

**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT
 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
 10 SEPTEMBER 2018**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M BROOKES (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors S P Roe (Vice-Chairman), B Adams, Mrs W Bowkett, C J T H Brewis, Mrs J Brockway, Mrs P Cooper, R Grocock, R A Renshaw, A N Stokes and E W Strengiel

Councillor: Clio Perraton-Williams attended the meeting as an observer

Officers in attendance:-

Steve Blagg (Democratic Services Officer), Sam Edwards (Major Schemes and Design Commissioner), Mark Heaton (Area Highways Manager (Grantham)), Matt Jones (Parking Services Manager), Paul Rusted (Infrastructure Commissioner), Ethan Thorpe (Communications) (Strategic Communications Lead), Vincent Van Doninck (Policy and Strategic Asset Manager) and Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer)

18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

The meeting was informed that Councillor M A Griggs was no longer a member of the Committee and that therefore a vacancy existed on the Committee.

The Chief Executive reported that under the Local Government (Committee and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, he had appointed Councillor Mrs P Copper to the Committee, place of Councillor M A Griggs, for this meeting only.

19 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor S P Roe stated that he would withdraw from the meeting during consideration of item 21 as he owned land affected by the line of the proposed North Hykeham Relief Road.

20 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 16 JULY 2018

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 July 2018, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to "Councillor B Adams" being added to the list of attendees at the meeting.

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AND LEAD OFFICERS**

The Executive Support Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT stated that a letter had been received from Jesse Norman MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Department for Transport, stating that he would like to visit Lincolnshire.

Officers announced that the County Council had been shortlisted for the Highway Excellence Awards in the Apprenticeship Category and for the Highways Future Operating Model. The Committee placed on record their appreciation to officers for this good news.

22 NORTH HYKEHAM RELIEF ROAD

(NOTE: Councillor S Roe declared a pecuniary interest as he owned land on the proposed line of the North Hykeham Relief Road and left the meeting while this item was considered).

The Committee received a report in connection with the North Hykeham Relief Road aimed to complete the final phase of the circulatory around Greater Lincoln and North Hykeham, which was due to be considered by the Executive on 2 October 2018.

The report sought to gain approval for the length and type of carriageway, prior to the completion of the Outline Business Case which was the key tool for justifying funding opportunities from government bodies such as the Department for Transport.

Comments made by the Committee and the responses of officers, where appropriate, included:-

- Officers explained the Benefit Cost Ratio assessment and stated that a dual carriageway met the criteria. Officers stated that a Relief Road would reduce accidents, reduce traffic, provide more resilience to the road network and provide a route to the Coastal Highway. A more detailed breakdown of costs would be provided in the future.
- Could funding contributions from developers reduce the Council's financial contribution? Officers were unable to give an assurance that this would happen with funding dependent on approval of the scheme by the Department for Transport.
- The outcome of stakeholder and public engagement supported the development of a dual carriageway.
- The Relief Road would help the emergency services.

The Committee gave its unanimous support to the proposed development of a dual carriageway for the Relief Road.

RESOLVED

That the Executive be recommended:-

(1) To approve a dual carriageway from the A46 (Pennells' roundabout) to connect with the roundabout at the A15 (currently being constructed as part of the Lincoln Eastern Bypass) as opposed to either a single or single + future proofed carriageway as the Council's preferred carriageway option in all future development of the North Hykeham Relief Road including the making of funding bids.

(2) To approve seeking funding from governmental bodies such as the Department for Transport in line with the percentages/values detailed in the report.

(3) To delegate authority for approving the final form of the Outline Business Case (at the point when the bidding opportunity is announced) and submission of the same to the County Commissioner Economy and Place.

23 HIGHWAYS INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Committee received a report in connection with a proposed amended Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Plan and that the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT be recommended to approve the draft Plan subject to the consideration of any comments made by this Committee.

Officers emphasised the importance of the Plan in helping the Council to obtain Band 3 status and to obtain maximum funding from the Department of Transport for highways maintenance.

Officers outlined the changes made to the Plan, the primary one being the introduction of a risk based approach to hierarchies for repairs to the highway and changes to inspection response times

Comments by the Committee and the responses of officers, where appropriate, included:-

- How would the new proposed hierarchies improve on the current arrangements for the repair of roads, for example, it was sometimes necessary to use a "B" road because an "A" road was closed? Officers stated that by further splitting the hierarchies this would help to identify roads better.
- Officers stated that the road between Pennell's roundabout and Carholme roundabout (A46) was the responsibility of the Highways Agency.
- Had local people been involved in the in the preparation of the Plan because they might have specific knowledge which highways were unaware? Officers stated that local knowledge was important and that the Highways Managers were aware of this.
- Concern was expressed about the response times to repair raised and sunken covers owned by the utility companies particularly in rural areas. Officers stated that the new Permit Scheme to regulate the digging up of the highway by utility companies would help with response times. Officers agreed to provide details of response times in the next report on the Permit Scheme to the Committee.
- Would the proposed extension of the hierarchies be different for rural and urban areas? Officers stated that there would be a difference in dealing with rural and

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urban areas and it was possible, for example, for the Highways Officer to escalate a repair if numerous complaints were received.

- In response to issues about reporting problems with the highway by both members and the public, officers stated that a report on communications and on "Fix my Street" would be considered at a future meeting.
- Footways for school children were an issue in some areas. Officers stated that local knowledge was important and identifying hierarchies for footways was taken into consideration.
- The revised Plan if approved by the Executive Councillor should be circulated to all Members for reference purposes and that the Overview Scrutiny Management Board should be informed that the style of the report should be adopted by other Council departments. This request was supported.
- How would the changes proposed protect the people of Lincolnshire? Officers stated that by adopting the Plan this would provide evidence if a problem escalated. Officers stated that the Commissioning Team would ensure that the necessary changes were made to risk management and training would be provided.
- Was there any provision to re-categorise roads or lanes prior to the preparation of the Plan? Officers stated that there was a process in place to re-categorise roads and lanes prior to the preparation of the Plan with Local Highway Managers making the final decision.
- In response to an enquiry about road signs being obscured and problems caused by tree roots damaging footways, officers stated that these issues should be reported to the Council to investigate.
- In response to a request for the document to be reviewed, officers stated that the Plan would be reviewed by the Committee in April 2019, before the start of the financial year.

The Plan was unanimously supported by the Committee.

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee supports the recommendation to the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT, that he should approve the Plan in the form of the draft dated July 2018 detailed in Appendix A to the report.
2. That the comments by the Committee and the responses of officers be passed to the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT.

24 WINTER SERVICE PLAN 2018

The Committee received a report in connection with proposed amendments to the existing highways Winter Maintenance Plan 2018, issued in October 2017, to take account of national guidance in Well Managed Infrastructure – Code of Practice, prior to the Plan being submitted to the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT approval.

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Officers stated that the report should be read in conjunction with the Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Plan.

Comments by the Committee and the responses of officers, where appropriate, included:-

- A member stated that in his area he had noted that the roads in the vicinity of village schools were not salted. Officers stated that all roads within 500 metres of a school were treated by salt and that "severe" weather routes were covered as detailed in the Plan.
- Had Parish/Town Councils been consulted about the Plan? Officers stated that the Council would send information to the Parish/Town Councils about the new arrangements for the filling of grit bins.
- Grit bins in some instances had been removed from outside of schools. Officers agreed to examine this as grit bins should not be removed from these locations.
- In response to a question about the notice a Parish Council was required to give if it required a grit bin before the winter the Committee was informed that an annual review was undertaken before winter and it depended on the severity of the winter with regard to the allocation of grit bins.
- It was suggested that personnel working on gritting vehicles should be required to have a portable telephone charger and blanket in case they became stuck in their vehicle during inclement weather.

Officers drew attention to the reduced tonnage of salt now required to be retained in salt depots due to the use of treated salt and the new need of replenishing supplies as and when required.

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

RESOLVED

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

25 CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2017 TO 2018

The Committee received a report in connection with the Civil Parking Enforcement Annual Report 2017 to 2018 in accordance with the statutory guidance to Local Authorities on the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions.

Officers stated that the purpose of Civil Parking Enforcement was to ensure that traffic flowed well, that areas of non-compliance were being examined and that the statistical information helped to ensure that the right areas were being addressed. Officers stated that the Council was also working with the Police and that they were improving communication with the public to increase awareness. Officers stated that

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this was the first year a deficit had been recorded which meant that the public was becoming more aware of where Civil Parking Enforcement took place.

Officers stated that more details about the reasons for the cancellation of a parking ticket would be provided in the annual report in the future.

Comments by the Committee and the responses of officers, where appropriate, included:-

- In response to a question about the format of the report, officers stated that next year more information would be supplied about areas, the type of tickets issued, reasons for the cancellation of a ticket and more information published on-line which would help the public.
- Traffic on the Brayford in Lincoln had increased.
- Parking near schools was a problem for local residents. Officers stated that parking in the vicinity of schools was a local and national problem. Patrols had increased in those areas where there was a particular problem with enforcement where applicable.
- It was noticeable that when a patrol officer was on duty compliance was more apparent.
- Police Community Support Officers would have responsibility to issue parking tickets in the future.
- Officers stated that to avoid waste more consideration was required on the deployment of parking officers to areas of concern in a large county like Lincolnshire.
- The loss of income was a concern.
- While the reduction in the number of tickets issued was welcomed were people parking in other areas and causing problems? Officers stated that smart enforcement was important.
- With costs increasing was it possible to increase fines? Officers stated that the Council already used the higher rate for parking offences and nothing had been forthcoming from the Government about changing the fine levels.

RESOLVED

1. That the report and comments made by the Committee be noted.
2. That it be noted that the Annual Report next year will contain additional information as highlighted by officers.

26 CCTV TRIAL ENFORCEMENT REPORT

The Committee received a report in connection with the CCTV enforcement trial implemented outside eight schools within the county.

Officers stated that when the CCTV vehicle was not used on site non-compliance was worse and that it would only be possible to assess if the project had been successful when the bus stands had been installed.

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Comments by the Committee and the responses of officers, where applicable, included:-

- Parking outside schools was a big issue both locally and nationally.
- It was felt that the trial should continue for a further year but next year the future of the scheme would need to be considered as other schools were experiencing similar problems.
- The effects of the trial had led to schools improving their communication with parents.
- Schools needed to discuss their School Travel Plans with parents to avoid unnecessary congestion and to encourage children to walk or cycle to school. Officers stated that feedback from parents about the use of CCTV had been supportive. However, there were some parents who did not comply.
- The cost of the trial could not be justified as the problem of irresponsible parking was a nationwide problem and the trial should be examined again. Officers stated that the cost of the trial involved the cost of paying for the CCTV vehicle and the cost of the officer's time was not included.
- The zig zag lines outside of schools should be made compulsory and that, if this was not possible, then this should be raised with the Executive. PCSOs should also have the power to take action. Officers stated that the Traffic Regulation Order budget had been substantially reduced in recent years and therefore it was not possible to make the zig zag lines compulsory.
- PCSOs required authorisation to take action for obstruction but not when there were yellow lines. Under the existing Civil Parking arrangements it was not possible to take action for obstruction.
- A Working Group was suggested to examine this matter in detail and to report back to the Committee with evidence.

The Committee supported a further year of the trial and that, in the meantime, a Working Group should be established to examine the matter and report to the Committee before the consideration was given to renewing the trial next year.

RESOLVED

1. That the comments by the Committee and the responses of officers be noted.
2. That the trial be extended for a further 12 months until the end of 2019, and that, in the meantime, a Working Group be established to examine the trial including the effects of the installation of bus stands and to report back to the Committee before a decision is made to extend the trial after 2019.

27 PERFORMANCE REPORT, QUARTER 1 - (APRIL 2018 TO JUNE 2018)

The Committee received a report in connection with the performance of the highways service for the quarter April to June 2018. Officers stated that "increase" should replace "decrease" on page 282 of his report.

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Officers stated that, overall, the Council was performing at a high level on all the indicators, was doing well against other local authorities and that many other local authorities were visiting the Council as it was a lead authority.

The Committee welcomed the improvement in the quality of pothole repairs and that contractors were engaging with the public. Officers stated that the surface testing was undertaken after repairs had taken place.

RESOLVED

That the report and the comments made by officers be noted.

28 HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received a report in connection with its Work Programme.

RESOLVED

That the Committee's Work Programme be noted and updated accordingly subject to a report on grass cutting and weed control being added to the programme for consideration on 10 December 2018.

The meeting closed at 1.15 pm