

**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
23 JANUARY 2017**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M BROOKES (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors A G Hagues (Vice-Chairman), M G Allan, A M Austin, K J Clarke, G J Ellis, R L Foulkes, R G Fairman, Mrs A M Newton and A H Turner MBE JP

Councillors: R G Davies, Ms T Keywood-Wainwright, Mrs S Ransome and R A Renshaw attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Steve Blagg (Democratic Services Officer), Mike Coates (Highways Assessment and Laboratory Manager), Michelle Grady (Head of Finance (Communities)), Richard Hardesty (Senior Project Leader), Matt Jones (Parking Services Manager), Peter Ramsey (Mouchel Divisional Manager, Transport Planning), Paul Rusted (Infrastructure Commissioner), Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer) and Steve Willis (Chief Operating Officer, Development Services)

39 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

The Chief Executive reported that under the Local Government (Committee and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, he had appointed Councillors A Austin and G J Ellis, respectively, in place of Councillors D Brailsford and N M Murray, for this meeting only.

40 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were made at this stage of the meeting.

41 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 28 NOVEMBER 2016

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 November 2016, be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

42 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND IT AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICERS

Executive Councillor R G Davies stated that the County Council had secured additional funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) and the Council would now receive just over £35m for highway projects, an increase of £3m on the original

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figure of £32m. He agreed to circulate the details of the funding package to members. Executive Councillor R G Davies requested that members should notify the Council if they had any specific concerns about the highway network. Councillor R G Davies and the Committee placed on record their appreciation to the officers for their efforts in obtaining additional funding from the Government.

43 MAJOR SCHEMES UPDATE

The Committee received an update of the latest situation of major schemes as follows:-

- Lincoln East West Link – now completed and opened to traffic with the exception of some tidying up work required.
- Skegness Business Park – discussions were on-going with the contractor and utility companies about potential savings.
- Go Skegness – progress was on schedule, including, amongst others, the award of a contract for a cycle path on the A52; work had started on Gibraltar Point Phase 1; completion of bus stops on Lumley Road and remedial works required on Roman Bank.
- Lincoln Eastern Bypass – archaeological investigations were on-going with some interesting artefacts found and recorded. Network Rail's contractor for the construction of a rail bridge over the by-pass had begun.
- Sutterton Roundabout – work was about to commence in January 2017.
- Grantham Southern Relief Road – Phase 2 was the next section to be built and discussions were on-going with Highways England with an expected start in June/July 2017.
- Street Lighting Transformation Project – on schedule for completion in March 2017.
- A17/A151 – Peppermint Junction, Holbeach – on schedule with a start being made in mid- 2017.

Officers agreed to respond to Councillor K Clarke's enquiry about the provision of highway signage following the opening of the Lincoln East West Bypass.

44 BOSTON TRANSPORT STRATEGY 2016-2036

The Committee received a pre-decision report and presentation in connection with the Boston Transport Strategy 2016-2036 which was due to be considered by the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT. The views of the Committee along with those of Boston Borough Council's Overview Committee would be reported to the Executive Councillor.

The Transport Strategy examined a number of proposals in the short, medium and long term to improve travel access within the town and the immediate surrounding area.

Comments by the Committee and responses of officers included the following:-

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- County and Boston Borough Council members needed to be involved in the Strategy Steering Group which was important for the delivery of the Strategy in the future. Officers welcomed member involvement in the Steering Group.
- Officers in response to the questions submitted responded as follows: – 1. Real Time Passenger Information was not yet available. 2. The Lincolnshire car sharing scheme was successful with over 2,000 participants from around the county, 350,000 miles saved and £88,000 saved. 3. The enforcement of 20mph zones had been examined elsewhere and was the responsibility of the Police. The use of signage helped and there was a need to examine the current speed limits. 4. Cycle storage on buses had not been done in Lincolnshire but had been trialled in the UK and there was an opportunity to trial this in Boston. 5. The opportune time to lobby train operators was during the franchise process were renewed and to present a business case to show an increase in passenger usage.
- Boston was a Sub-Regional Centre but lacked a proper road and rail structure. There was a lot of local traffic coming into Boston using the same routes as through traffic. Rail infrastructure into and around Boston had been drastically reduced since the 1960's and there was no direct rail line between Lincoln and Boston. There was an opportunity to improve rail passenger services when the new rail franchises came up for renewal. The Port rail head needed to be protected.
- The Pilgrim Hospital attracted a lot of traffic.
- The inter-town bus was suitable only if you lived near to its route.
- There was only one bus operator in Boston and therefore there was little incentive for operators to develop new routes.
- Economic development was prevented in Boston due to the perception of congestion problems and there was a need for investment to address this problem.
- The proposals for the Boston Distributor Road were welcomed.
- Conflict due to shared pedestrian and cycle routes was caused by lack of consideration. Officers stated that one of the aims of the strategy was to try and get people out of their cars and to use more sustainable transport.
- There had not been any account taken of the issues caused by population growth.
- What were Business Travel Zones? Officers stated that these Zones involved local authorities working with businesses to encourage car sharing and cycling.
- Traffic issues raised included the destination of the proposed East West Link Road which was needed due to the shortage of bridges; a lot of the traffic coming from the south of Boston was commercial, went through residential areas and a minor break downs caused gridlock. Officers stated that proposals for the East West Link Road required examination but the route would alleviate the amount of traffic using John Adam's Way which was the most congested road in the county. Officers stated that strategic traffic comprised less than 4% of journeys in Boston, HGV traffic was low and the biggest factor contributing to congestion was local traffic.

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Following the discussion it was agreed that the Committee's conclusions should be passed to the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT as follows:-

- The importance of the Boston Distributor Road in conjunction with the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan.
- The importance of the Strategy Steering Group in delivering the Strategy with Member involvement on this Group welcomed.
- The opportunity to improve rail services when rail franchises were renewed.
- The current bus services were not meeting needs.
- The importance of developing the East West link.

RESOLVED

(a) That the recommendation to the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT, detailed in the report, is supported.

(b) That the additional comments made by the Committee, below, be passed to the Executive Councillor as follows:-

- The importance of the Strategy Steering Group, with Member involvement on this Group, in delivering the Strategy.
- The importance of economic development to Boston.
- The opportunity to improve rail services when rail franchises were renewed.
- The current bus services were not meeting needs.
- The importance of developing the East West link.
- The importance of the Boston Distributor Road in conjunction with the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan.

45 CCTV PILOT SCHEME - PARKING ENFORCEMENT OUTSIDE SCHOOLS

The Committee received a progress report in connection with the introduction of a trial for a CCTV enforcement scheme to take place outside schools, which was due to commence in January 2017. The idea behind the proposal was to prevent irresponsible parking outside of schools particularly by parents picking up their children at the start and beginning of each school day. Officers stated that since the publication of the report the enforcement vehicle was now on site; that the transfer of information from the enforcement vehicle to the back office was still being tested; the vehicle would be marked up to show clearly that CCTV was in operation and that the exercise was designed to act as a deterrent. Officers stated that the Department of Transport had indicated that school keep clear markings could not be enforced by local authorities unless there was an underlying traffic order as the zig zag road markings were advisory only. Officers stated that when the vehicle was not being used on school duties it would be used to enforce Clearways and pedestrian crossings and members would be kept informed of its use.

Comments by the Committee and the responses of officers included the following:-

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- A number of comments were made in connection with car parking, including allowing parents within the school boundary to drop off/pick and that, if this was allowed, how could it be rolled out in the county because it was resource intensive? If parking for parents was allowed within the school boundary schools might be liable for any injuries. Parents needed to be made aware that irresponsible parking was dangerous to all. The Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT stated that the provision of car parking was not a mandatory requirement for schools, that car parking was provided for school staff and that car parking in the vicinity of a school caused problems for local communities.
- Some parents ignored the warnings not to park on single yellow lines outside of a school because there was no enforcement. Officers stated that while the CCTV was unable to enforce parking on a single yellow line, the CCTV vehicle would still be on site to monitor and an enforcement officer would be present to carry out enforcement although it was noted that action could only be taken by the Enforcement Officer following a five minute observation.
- In some local authority areas the use of CCTV had caused public concern. The Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT stated that the CCTV was overt and that there had only been problems caused by the covert use of CCTV. He stated that irresponsible parking outside of schools was a problem.
- The numbers of pupils on roll at the Priory Witham School had increased and traffic calming measures on the road outside of the school aggravated parking problems and could the traffic calming measures be removed? The Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT stated that this matter should be raised with the Area Highways Manager.
- In one case the developer wished to install a separate access to a school to facilitate pupil access but the school had refused the new access because of concerns about safety.

RESOLVED

That the progress of the scheme and the comments made by the Committee be noted.

46 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET PROPOSALS 2017/18

(Note: Councillors M G Allan, K J Clarke and A H Turner MBE left the meeting during this item)

The Committee received a report in connection with the budget proposals arising from the Provisional Local Government Settlement, announced on 15 December 2016 and its implications for Highways and Transport Services. The Committee's views were sought and their comments passed to the Executive meeting on 7 February 2017.

Comments by the Committee and the response of officers included the following:-

- Was the additional funding of £3m awarded by the Department for Transport from the productivity fund to be spent in the financial year 2017/18? Officers

explained how the additional funding would be spent and that, ideally, it should be spent in the financial year 2017/18.

- Alternative street lights should only be switched off; people working shifts needed the street lights on; in some cases residents had been advised by the Police to lock their property because of the poor lighting; older versions of CCTV did not operate in the dark but newer versions used infra-red which was able to see in the dark; there had been an increase in burglaries and footpaths should be lit. The Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT stated that the cost of reinstating street lighting would be too expensive to undertake with the Council needing to save £100m in this financial year. He added that the Police had stated that there had not been increase in crime, that North Yorkshire and Worcestershire County Councils had already adopted a similar reduction in street lighting and crime had gone down. He stated that the majority of areas in Lincolnshire did not have street lighting with street lighting provided where there was a night time economy and where there were high numbers of frail elderly people.
- With regard to the proposal to reduce amenity grass cutting the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT reiterated his previous comments on the need for the Council to save £100m this financial year. The Council had communicated with local communities, including Parish Councils, about the proposals to reduce amenity grass cutting and that safety cuts would be carried out if required. The Committee welcomed the offer of 20% funding to Parish and Town Councils to continue with the amenity cuts on a self-service basis.
- Officers stated the Council would save £1.7m a year by reducing street lighting and that the Council would get back £35m from the Government for its 2017/18 net capital programme.
- Officers asked Councillor R A Renshaw to let them have the details of a street light located on a playing field footpath which he raised at the meeting.
- The reduction in gully emptying and drainage cleansing to less than one cycle per annum and emergencies was highlighted as an area of concern. There was concern about the impact on the public and the increased risk of localised flooding and complaints. Officers highlighted the impact would be minimal as the cleansing would be targeted to those areas that needed it more.

A motion by Councillor Mrs A M Newton that the Executive should be asked to reconsider the recommendation to reduce the Highway Asset Maintenance budget in connection with street lighting as detailed in the report, because of safety concerns, was not seconded and therefore was not carried. It was agreed to pass Councillor Mrs A M Newton's comments to the Executive on 7 February 2017.

RESOLVED

That the comments made by the Committee on the Revenue and Capital Budget proposals 2017/18 be passed to the Executive on 7 February 2017.

47 HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK
PROGRAMME

The Committee received a report in connection with its Work Programme. Officers stated that as the next meeting of the Committee was due to be held in the period leading up to the County Council Election on 4 May 2017, the Committee agreed that this meeting would only be held if there emergency items to consider.

RESOLVED

That the Committee's Work Programme be noted and updated accordingly.

The meeting closed at 12.45 pm