

**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
18 SEPTEMBER 2017**

**PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M BROOKES (CHAIRMAN)**

Councillors C J T H Brewis (Vice-Chairman), Mrs J Brockway, M A Griggs, R Grocock, R A Renshaw, S P Roe, A N Stokes, E W Strengiel and C L Strange

Councillors: R G Davies and Mrs C L Perraton-Williams attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Richard Fenwick (Highways Officer), Ian Kitchen (Transport Manager - Policy and Orders), Paul Rusted (Infrastructure Commissioner), Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer) and Rachel Wilson (Democratic Services Officer)

**Announcement**

The Committee held a one minute silence in memory of Lee Rowley, Senior Project Leader for the Highways Team, who had recently passed away.

**17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs W Bowkett.

The Chief Executive reported that, under Local Government (Committee and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, Councillor C L Strange had been appointed to the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee to replace Councillor Mrs W Bowkett for this meeting only.

**18 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

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

**19 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 JULY 2017**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2017 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**20 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR AND CHIEF OFFICERS**

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The Chairman reported that the training which had been held recently for members of the Committee in relation to contracts and procurement of contract had been excellent and over half of the Committee had attended. The Chairman thanks the Infrastructure Commissioner and his team for putting the training together. It was also suggested that this training should be raised with the Councillor Development Group and offered as a session to all members.

The Executive Councillor advised that he did not specifically have any announcements, but instead would give the Committee a flavour of some of the other issues which were ongoing in relation to Highways.

- Town centre parking – a number of issues had been raised particularly in relation to Gainsborough and Spalding. The Executive Councillor was exploring with the local members how the situation could be improved.
- Development management issues with district councils planning committees continued to arise, but work continued to resolve them.
- Transport for the East Midlands – this was now meeting on a regular basis. Further investment into major road networks was expected (around £1 billion) and Lincolnshire was entering into a consultation for some of that funding. Schemes were being drawn up around major road issues.
- The future of the East Midlands Trains franchise was an ongoing issue.
- There were now a substantial number of vacancies within the Highways team, and attempts to recruit were underway although this was proving difficult. It was confirmed that these posts were all required and therefore recruitment would continue.
- Highways IMT had been impacted by issues with the Confirm system.
- Remembrance Day Parades – due to changes in legislation there was now a requirement for Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) to be submitted to the Council in order to hold a parade, as well as the need for marshalls to manage the parade, which would no longer be provided by the Police. Members were asked to relay the message regarding TRO's to their communities.
- Work had been ongoing with representatives of the food industry to organise a transport conference in the south of the county, to look at how the industry could reduce transport time for produce.
- A lot of complaints were being received regarding overgrown hedges.
- The opportunities around sponsorship of roundabouts by local businesses were being looked into further.
- 16,618 enquiries had been received through the Customer Service Centre this quarter.
- During this quarter, 2,147 potholes had been reported, but the Council had actually filled around 25,000.

In relation to roundabout sponsorship it was queried whether this was something that the Committee should look at, and it was agreed that it could be looked at as there were some businesses which were very keen to be involved in this.

In respect of parades, it was highlighted that a lot of the remaining British Legion veterans were now quite elderly, and it was suggested whether the Council could

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liaise more closely with parade organisers, or look at a different way of doing things, maybe through district councils. The Executive Councillor acknowledged that this was an issue which needed to be taken into account, and also reported that work was underway to agree set routes for a parade, and also to simplify the routes and have a standard plan that could be used each time, as there were now reduced resources. It was also clarified that the County Council did not charge charitable organisations for TRO's for parades.

21 HIGHWAYS 2020 UPDATE REPORT (SEPTEMBER 2017)

Consideration was given to a report which provided the Committee with an update on the work being carried out to replace the Lincolnshire Highways Alliance. The three contracts which formed the Alliance were due to reach their full term on 31 March 2018.

Members were advised that market engagement was continuing and further local authority visits were planned to Staffordshire and Leicester.

It was noted that in relation to the Traffic Signals and Professional Services contracts, options were fairly limited due to the low number of companies operating these services.

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:

- There had been good involvement from members and it was likely that the report would be presented to the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on 6 November 2017.
- One member commented that they were beginning to understand why Lincolnshire was a level three authority and were very grateful for being kept up to date by the officers.
- It was commented that the training which had been undertaken in relation to understanding contract procurement would be beneficial to the decision making process going forward. It was suggested that this training was something that should be made available to all members and it was reported that including this training as part of the Councillor Development Programme was being actively pursued.

RESOLVED

That the work done to date, as well as the work proposed for the following period be noted.

22 PERFORMANCE REPORT, QUARTER 1 - (APRIL 2017 - JUNE 2017)

Consideration was given to a report which set out performance of the highways service including the Lincolnshire Highways Alliance, Major Highways Schemes Update, the Customer Satisfaction Information (including service specific complaints and compliments) and the yearly carriageway condition indicators.

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The Infrastructure Commissioner guided members of the Committee through the report, drawing specific attention to the following areas:

- Performance
- Traffic Signals Term Contract
- Highway Works Term Contract
- Professional Services Contract
- Customer Satisfaction Information

Members of the Committee 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 noted that the authority was constantly reviewing the targets for the Alliance to ensure they stayed challenging, and it was highlighted that there were still pleasing levels of performance across the Alliance.
- Members were pleased to see that indicators were adjusted when performance was good to ensure that performance continued to improve.
- It was considered positive that the Service did not receive that many complaints.
- It was commented that a lot of progress had been made in terms of service provision in the eight years that the Highways Alliance had been in operation.
- It was noted that the explanations of results included within the performance report were helpful to members.
- Reference was also made to the Alliance Indicator scoring a maximum of 100 points for this quarter, which was the first time this level had been reached. It was also noted that there was a continuing low level of negative press coverage which helped in the achieving of this score.
- It was queried why the Alliance Indicator for year 5 had been so low at a score of 42, and members were advised that the Alliance had gone through a difficult time in its relationship with one of the contractor and a penalty had to be applied. However, changes had been made and performance had since improved which demonstrated that the alliance was working better as a group of organisations.

### RESOLVED

That the performance, as presented, be noted.

### 23 RAIL FRANCHISING

Consideration was given to a report which updated the Committee on the position in respect of the three rails franchises which provided services across Lincolnshire. In particular it outlined the consultation being carried out by the Department for Transport for the re-letting of the East Midlands rail franchise.

The Committee were guided through the report by Ian Kitchen, Transport Policy Manager, with particular attention being drawn to the following sections:

- East Coast Main Line Franchise

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- Northern Franchise
- East Midlands Franchise
- The increased service frequency aspirations for Lincolnshire
- Connectivity
- DfT timetable for delivery

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 a joint approach by East Midlands Councils was the right way to go, as if authorities had the same message there would be an improved chance of improvements.
- A query had been raised at the County Council on Friday 15 September 2017 regarding direct train services from Boston and Skegness to Lincoln. Whilst it was acknowledged that new services may not be possible, there was a need to look at the connectivity at Sleaford. It was hoped that this would be captured in the response to the consultation.
- There were two main railway crossings in the south of Lincoln – Doddington Road and Skellingthorpe Road and neither were suitable for bridges due to the residential nature of the area. It was commented that traffic could be held up for around 7 minutes when the barriers were down waiting for three trains to pass. As more services were attracted to Lincoln, then this would have an impact on the barrier down time. There was a need to consider the road network as well as the rail network. Members were advised that there was no quick win solution for these issues, but if the Western Growth Corridor was delivered as planned, this would include a link road from Birchwood. However, there may be small things which could be done such as improving the timing of trains so they cross at the same time to reduce crossing down time.
- It was queried whether another visit to the signalling centre for new members would be useful.
- The co-operation with other authorities outside of Lincolnshire was welcomed, as trains within Lincolnshire travelled outside of the county, so it was right to work with other areas as connectivity was an important issue.
- It was commented that there were advantages to using bi-mode trains and it was queried whether the Committee could have a briefing paper by e-mail with further information.
- The direct Lincoln – Birmingham route was one that members would like to see re-introduced. Members were advised that this was something that businesses would also like to see, as it would also provide easier connections to other areas of the country.
- It was suggested that there was a need to ensure that all trains had guards on them, but it was commented that members would rather Lincolnshire had a service that benefitted all passengers. It was noted that it had been stated that there was no intention to introduce driver only trains into the east midlands contract.
- It was important to ensure that there was assistance available for any disabled passengers who may have difficulty getting on and off trains.

- It was noted that there was a stakeholder meeting with Virgin Trains East Coast (VTEC) taking place shortly which would be an opportunity to receive an update on progress.
- It was noted that when barriers were down for a long time, it was probably because they were automated and allowed additional time from the time stated on the timetable for safety reasons.
- In terms of cascading old stock, it was commented that there was a need to have space on trains for all the people wishing to board.
- It was commented that there was a wish to see the Joint Line electrified.
- There was a need for hourly services, as well for the Spalding Peterborough route to be a two shift line. Members were advised that the improvements to the joint line had enabled that to happen in theory, but that opportunity had not yet been taken, but this consultation could help to progress that option.
- It was suggested that there could be spin-off benefits to improving the rail services, such as saving money on road repairs if more people started using the trains.
- It was commented that there was a lot that rail could offer this city, and a lot that could be done to achieve it such as having one train per hour from Lincoln to Nottingham. There was a need to embrace rail travel as well as the car. This consultation was a chance to influence service at the start of a contract for the next seven years and get enhancements. Participation was important and it was hoped that members would make individual responses to the consultation as well as supporting the East Midlands Councils response.
- Lincolnshire did struggle with rail as there was no through traffic and it was very hard to compete with major urban centres.
- It was queried whether there was a need for a policy decision on supporting an increased number of trains to Lincoln, as it could have an impact on traffic flow through the city.
- It was suggested that staggered platforms, such as those at Metheringham and Ruskington, could help alleviate barrier down time, as the barriers could be raised as soon as the train had passed.
- In relation to the Western Growth Corridor, it was commented that there was a need for two bridges over the railway lines, and without these bridges the development would fail, and there was no agreement regarding who would pay for them.
- It was commented that Lincoln was a modern city with two universities which were moving up the league tables, and students were using the trains to travel around the country.
- It was considered unacceptable that passengers at Market Rasen often did not know whether they would be able to board the train they were waiting for due to overcrowding. It was acknowledged that there was a good bus service, but that people should be able to make a choice about how they travel. It was hoped that in future a dual car service would be provided. Members were advised that these issues would be highlighted in the consultation response.
- There was support for additional night time trains, as this could have an impact on the night-time economy in Lincoln for theatre visitors etc. However, this would also benefit people who needed to access hospital appointments in Lincoln who could not drive.

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- It was suggested that a change in people's driving habits could help to alleviate some of the congestion around the level crossings on Doddington Road and Skellingthorpe Road, and it was suggested whether there could be signs highlighting alternative routes. It was also queried whether there were any pinch point schemes which could be implemented in these areas, which may help in the short term.
- The waiting times for connections for Boston/Skegness to Lincoln were highlighted, and it was noted that people would not commit to using public transport when they could make this journey faster with their own transport. Work was needed on the timetables.

The main points highlighted during the discussion were summarised as follows:

- Spalding to Sleaford needed to be a two shift line
- There was a need for cascading of old stock
- More services in Lincolnshire were welcomed even though it was acknowledged there could be traffic hold ups due to barrier down time.

The Committee was advised that there was a need to be prepared to accept the impact that this could have and be prepared to defend it. The Committee accepted this and suggested that it needed to be captured in the response.

**RESOLVED**

1. That the position in respect of the East Coast Main Line and Northern rail franchises be noted.
2. That the comments made during discussion be noted and taken into account when responding to the DfT's consultation in respect of the East Midlands rail franchise.

**24      CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2016 TO 2017**

The Committee received a report which provided members with the opportunity to consider the Civil Parking Enforcement Annual Report 2016 to 2017. It was reported that the adoption of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) by Lincolnshire County Council required the Council to submit an annual report on CPE related activities and a financial statement showing the cost of the operation, including any deficit or surplus. This was in accordance with the Statutory Guidance to Local Authorities on the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions.

Members were guided through the report and some of the points highlighted included the following:

- CPE had been in operation for almost five years, as the County Council had taken over this responsibility from the Police in 2012.
- There were approximately 22 officers who patrolled the County.
- Compliance was becoming more noticeable in certain areas.
- Just over 30,000 penalty charge notices had been issued in 2016-2017, which was slightly down on the previous year, which fitted in with the increased compliance which was being seen.

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- There was a surplus of just less than £70,000, and it was noted that any surplus could only be used for certain activities. The surplus from the previous year had been used to fund CCTV monitoring of parking around schools.
- Members were reminded that the County Council did not receive any income from on street parking.

Members of the Committee 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 things seemed to be going really well. Income was going down as compliance increased, and so the scheme was doing what it was meant to.
- It was commented that retailers had been seen parking outside of their shops for several hours which prevented customers from parking there to visit the shops.
- Problems in relation to parking in Spalding town centre were highlighted, the Executive Councillor advised he had spoken to the contractor about this issue and it was being worked on.
- Members were advised that before a ticket would be issued, the officer would always check that the 'signs and lines' were compliant, otherwise, they could not issue a ticket.
- Members of the public were able to report inconsiderate parking directly to APCOA which would then be conveyed through to the team.
- If members were aware of any issues in their areas, they could contact the Parking Services Manager directly, who would try and resolve the issue.
- One member commented that they found the service to be very efficient, and appreciated the response that was received from officers.
- It was queried whether information could be made available regarding the number of tickets issued in a particular area.
- A member commented that they had witnessed the abuse of patrol officers by members of the public and it was queried whether training to deal with these situations was the responsibility of the County Council or the contractor. It was clarified that it was the contractors responsibility to provide this training which included conflict management. Also, all officers wore video badge cameras which would be switched on whilst on patrol. It was acknowledged that officers received a lot of abuse, and the cameras would also record conversations, which have helped in the prosecution of members of the public for their actions against officers.
- It was noted that the main goal of CPE was compliance, and so it was queried whether the contract was a fixed cost. Members were advised that the contract was based on the number of hours, and the County Council currently asked for 33,000.
- It was noted that the function of civil parking enforcement for on street areas had been delegated to the County Council, and off street parking enforcement was delegated to district councils. It had been suggested at one time that there was just one contract for on and off street parking, but this did not go ahead.

## RESOLVED

That the contents of the annual report and comments made be noted, and that the Committee support the publishing of the report on the Council's website.

25 UPDATE TO THE WINTER MAINTENANCE PLAN

The Committee received a report which provided members with an opportunity to consider an update to the Winter Maintenance Plan which set out proposed amendments to the existing highways Winter Maintenance Plan which was issued in October 2016 to take into account national guidance.

The Committee received a short presentation which provided further detail in relation to the following areas:

- Overview
- Statutory Duties
- Key goals
- Precautionary Salting Network
- What do we use
- Pre-wetting salt
- When to salt
- Salting the Lincolnshire roads
- Well Managed Highways Infrastructure
- Winter Maintenance Plan
- Starting salt figures, callouts, salt usage

The Committee was 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 noted that there was a number of bins around the county which were kept stocked up with salt and was queried whether there was a list of available emergency equipment and people to assist in the event of severe weather. It was confirmed that there were a series of local arrangements in place with local farmers.
- Members commented that it was a good document and very useful. It was commented that it would also be useful for councillors to have a list of supplementary routes. It was reported that all councillors used to receive a copy of the salting routes in their pigeon holes, and this could be arranged again if required, but the maps were now available online.
- In relation to salt stock for bins, salt could be delivered to certain villages for farmers to spread. Highways teams were working alongside parish councils on this. It was noted that there was a standard agreement that could be drawn up for any area which wanted to get involved, and a one tonne bag of salt would be provided each winter.
- Members were advised that officers were looking into the option of having an interactive version of the precautionary salting network maps on the website.
- In response to a query, members were advised that the authority purchased its salt from Peacock Salt, and a term contract was in place and the salt was

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shipped to Immingham docks. It was noted that there was a set price per tonne for the duration of the contract, so the price would not increase with demand.

- It was noted that if there was a good winter, the Service would retain the surplus budget for the following year.
- In relation to paragraph 3.7.6 (page 128 of the agenda pack), it was queried whether members could be added to the list of key stakeholders.
- Officers were praised for how easy the report was to follow.

**RESOLVED**

1. That the Committee supports the recommendations to the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT as set out in the report.
2. That members be added to the list of key stakeholders in paragraph 3.7.6.

**26 HIGHWAYS ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN - WELL MANAGED HIGHWAY  
INFRASTRUCTURE CODE OF PRACTICE**

Consideration was given to a report which detailed the review process of the Highways Asset Management Plan which was being updated following the publication of "Well Managed Highway Infrastructure – A Code of Practice". It was reported that changes to this national guidance had significant implications for Lincolnshire's Highways Asset Management Policies and would require a thorough revision of the Plan. The purpose of the report was to give visibility to the potential changes before the Plan was brought to the Committee in 2018.

It was discussed whether a working group was required to look at this more closely, but it was instead suggested that a sounding board group could be more useful if and when it was required.

**RESOLVED**

1. That the process of review to bring Lincolnshire County Council's Highways Asset management Plan in line with "Well Maintained Highways Infrastructure – A Code of Practice" by October 2018 be noted; and
2. That a sounding board/working group of members of the Committee be set up if and when it was required.

**27 A17 HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AT GEDNEY AND HIGHWAY  
AND TRANSPORTATION USE OF THE NATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY  
INVESTMENT FUND**

Consideration was given to a report which summarised the assessment process undergone for generating the highway improvement project at Gedney and then identified the details and benefits. The report also identified how the National Productivity Investment Fund was being allocated across the County for Highway and Transportation projects to maintain existing infrastructure and drive improvements.

Members were advised that most of the concerns with this scheme were around the delineation between the lanes and the proximity to the junction. It was reported that the merge would begin 325m in advance of the junction and be fully merged at 150m in advance. The minimum design requirement was for the lanes to be fully merged by 50m. It was noted that the authority was significantly exceeding the minimum safety requirements of the national design standards.

The Committee was 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;

- One member commented that the proposals seemed fine, but they could not understand why people would have concerns about 3 lane carriageways. It was hoped that people would look at the design of the scheme being proposed and not the perception of historical dangerous schemes which scheme did not mirror.
- It was commented that a loose comparison with schemes at Louth and Leadenham had been made regarding very low accident figures, however, it was felt that that these schemes were not directly comparable with Gedney but did provide an expected trend.
- One member commented that when all parish and district councils were against a scheme, then it was time for a rethink. There were concerns that £2.5m was going to be spent on this scheme and then more money would need to be spent at a later date, to rectify any issues.
- One member commented that they could not see a problem with this piece of road and that many district councillors and local people were against it. It was felt that the scheme was in the wrong place, or not needed at all. It was also commented that the road was in good condition, and it could not be understood why the scheme was taking place, as there had not been accidents on this stretch of road either.
- It was clarified for members, that this scheme was taking place as it had been identified through a Routes Action Plan (RAP) for the A15, A16 and A17. This analysis showed that there was a need for improvements based on modelling work which had been done. The decision to carry out this scheme had been evidence based. This scheme is a strategic improvement to the road network in order to reduce congestion. It was noted that this was one of the slowest stretches of road on the A17.
- It was noted that transport businesses were in favour of this scheme.
- It was important to not allow an unclear consultation to determine an outcome. It was commented that this was an important point as a lot of people did not understand what the scheme was or the reasoning behind it.
- One member commented that they would be supporting the scheme as there was a clear need to scrutinise proposed projects based on evidence of facts.
- It was also commented that if this scheme was going ahead, then it was felt that the double lane was on the wrong side, as one area of frustration for drivers was when Cross Keys Bridge was closed, and it was suggested that the two lanes should be on the convex side of the bend.

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- It was noted that it was correct that there had been no accidents on this stretch of road, but this was not an accident reduction scheme, it was primarily aimed at improving journey time reliability.
- In relation to the comment regarding the side of the road for the two lanes, it was reported that an analysis of both sides had been carried out, and the east bend had resulted in a better cost benefit analysis. Members were advised that the analysis data was contained in the RAP document on the LCC website.
- One member commented that they would support this scheme on the basis of it being part of the strategic network that would significantly reduce congestion.
- The Committee supported the proposal for an information event on this scheme before a decision was made.
- It was suggested that the Route Action Plan document should be brought to a future meeting.

Upon being put to the vote, it was noted that Councillor C J T H voted against the proposed scheme, but supported a consultation before a decision was made.

**RESOLVED**

1. That the Committee supported the proposed carriageway improvement scheme on the A17 at Gedney.
2. That the Committee supported the carrying out of a consultation before any decision on the scheme was made.
3. That the comments made in relation to this scheme be noted.

**28 HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK  
PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to a report which enabled the Committee to comment on the content of its work programme for the coming year to ensure that scrutiny activity was focused where it could be of greatest benefit.

It was queried whether an item on the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership could be included for a future meeting, but members were advised that a report was due to go to the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

The meeting closed at 1.45 pm