

**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
11 JULY 2016**

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, G J Ellis and R G Fairman

Councillor R G Davies attended the meeting as an observer

Officers in attendance:-

Steven Batchelor (Senior Manager), Steve Blagg (Democratic Services Officer), Mick Phoenix (Regulation Services Manager), Paul Rusted (Infrastructure Commissioner), Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer) and Andrew Trevithick (Casualty Reduction Officer)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs A M Newton.

The Chief Executive reported that under the Local Government (Committee and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, he had appointed Councillors R G Fairman and G J Ellis to the Committee, in place of Councillors R J Hunter-Clarke and N M Murray, respectively, for this meeting only.

2 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

None were declared at this stage of the meeting.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS AND
TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 13 JUNE 2016

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee held on 13 June 2016, be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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

None were announced.

5 MAJOR SCHEMES UPDATE

The Committee received a verbal report on the latest situation in connection with Major Schemes as follows:-

(a) Lincoln East West Link – on programme for completion for September 2016 and the key opening ceremony had been arranged for 18 November 2016, with the same invited guests that started the works.

(b) Skegness Countryside Business Park – construction contract for roundabout on A52 plus estate roads and servicing would be sent on the 18 July 2016, with a view to awarding the contract on 18 October 2016 and starting work on 15 November 2016. Works were expected to take nine months to complete during which planning permission for the new County Council commercial workspaces would be obtained.

(c) Select List Framework – three and half year's into a four year framework. The first stage had been completed, the second stage (Invitation to Tender) had been released to those who were successful in Stage 1 and they were currently compiling their submissions, due back at the end of July 2016.

(d) Go Skegness - £4m of funding secured from the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP) to help improve sustainable transport (bus, cyclists and pedestrian) links to and through Skegness and Ingoldmells. Work would start during the winter months so as not to affect summer traffic movements.

(e) Lincoln Southern Bypass – bids had been submitted to the Lincolnshire Enterprise Partnership and Highways England to assist with funding construction of the improvements to the A46 roundabout. Also, an additional bid was prepared for the Government's Large Major Schemes Fund, for submission by the end of July 2016.

(f) Lincoln Eastern Bypass – the selection list of a tender list of four contractors was completed in December 2015. Tenders were issued in early June 2016 with a tender period of twelve weeks. Local suppliers were being encouraged to participate in the tender process. There was still an issue concerning Network Rail's inability to confirm the Disruptive Track Possession required to deliver this element of the scheme.

(g) Lincoln Footbridges – the High Street footbridge opened on 24 June 2016 with the lifts expected to be operational by 4 July 2016.

With regard to Brayford Wharf a planning application was expected to be submitted by Network Rail to the City of Lincoln in Autumn 2016 and it was hoped to have the scheme open in the Autumn of 2017.

(h) Boston Quadrant – Quadrant 1, a mixed use development by Chestnut Homes was now under way, having started installing a new roundabout south of Boston on the A16. The infrastructure for this development would in effect form the first part of the proposed Boston Distributor Road.

(i) Street Lighting Transformation Project – following the announcement by the Council on the 8 June 2016, to revise its plans, the Executive Councillor for Highways and Transport had been requested to make a decision on 18 July 2016, relating to calls, from some of those affected, for part night switch offs to be changed from 10pm to midnight switch off. LED conversions were taking place and the existing "10pm" photocells would be reprogrammed so that they could be reused later in the programme.

(j) Grantham Southern Relief Road – King 31 Phase 1 of scheme extended in to Phase 2 was substantially completed in June 2016. Phase 2 of the scheme was progressing.

(k) A17/A151 (Peppermint Junction, Holbeach) – the programme would look to award the tender in March 2017 and work would commence in early May 2017.

Responding to comments made by the Committee, officers stated that there was no funding for compensation in the Lincoln Eastern Bypass budget in connection with the issues arising from the Disruptive Track Possession; stated that the change to the part night switch off of street lights from 10pm to midnight would be completed in two months; stated that with regard to proposals for a road from Skellingthorpe Road to Beevor Street, discussions were ongoing with Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership and that in connection with the problems of east to west travel across Lincoln all schemes relied on funding from development in order to take place.

6 PERMIT SCHEME - UPDATE

The Committee received a report in connection with the completion of the consultation for the County Council's Permitting Scheme. Officers stated that various suggestions following the consultation had been built into the Permit Scheme documentation. The Scheme would allow the Council to control third party activities on the highway. The Council had worked in a collaborative way with the utilities on the consultation for the project. A trial period for our own works had mimicked the requirements that a Permit Scheme would impose and this had proved to be beneficial for all parties concerned.

Officers reported an amendment to the second paragraph of the report under the heading "Conclusion", the second sentence should be deleted and the following two sentences added – "It is intended to invoke the scheme as a single authority scheme. However, to facilitate Rutland County Council's possible future membership it is intended to amend the scheme to a Joint Scheme at a later date".

Discussion between the Committee and officers included the following topics:-

1. Was there any evidence to help traffic problems on sensitive routes? Officers stated that information on road signs was more informative for the public, particularly, an improvement in the start and end dates of a project had led to a reduction in complaints. Adherence to project timescales by contractors had also improved.

2. There was a need to ensure that work on roads by the utilities did not disrupt traffic flow, that the Council was pro-active in monitoring work and that work was carried out correctly.
3. There had been an issue with other Permit Schemes by the use of incorrect addresses given by Promoters. Officers stated that this issue had been examined and the asset management tool used had been updated to reduce the risk of this happening.
4. Concern about the proliferation of emergency works by promoters. Officers stated that this would be a priority for the Inspectors and this was welcomed by the utilities.
5. Was the cost of the Permit scheme met by charges? Officers stated that the price of Permits were set to cover the cost of the scheme and the cost of Permits would be reviewed each year.
6. The information provided on the road signs for the public was good but it was noted that some of the information was written in felt tipped pen which could fade in inclement weather. Officers stated that the signs were regularly inspected by an Inspector.
7. Officers confirmed that Promoters should apply for a permit before starting any work. If the Promoter over stayed beyond the day when the work was due to be completed then a fine could be imposed.
8. The Permit scheme should encourage co-ordination by Promoters. Officers stated that Promoters would receive a reduction in the cost of a Permit for jointly promoted schemes.
9. Other road works taking place in the vicinity needed to be taken into consideration for space management purposes.
10. Performance information arising from the Permit scheme would be published.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the outcome of the Permit Scheme consultation be noted.
- (b) That the comments made by the Committee and the responses by officers on the Permit Scheme be noted.
- (c) That the Lincolnshire Permit Scheme be supported and that the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT be asked to approve adoption of the Scheme.

7 LINCOLNSHIRE ROAD SAFETY PARTNERSHIP SCHOOL SAFETY WATCH -STATUS REPORT

The Committee received a report in connection with the School Safety Watch. This new initiative was aimed primarily at Lincolnshire schools but might include other establishments where children regularly attended.

Discussion between the Committee and officers included the following topics:-

1. Officers stated that the trial statistics from the use of the School Safety Watch signs indicated that before their erection the speed limit was exceeded by 10% of motorists, after erection this reduced to 2.9%.

2. Was it proposed to erect just one sign outside of a school? Officers stated that it was at the discretion of the school how many signs they purchased and it was better if the school moved the signs on a regular basis to avoid complacency by motorists.
3. Were the signs reflective as this could cause problems for motorists? Officers stated that while the signs were reflective they would be installed at a level that that prevented dazzle caused by headlights. Any problems would be investigated.
4. Why were local authority schools being asked to pay for the signs? Officers stated that schools needing the signs would be prepared to pay for them.
5. There were fewer local authority schools. If the signs were free this would devalue them and schools were more able to afford them than the local authority.
6. Parish Councils were required to purchase the Community Speed Watch signs.
7. Schools had a responsibility for parking in the vicinity of the school.
8. Was it possible to set the time and day the signs came on? Officers stated that the signs operated on a similar system to the timing for a central heating system. The signs also used rechargeable batteries and these were the school's responsibility.
9. Proliferation of signs in the vicinity of a school could cause problems
10. This scheme should complement the School Safety Zones scheme to prevent the proliferation of signs and the school should to conduct a survey before the signs were erected.
11. Officers stated that it was proposed to test run the signs before they were installed. The signs were able to detect variable speed and monitoring procedures were in place.
12. Did the signs have a function that informed motorists not to drop off children? Officers stated that the signs had a function to inform motorists of this matter.
13. Officers stated that the wording on the signs could be changed to reflect local circumstances.
14. Who had responsibility for moving the signs? Officers stated that the school had responsibility for moving the signs and they were easy to move.
15. Was the battery power easy to check? Officers stated that the rechargeable batteries were easy to check and it was possible to use a mobile telephone for this purpose.
16. Could the signs be purchased on credit? Officers stated that this was being considered as an option by the supplier of the Community Safety Watch device and officers would discuss the same with the different supplier of the School Safety Watch device.
17. Was it possible for the signs to record historical data? Officers stated that it was possible for the signs to record historical data, including, amongst others, the time of day speeding occurred.
19. Were the signs vandal proof? Officers stated that the sign had a shatterproof facia over the leds. Vandalism such as spray painting could not be prevented.

Officers agreed to continue the test trials of the signs, they would take into consideration the comments made by the Committee and agreed to report their findings to a future meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the comments made by the Committee and the responses of officers be noted.

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(b) That officers report their findings from the test trials of the signs and consider the various comments raised by the Committee to a future meeting of the Committee.

8 HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK
PROGRAMME

The Committee received its Work Programme. Comments raised by the Committee included the following:-

- (a) A meeting between the Committee and Network Rail was being investigated.
- (b) The report on the CCTV Pilot Scheme for parking enforcement outside schools update would now be presented to the meeting on 23 January 2017, not 28 November 2016, as detailed in the report.
- (c) The effects of the reduction in the cutting of verges would be considered when the Highways Asset Management Plan was considered on 12 September 2016. It was agreed that a copy of the report considered at the Council's budget meeting and a breakdown of each District Council's verge cutting programme should be sent to Councillor M Allan.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the Committee's Work Programme be noted and updated accordingly.
- (b) That officers send the necessary information in connection with the cutting of verges requested by Councillor Mark Allan.

The meeting closed at 11.30 am