

**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
12 SEPTEMBER 2016**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M BROOKES (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors A G Hagues (Vice-Chairman), M G Allan, D Brailsford, K J Clarke, G J Ellis, R G Fairman, Mrs A M Newton, Mrs S Ransome and A H Turner MBE JP

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

Officers in attendance:-

Steve Blagg (Democratic Services Officer), David Davies (Principal Maintenance Engineer), Steve Blagg (Democratic Services Officer), Richard Fenwick (Highways Officer), Richard Hardesty (Senior Project Leader), Paul Rusted (Infrastructure Commissioner), Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer), Mark Welsh (Flood Risk and Development Manager) and Steve Willis (Chief Operating Officer, Development Services)

9 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J R Marriott.

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

10 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

None were declared at this stage of the meeting.

11 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 11 JULY 2016

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee held on 11 July 2016, be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND IT AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICERS**

No announcements were made.

13 HIGHWAY ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Committee received a report in connection with the Highway Asset Management Plan which sets out the Council's highway maintenance policies, legal duties and standards. Officers stated that the Plan was in need of review in 2016 due to (a) revisions to internal operating procedures as a result of budget pressures, including grass cutting, weed spraying and drainage cleansing frequencies and (b) amendments to some wording and formatting errors in the previous version of the Plan.

Officers informed the Committee that it was necessary for the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT to approve the amendments on 19 September 2016.

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

1. South Kesteven District Council only carried out weed control once a year and therefore the County Council's proposals were in line with the District Council. Officers stated that District Councils were responsible for weed clearance from footpaths and their own amenity areas and the County Council's main responsibility was the removal of weeds from the highway.
2. Officers stated that the type of chemicals used to control weed growth was very restrictive and therefore weed control could only be undertaken at certain times of the year.
3. Officers stated that gully cleaning had been analysed in detail and it was now clear which gullies needed targeting on a frequent basis.
4. There was nothing in the report about the cutting of amenity verges on the highway. Officers stated that this issue would be addressed next year when new national guidelines were expected to be issued.
5. Councillor K Clarke was requested to report the specific problem with a gully in Boultham Park, Lincoln, to the Council, for investigation.

RESOLVED

That the comments made by the Committee and responses by officers, be noted and that the recommendations to the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT, detailed in the report, be supported.

14 STREET LIGHTING TRANSFORMATION PROJECT UPDATE

The Committee received a progress report in connection with the Street Lighting Transformation Project up to 31 August 2016. Officers stated that the project was due to be completed by March 2017.

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Officers reported that following the submission of a 4000 signature petition received by the Committee on 13 June 2016, part night time lighting had been altered from 10pm to 12 midnight.

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

1. Parish Councils being kept informed of street lighting developments was welcomed.
2. The proposals struck a balance between the saving of energy and reducing CO₂ emissions.
3. The use of LED lighting to reduce light pollution was welcomed.
4. Concern about foliage from trees obstructing street lights and causing street lights to remain on during day time hours. Officers stated that specific details of street lights being obstructed needed to be reported to the Council in the first instance for investigation.
5. Concern was expressed about street lighting on the A15. Officers stated that some street lights on the A15 had been switched off following assessment by Road Safety Partnership. Street lights on the A16 and A17 were currently being investigated in consultation with local Parish Councils and would only be switched off following the outcome of discussions with the Road Safety Partnership.
6. Officers reminded the Committee to contact the Council's Customer Service Centre in the first instance if they had any concerns about street lighting.
7. Had there been an increase in the reporting of crime since the Street Light Transformation project had started? Officers stated that statistics provided by the Lincolnshire Crime Partnership indicated that any significant crime was associated with the night time economy of major urban areas and in these areas the lights remained on. The Police had not reported any increase in crime and evidence from North Yorkshire County Council which had a similar street lighting policy to the Council, reported crime had actually fallen by 19%.
8. What was the procedure for anyone wishing to appeal against changes to street lighting and how many appeals had been received to date? Officers explained the exception criteria and gave an example of a Nursing Home which could be visited by emergency vehicles at any time of the night. Another example involved the presence of road humps and the need for motorists to be able to see them.
9. When the street lights went off at 10pm in the Moorland Ward of Lincoln the Police had had concerns about break-ins of garden sheds. Had there been an increase in this crime and accidents? Officers stated that they had not got any statistics for any of these areas and the Police had not contacted the Council with any concerns. The prime purpose for street lights were to light the public highway and there was no statutory duty for Councils to provide street lighting at all locations. Officers stated that two residents had contacted the Council following falls/trips and added that residents were able to make a claim for compensation, however, these would need to be in relation to the surface they were walking on and not due to being lit or not.

RESOLVED

That the report, comments made by the Committee and the responses of officers, be noted.

15 PERFORMANCE REPORT, QUARTER 1 - 1 APRIL TO 30 JUNE 2016

The Committee received a report in connection with the performance of the highways service including Lincolnshire Highways Alliance, Major Highway Schemes update and the Customer Satisfaction information, including service specific complaints and compliments for Quarter 1 (1 April 2016 to 30 June 2016).

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

1. It was noted that the East West Link was nearing completion and could currently be used by traffic. What was the latest situation in connection with the provision of signage to help motorists to use this road and avoid congestion in other parts of Lincoln? Officers stated that it was proposed to consider the provision of signage in Lincoln generally in due course. The introduction of temporary signage was expensive.
2. Who was responsible for maintenance issues for the new pedestrian bridge at the High Street rail crossing? Officers stated that maintenance of the footbridge was the responsibility of Network Rail and discussions were still required between the Council and Network Rail in connection with responsibility for the walking surface on the bridge.
3. The timing sequence of traffic lights on Tentercroft Street, Lincoln was causing issues for buses. Officers stated that they would ask the Traffic Light Engineer to investigate.
4. While the number of highways schemes being completed was welcomed was any consideration being given to future schemes? Officers stated that many large highway schemes were now required to show economic value in order to obtain Local Enterprise Partnership funding and the Council was in the process of prioritising projects in one overall strategy. Local Plans also provided another opportunity for forward development.
5. What was the timescale for responding to complaints? Officers stated that the response to responding to complaints about the highway was ten working days. However, there were currently delays in responding because the department was going through a major review and was running a 30% vacancy rate.
6. Concern was expressed about the potential delay to the start of the Lincoln Eastern Bypass due to Network Rail's inability to confirm the Disruptive Track Possession required to deliver the Spalding Line overbridge. Officers stated that the Council was expecting a more positive response from Network Rail on this matter in October 2016 and that, in the meantime, it was proposed to adjust the building programme to account for this delay.

RESOLVED

That the report, the comments made by the Committee and responses by officers, be noted.

16 UPDATE ON LOCAL BUS MATTERS

The Committee received a report in connection with legislative proposals for public transport, along with an update on integration with NHS Services; Real Time

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Passenger Information and Market Moderation by the County Council's Teckal Company. Officers informed the Committee that the Teckal Company had commenced services from today.

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

1. The Voluntary Car Scheme was so popular in South Holland that the service was inundated. Officers stated that the Council was working with the Voluntary Car Scheme to establish a hub which would allow the pooling of resources in this area.
2. Was the TUPE process used for the Teckal Company similar to that used by the County Council? Officers stated that the Teckal Company would follow the TUPE process used by private sector bus companies.
3. Disappointment was expressed that the proposed integration of the Total Transport Initiative between the County Council and the West Lincolnshire CCG had been unsuccessful. What were the reasons for the failure? Officers stated that no reasons had been given. Also, despite CallConnect/NSL trials which indicated potential for efficiencies, the County Council was not invited to stakeholder engagement events as they had been seen as a potential bidder for the contract.

The Committee placed on record their disappointment at the decision by West Lincolnshire CCG not to get involve with the County Council in an integrated transport initiative which could have provided an opportunity for collaboration and delivered efficiencies.

RESOLVED

(a) That the report, comments made by the Committee and the response of officers, be noted.

(b) That the Committee place on record their disappointment at the decision by West Lincolnshire CCG not to get involve with the County Council in an integrated transport initiative which provided an opportunity for collaboration and delivered efficiencies.

17 DEVELOPMENT ROAD AND SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SPECIFICATION AND CONSTRUCTION

The Committee received a report in connection with the new County Council Development Road and Sustainability Drainage Specification and Construction document, which had been produced to take account of the changes introduced by government legislation, from April 2015 requiring Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems on all major developments. Officers stated that a similar report would be submitted to the Flood and Drainage Scrutiny Committee.

A discussion between the Committee and officers included the following topics:-

1. How would the document deal with urban areas? Officers stated that there was a difference between dealing with water "run off" in urban areas and rural areas. There was a need for any new development to avoid adding to "run off". The requirements

or a brown field site were not as onerous and explained the process for dealing with water "run off" adding that the future maintenance of "run off" was being reviewed.

2. Officers stated that they could provide presentations on Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems to future meetings.

3. What was the situation in connection with Private Roads? Officers stated that this was a complex area. Residents could bring forward a requirement under the Street Works Act for the road to be adopted and notice would have to be served on the developer to bring the Private Road up to standard.

3. In the past building had taken place without any consideration to the effects of water "run off". Officers stated that before the major flooding incidents nationwide in 2007 took place responsibility for flooding incidents was unclear. The County Council now had responsibility for advising the District Planning Authorities about flood risks generally, the effects on new developments and water "run off" incidents. The Council was not involved in advising on foul, fluvial and coastal flooding matters.

RESOLVED

That the report, comments made by the Committee and the responses of officers, be noted.

18 WINTER MAINTENANCE WORKING GROUP 2016 OUTCOME AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee received a report in connection with the outcome and recommendations of the Winter Maintenance Working Group 2016, in connection with the following areas:-

1. Areas of possible savings, with particular focus on the equipment available for Severe Weather Events;
2. Identifying any changes to be considered for inclusion in an updated Winter Maintenance Plan;
3. Consider and review options for continued publicity to encourage suitable LGV licenced drivers to join Kier leading up to the 2016/17 winter period.

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

1. The use of Firefighters to help in severe weather was welcomed.
2. The interest shown in the recruitment days was welcomed.
3. Many Fire Stations had Retained Fire Fighters and they were required to live a certain distance from the Fire Station. What happened if they received a request to the Council with gritting were on call? Officers stated that Fire Fighters would only be involved in gritting duties when they were not on call.
4. Could any spare gritter capacity be offered to neighbouring Local Authorities to use? Officers stated that any spare capacity was retained in case of breakdowns but with improved reliability the number of Large Goods Vehicle Gritters had been reduced from five to four vehicles.
5. Concern was expressed about rural areas in the event of severe inclement weather and was it possible to store gritting vehicles in a barn for use when needed? Officers stated that the cost of storage was too much and, also, many contracts for

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snow clearance were given to local farmers and the Council was able to give them free use of any surplus equipment.

6. Weather forecasting had improved considerably in recent years. Officers stated that weather modelling had improved with the ability to forecast the presence of ice at specific locations.

RESOLVED

(a) That the outcomes and recommendations of the Winter Maintenance Working Group, be supported.

(b) That a review of the Winter Maintenance Plan, taking into account the outcomes and recommendations from the Working Group, for consideration by the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT, be supported.

19 HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK
PROGRAMME

The Committee considered its Work Programme.

RESOLVED

That the Committee's Work Programme be noted and updated accordingly, subject to the programming of the following:-

(a) Pre-Decision scrutiny of the award of the contract for the Lincoln Eastern Bypass.

(b) Review of the Boston Transport Strategy.

The meeting closed at 12.05 pm