Council recorded their own FPN offences for the purposes of parity, but that no charges were incurred.

RESOLVED

That the report, comments by members and the responses of officers on the second year of operation of the Permit Scheme, be noted.

56 HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received its Work Programme for the coming year for consideration and comment.

RESOLVED

That the Work Programme be noted and updated accordingly.

The meeting closed at 11.55 am