



HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 JUNE 2015

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M BROOKES (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors A G Hagues (Vice-Chairman), M G Allan, D Brailsford, K J Clarke, R L Foulkes, J R Marriott, A H Turner MBE JP and C J T H Brewis

Councillors: R G Davies and R A Renshaw attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

David Davies (Principal Maintenance Engineer), Paul Rusted (Infrastructure Commissioner), Louise Tyers (Scrutiny Officer), Steve Willis (Chief Operating Officer) and Rachel Wilson (Democratic Services Officer)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs A Newton and Councillor R J Hunter-Clarke.

The Chief Executive reported that having received notice under Regulation 13 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, he had appointed Councillor C J T H Brewis as a replacement member on the Committee in place of Councillor Mrs A Newton for this meeting only.

2 DECLARATION OF COUNCILLOR'S INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest at this point in the meeting.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 APRIL 2015

During consideration of the minutes of the previous meeting, members raised a number of queries in relation to information contained in the minutes as follows:

- In relation to minute number 69, and parish councils being able to request 1 tonne bags of salt, it was queried how and when the salt would be delivered. Members were advised that once a parish had signed up to the self-help programme, the salt would be delivered prior to the start of inclement weather;
- It was queried whether there was a definitive list of those parishes and community groups who had signed up to the self-help winter maintenance programme. Officers agreed to provide this for members, and suggested that it could be included in the winter maintenance – preparations for winter report which was scheduled for the September 2015 meeting;

- It was noted that there had been a lot of interest from members on this scheme;
- In relation to minute number 73, and the comment that some traffic calming measures (such as speed bumps) could have an impact on gritting routes, it was queried whether salt could be issued to schools. However, members were advised that the authority did already grit to within 500m of a school.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2015 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND IT AND THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

The Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT reported that Canwick Road, Lincoln had reopened at 7.30pm on Sunday, 31 May 2015 after five months of improvement works. It was commented that the difference made by these works was remarkable. Members were informed that there were another 4-6 weeks of minor works to pavements, bus stops and other measures to complete, but the new carriageway was open. The remaining works were not likely to cause any delays at peak times.

There were no further announcements.

5 MAJOR SCHEMES UPDATE

The Committee received updates in relation to the following major schemes;

Lincoln Eastern Bypass – officers were still waiting for the Public Inquiry to take place. A pre-meeting for the Public Inquiry had been held on 15 May 2015.

Lincoln Southern Bypass – officers had carried out a quick update on the estimate of the cost of this scheme. It was noted that in 2006 the scheme was estimated at £67million, it was believed that at the current time it would cost around £90million to build this road as a dual carriageway. However, the cost would depend on a more detailed design.

Lincoln East West Link Road – this scheme was progressing well, there had been slight delays due to the demolition of buildings, but most of the demolition was complete and archaeologists were now on site. Completion was still expected for October 2016.

Canwick Road, Lincoln – as previously reported this scheme was now complete other than some minor works.

Footbridges, Lincoln – in relation to the High Street footbridge, work was being undertaken by Network Rail to move the utilities pipework. Completion was still expected for October 2015. Work on the Brayford Wharf footbridge was expected to commence following completion of the High Street Bridge. The new design of this footbridge had not received planning permission, and so Network Rail had reverted back to the original design and would be looking to introduce efficiencies in the design to bring the scheme back within budget.

Grantham Southern Relief Road – discussions had been taking place around the Heads of Terms for the scheme. Further discussions were taking place with South Kesteven District Council in relation to the King-31 aspect of the scheme.

Spalding Western Relief Road – there was no change in this scheme. Detailed discussions with employers around phases 2 and 3 were ongoing.

Skegness Business Park – the potential start time of the scheme was now November 2015.

Boston Quadrant – there was no change with this scheme.

Members of the Committee were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- There were concerns that if the Lincoln Eastern Bypass did not go ahead there could be implications for the delivery of the Local Plan;
- It was queried whether there would be opportunities to further consider the feasibility of progressing the western and southern bypasses for Lincoln if the Eastern Bypass did not go ahead;
- In relation to the plans by Network Rail to close level crossings in the south of the county, it was noted that officers had not been involved in these discussions. However, members were advised by the Executive Councillor that Network Rail was moving forward with plans to close the level crossings and schemes would be funded through its development plan. It was noted that the County Council would only be a consultee on these schemes;
- It was important that the difficulties in relation to the cost of schemes were accepted;
- It was queried whether the option of making the Lincoln Southern Bypass a single carriageway rather than a dual carriageway would make the scheme more feasible.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

6 QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE - 1 JANUARY - 31 MARCH 2015

Consideration was given to a report which provided key performance information relevant to the work of the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee.

The Chief Operating Officer guided the Committee through the report and highlighted the following:

- As it was performance information for quarter 4, which was to the end of March 2015, the data was already a couple of months out of date;
- It was planned to bring a report on road safety to the July meeting of the Committee;
- It was suggested that the Committee may want to consider whether the annual indicators reported were the most appropriate, and also whether it would be useful to set up a task and finish to look at this in more detail;
- In relation to Indicator NI169 it was noted that it was believed that the figure of 9% was incorrect, but the target of 12% was correct;
- Under performance in relation to bus services was attributed to the volume of roadworks within Lincoln. It was hoped that this performance should start to improve following the completion of works on Canwick Road;
- It was noted that 80 complaints had been received in relation to the Lincoln Eastern Bypass, these were dealt with differently to normal complaints as they related to the project;

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- It was commented that it was an interesting suggestion to have a task and finish group to look at the performance indicators. However, it was noted that they were national indicators, and not using them would mean the authority would be unable to benchmark against other authorities;
- If it was felt that the service received from the customer service centre when calling to make a complaint was not of an expected level, this would need to be lodged as a separate complaint about the customer service;
- Concerns were raised regarding the number of buses which were standing at bus stops for a number of minutes with their engines running. Members were advised that bus companies had a six minute window in relation to their timetables – they could be up to one minute early or five minutes late. Anything outside that time would incur fines, which were based on the size of the fleet. The Group Manager PTU (Passenger Transport Unit) informed members that she would try and work with the operators on this issue to ensure that their schedules were correct. However, some routes built in additional time to take account of level crossings;
- Concerns were raised regarding the terminology of the number of Children KSI in road traffic accidents, as it was felt that use of the word 'target' was inappropriate. These concerns were acknowledged, but it was a term which was used nationally;
- It was clarified that the complaints received were those which were relevant to the work of the Highways and Transport Committee, rather than the committee itself;
- It was queried whether there was any legislation that required bus drivers to switch off their engines when they were not moving;
- It was requested whether a breakdown of the service areas that the complaints referred to the Ombudsman related to could be provided? It was

also suggested that it would be useful if this information was included in the reports in the future;

- It was agreed that clarification would be sought on what the 'age' category referred to in the customer satisfaction information.

RESOLVED

That the performance information presented be noted.

7 HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE EFFICIENCY PROGRAMME (HMEP) PEER REVIEW ACTION PLAN

Consideration was given to a report which provided the Committee with information on the HMEP (Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme) Peer Review Action Plan which had been developed from the Action Planning Day following the Peer Review in March 2015.

Members were guided through the report and action plan by the Chief Operating Officer and were provided with an opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised through discussion included the following:

- The task and finish groups referred to in D1 and D5 would initially comprise officers;
- Members agreed that the action plan was the right way forward and that collaborative working was important;
- It was suggested whether there were savings that could be made through economies of scale if several authorities decided to procure services together. Members were advised that those economies of scale tended to be lost for road networks over 5,000 Km (Lincolnshire's network was approximately 9,000km, of that approximately 200km was looked after by the Highways Agency);
- It was commented that the dissatisfaction with the county's roads varied with the proximity to the borders, as there tended to be fewer complaints from those that lived nearer to the borders. Another member of the committee who lived close to the Cambridgeshire border, agreed with this statement;
- It was important to recognise that there was a need for more government investment, as there were a lot of people that used Lincolnshire roads who did not directly contribute to their maintenance such as tourists, commuters and bus companies. It was also commented that visitors to places such as Skegness and Mablethorpe usually arrived by road, as there was no longer a direct rail service from Lincoln;
- There was a need for visibility within the budget for asset management and maintenance in order to successfully bid for DfT funding;
- Lincolnshire had had success in the last few years with gaining additional funding by taking part in pilot studies. It was noted that the pinch point schemes had been a good example of this, as the authority had plans

available when the government had additional funding it wanted to spend quickly.

RESOLVED

That the comments made in relation to the action plan be noted.

8 HIGHWAYS ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Committee received a report which presented the proposed Highways Asset Management Plan for consideration by the Committee, prior to it being submitted to the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT for approval.

The Highways Asset Management Plan (formerly the Highway Maintenance Plan) set out the Council's highways maintenance policies, legal duties and standards. The document detailed any deviation from national guidance which was set out in 'Well Maintained Highways – Code of Practice for Maintenance Management'. Following changes in the authority's Asset Management Policy and Strategy, the plan was in need of approval for 2015 due to revisions to national standards and internal policy documents, however, national codes of practice were currently under review and were due to be published in the autumn; and, changes to emergency response times to category 1 and 2 defects.

It was noted that the Highways Asset Management Plan was usually used as a reference point during legal claims to determine whether the Council had a defence under section 58 of the Highways Act 1980. That defence required the Council to prove that it taken such care as in all the circumstances as was reasonably required to secure that the part of the highways to which the action related was not dangerous to traffic.

Historically the Council had met this test by referring to its inspection regime and reactive maintenance response times in accordance with previous national standards. The move to a first fix preventative approach was consistent with emerging national guidance. However, it was also currently untested in the courts. The proposed changes to the HAMP had been passed on to the Council's insurers. The insurers had declined to comment on the Plan but had not raised any objections to the proposed changes.

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- This was a move to a more risk based approach to the hierarchy of carriageways. The intervention levels would remain the same but depending on the carriageway the response times would change. For example, the response time to a defect on a category 4 and 5 carriageway would not be as fast as the same defect on a hierarchy 1 carriageway;
- The DfT had been provided with a copy of the HAMP and had used it as an example of best practice;

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- It was considered important that the message regarding the changes was communicated to the parish councils as well as why the authority would now be responding in a different way;
- Members commented that this plan was excellent, and that members also had a role in managing people's expectations when it came to repairs being carried out. There was agreement that it would be useful to send the Plan to all parish councils, and it was suggested that this could be done through LALC (Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils);
- If, following the reporting of a defect someone injured themselves before the authority had carried out a permanent repair, it was queried what the effect on the authority would be. Members were advised that in this situation, if there was a plan in place for how the defect would be dealt with and within what timescale, the test in court would be was it practicable and reasonable, in light of the resources available, to have waited to have carried out that repair;
- It was recognised that there were certain situations in which a response within 24 hours was required, which were outlined on page 53 of the Plan;
- In relation to gully cleaning, officers were trying to target those places where there were known issues, and silt level data was also being collected to assist in identifying where there were problems;
- Officers were confident that any permanent repairs which were carried out would be successful;
- Rural roads would not have as much maintenance work but would have preventative works carried out such as surface dressing etc;
- In relation to street lighting, it was noted that there was separate guidance which was in line with national guidance which related to this. Further details in relation to this would be provided to the Committee;
- It was suggested that drainage problems were often caused by issues that the county council were not responsible for such as material from developments being dumped in gullies;
- Concerns were raised regarding the condition of some footways, as some on school routes in rural areas were becoming very neglected, as there had been reductions in the footway maintenance budget. Members were advised that the budget for footways maintenance was allocated on the size of the network not on the basis of whether they were in a rural or urban area. The condition of the footways would continue to be monitored. It was acknowledged that the footway maintenance budget had been reduced in order to provide additional funding to the highways maintenance budget, as it was considered that maintaining highways was of greater priority than maintenance of footpaths;
- It was reported that in some areas problems were being encountered in relation to street cleansing due to cars being parked on the side of the roads. It was queried whether there was anything which could be done to alleviate this problem, such as by notifying residents when this was due to take place. However, members were advised that the authority could not force someone to move their car;

RESOLVED

That the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee support the recommendation of option 1 to approve the attached Highway Asset Management Plan and incorporated response times.

9 HIGHWAYS SURFACE TREATMENTS

It was agreed that this item be deferred to the next meeting as the report which had been circulated was incomplete and should have contained information in relation to the Burgh le Marsh bypass.

10 TOTAL TRANSPORT INITIATIVE

The Committee received a report which sought endorsement for the overall approach being proposed regarding the implementation of a new Total Transport Initiative, to be known as 'TotalConnect'.

It was reported that TotalConnect was a long term goal, which aimed to transform existing transport arrangements across Lincolnshire to a position where passenger transport organisation and service delivery was integrated to the maximum extent possible.

The TotalConnect initiative had secured £400,000 of Department for Transport (DfT) funding, to enable feasibility work and pilots to be undertaken to further the goal of total service integration through the creation of localised models with the potential for countywide application. As well as LCC service area integration, the initiative would seek to work with neighbouring local authorities, other public sector bodies such as the NHS and voluntary sector organisations.

It was noted that the award of £400,000 that Lincolnshire had secured was one of the highest awards in the country. Lincolnshire was seen as an example of best practice for rural transport solutions.

The Committee was guided through the report and provided more detail in relation to the potential TotalConnect projects including;

- Integrate with NHS Services;
- Expand the use of voluntary sector operators;
- Develop innovative approaches to packaging and procuring transport;
- Develop innovative methods of market moderation;
- Deliver smart ticketing across the market;
- Deliver a long term development plan for Real Time Passenger Information Systems;
- Deliver full integration of core IT systems;

Members of the Committee were provided with an opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

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- It was thought that there was currently a lack of flexibility in some of the smaller contracts, and it was hoped that this would be addressed as part of the new approach;
- It was confirmed that if there were savings which could be made from contracts, those changes should be able to be made immediately without having to wait for health partners to come on board;
- In terms of home to school transport, the use of taxis was always a last resort. When the authority went out to tender, it did not specify a type of transport;
- One of the options to be considered would be whether to bring some passenger transport services in-house;
- It was queried what the difference was between the 'Dial a Ride' service and Callconnect. Members were advised that Dial a Ride was run by the voluntary sector and there was specific criteria which had to be met to enable someone to use that service. CallConnect was a public service and was accessible by all. It was also noted that all of its buses were wheelchair accessible;
- Members were informed that concessionary bus passes were accepted on CallConnect services;
- The Stamford Community Transport Scheme was highlighted by a member as another successful scheme which was running in the County;
- It considered important that any systems brought in were accessible to all ages, for example booking tickets. Members were advised that any technology improvements would be behind the scenes, and the aim was to make it as easy as possible for members of the public to access;
- It was suggested that there was also a need to push for better passenger services on the railway, particularly now that work to upgrade the joint line between Peterborough and Doncaster had been completed.

RESOLVED

1. That Lincolnshire's status as a DfT Total Transport Pilot be supported;
2. That the proposed approach and potential schemes be supported;
3. That the Committee receive regular updates on progress.

11 APPOINTMENT OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN/CARE LEAVER REPRESENTATIVE

The Committee received a report which invited the Committee to appoint a Looked After Children/Care Leaver Representative for the Committee, following approval of the Corporate Parenting Strategy at the Council meeting on 19 December 2014.

Members were advised that the role of the Looked After Children/Care Leaver Representative would be to ensure that the Committee actively considered the potential impact of a policy, strategy or action carried out by the Committee on Looked After Children/Care Leavers and to seek further advice from relevant officers where this is unclear or unsure.

It was proposed that when the representative raises any issues at the Committee, this would be formally recorded in the minutes and passed onto the Assistant Director

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– Children's Safeguarding for information and any further action required. Members were advised that training for this role would be provided.

Councillor R L Foulkes volunteered to act as the Looked After Children/Care Leaver Representative for the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED

That Councillor R L Foulkes be appointed as the Looked After Children/Care Leaver Representative for the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee.

12 HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received a report which enabled members to consider and comment on the content of its work programme for the coming year.

A number of changes and additions to the work programme were highlighted by the Scrutiny Officer as follows:

- Highways Surface Treatment report would go to the meeting on 13 July 2015;
- Charging for vehicular access to be added to the agenda for the 13 July 2015 meeting;
- Following the motion at the County Council on 15 May 2015, the suggestion of providing parking permits to RNLI volunteers would also be considered at the meeting on 13 July 2015. It was commented whether there was a need for Task and Finish group to be set up to look at this complex issue;
- Presentation on LAGAN to be provided to a future meeting;
- It was requested that an item on school crossing patrols be considered at a future meeting. It was suggested that this could be incorporated into the Road Safety Partnership update;
- An update on the TotalConnect Project to be brought to the meeting in October 2015.

RESOLVED

That the work programme, and the changes highlighted above be noted.

The meeting closed at 12.50 pm