



**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
25 JANUARY 2021**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR B ADAMS (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors S P Roe (Vice-Chairman), T R Ashton, Mrs W Bowkett, Mrs J Brockway, R Grocock, R A Renshaw, A N Stokes, E W Strengiel and M A Whittington.

Councillors: R G Davies and Clio Perraton-Williams (Executive Support Councillor, Highways, Transport and IT) attended the meeting as observers.

Officers in attendance:-

Steven Batchelor (Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership Senior Manager), Steve Blagg (Democratic Services Officer), Karen Cassar (Assistant Director Highways), Simon Evans (Health Scrutiny Officer), Mick Phoenix (Traffic Manager-Place) and Keith Noyland (Head of Finance - Communities).

37 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

There were no apologies or membership changes.

38 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor S P Roe stated that he would leave the meeting during the discussion as he had family interests in connection with the proposed North Hykeham Relief Road. (Minute 41).

39 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 14 DECEMBER 2020

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 December 2020, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

40 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND CHIEF OFFICERS

The Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT thanked the highways teams, for their efforts clearing the roads following the recent snow fall in the south of the county.

A Member of the Committee welcomed the use of the Council bins used for the storage of grit/salt during the recent inclement weather in his area.

(Note: At this point in the proceedings, Councillor S P Roe left the meeting for the duration of Minute 41 below.)

41 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET PROPOSALS 2021/22

The Committee received a report on the Highways and Transport services revenue and capital budget proposals for 2021/22.

It was stated that the final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2021/22 had not been issued. However, it was expected to be in line with the Provisional Settlement issued on 17 December 2020. Further budgetary information was also awaited from the Lincolnshire District Councils, so the budget proposals for 2021/22 had therefore been estimated at this stage. The report specifically looked at the budget implications for the highways and transport services.

The Committee had the opportunity to scrutinise the proposals and make comments, prior to the Executive meeting on 2 February 2021, when it would make its final budget proposals for 2021/22.

The Committee supported the proposals and thanked the authors of the report for submitting a succinct and well-written report. The Committee concluded that the proposals reflected the expected level of government funding and the proposed increase in council tax of 1.99% were emphasised. In the light of this, communities were likely to support the Council's continued activities in progressing highways and transport schemes.

RESOLVED

That the revenue and capital budget proposals for 2021/22 for highways and transport, detailed in the report, be supported.

(Note: Following the proceedings in Minute 41 above, Councillor S P Roe returned to the meeting.)

42 HIGHWAY FEES AND CHARGES ANNUAL REVIEW

The Committee received a report in connection with the Highway Fees and Charges annual review, which was due to be considered by the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT, between 26 and 29 January 2021. Any views of the Committee would be reported to the Executive Councillor as part of his consideration of this decision.

Clarifications by the Committee included:-

- There was confirmation that the proposed 5% increase applied only to the officer time and resource element of the costs, and not to the costs of advertising, which had reduced as a result of a new contract.

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- There were differences in the cost of licences for cafés depending on their size, because for larger cafés more officer time was needed to assess its impact on the highway.

The Committee supported the proposed recommendations to the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT detailed in the report.

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the new charges and highway fees detailed in the report, to be applied from 1 April 2021 and to be approved by the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT, between 26 and 29 January 2021, be supported.

43 ROAD SAFETY PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received a report on the Road Safety Partnership and its Annual Report, which provided an update on fatal, killed and serious injury (KSI) casualty figures for Lincolnshire together with data on trends, comparisons and areas of priority.

The Committee noted that while the 'parent committee' for road safety was the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee, it was being considered by this Committee because of its remit for scrutinising highways and traffic matters.

The report provided detail on all activities of the Road Safety Partnership, including, the improved accuracy of information on injuries due to the use of technology, the emphasis on reducing accidents to young drivers and those over 60; engineering schemes to reduce accidents; the provision of training courses for drivers; the increased use of community involvement to monitor and record the speed of vehicles; and the composition and role of the Road Safety Board.

Comments by the Committee included:-

- An explanation was sought in connection with the recording of KSIs since 2014, which seemed to show a downward trend. However, you would expect the trend to have increased since 2014. In response it was stated that the long term trend for casualties had declined and in future reports to the Committee the trend would be reported.
- It was noticeable that while there had been a decrease in the volume of traffic using the roads, there had been an increase in business use particularly by commercial drivers and that there was a need to provide training to this group. The Partnership was aware of the increase in business use during the Covid-19 pandemic and these drivers had been identified for additional help along with other vulnerable groups such as cyclists and walkers.
- Reference was made to the ongoing effort to expanding the use of the Community Speed Watch (CSW) scheme to the City of Lincoln and larger towns throughout the county not covered by parish councils. It was agreed that there were more vulnerable people in urban areas, but rural communities had been targeted, because of the nature of roads in many villages.

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- Child casualties had increased. It was stated that child casualties in vehicles had been a serious concern. It was confirmed that these casualties tended to occur to children not as pedestrians.
- Police enforcement of defective vehicles was important. It was stated that this had been identified as a priority by the Police with visits to repeat offenders.
- An enquiry was made about what preventative measures could be taken to reduce driver errors such as speeding. It was stated that LRSP were now providing digital driver awareness courses and were now actively seeking to expand its online presence with more digital content. The Road Safety Partnership already had contacts with the University of Lincoln and other further and higher education institutions.
- In response to a question on whether any Community Speed Watch volunteers had been abused, it was stated that some volunteers had received abuse and this would be pursued by the Police.
- Some areas of the country were very successful in reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured. In response, it was stated that Lincolnshire was not doing anything different to those areas and was following best practice; Lincolnshire was also a member of the same national and regional bodies and shared best practice.
- There was a need to remind communities about the visual state of some of the fixed signs as some needed to be cleaned and moved to different locations. The Committee was advised that signs in need of cleaning were drawn to the attention of the local community. The Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire had kindly funded the cost of the first fixed signs in the county and replacement signs could be provided by the Road Safety Partnership.
- An enquiry was made if the reactive signs could be provided for 50mph speed limits. This request would be examined.
- Reference was made to a specific example of reduction in the speed limit from 60mph to 30mph and whether a staggered speed reduction could be introduced instead. The Committee was advised that the location would be examined to see if this was possible. However, the speed limit at this location was based on national guidance and speed reduction options, like the provision of a gateway should be considered.
- An enquiry was made if there was going to be an on-line version of the training for Community Speed Watch for the duration of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Committee was advised that the provision of on-line training would be explored; however, there was a need to ensure that any training provided was suitable in the present circumstances.

The Chairman thanked the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership Senior Manager for a very informative report and reiterated that the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee was the main 'parent committee' for road safety.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the report and comments by the Committee, be noted and taken in to consideration by the Road Safety Partnership.

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(b) That this Committee receive an annual report on the Road Safety Partnership.

44 HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received its Work Programme.

It was stated that the meeting scheduled for 8 April 2021 would be retained in the diary for the time being, owing to the uncertainty whether the County Council Election on 6 May 2021 would proceed.

RESOLVED

That the Work Programme be noted and updated accordingly.

45 STEVE BLAGG - RETIREMENT

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, referred to the imminent retirement of Steve Blagg, Democratic Services Officer. The Chairman thanked him for his services and wished him health and happiness for the future.

The meeting closed at 11.40 am

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