

**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
20 JANUARY 2020**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR B ADAMS (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors S P Roe (Vice-Chairman), T R Ashton, Mrs W Bowkett, C J T H Brewis, M Brookes, R Grocock, R A Renshaw, A N Stokes and E W Strengiel

Councillors: R G Davies and Clio Perraton-Williams attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Steve Blagg (Democratic Services Officer), Karen Cassar (Assistant Director Highways), Matt Jones (Parking Services Manager), Mick Phoenix (Traffic Manager-Place), Mandi Robinson (Team Leader) and Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer)

47 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

An apology was received from Councillor Mrs J Brockway.

The Chairman stated that Councillor Mrs J Brockway had been in hospital and was recovering. The Committee agreed that a letter should be sent to her giving their best wishes for a full recovery.

48 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were made at this stage of the meeting.

49 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2019

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 9 December 2019, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

50 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS

No announcements were made.

51 COUNCIL BUDGET 2020/21

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(Councillor S Roe stated that he had a pecuniary interest as both himself and some of his relatives had land affected by the proposed route of the North Hykeham Relief Road and would leave the meeting during consideration of this matter).

Consideration was given to a report in connection with the Council's Budget 2020/21 and its implications for highways and transport services.

Officers stated that the budget proposals would be considered by the Executive on 4 February and subsequently by the full Council on 21 February 2020. The Executive was preparing to consult on a single year revenue budget for 2020/21.

Comments by members included:-

- An enquiry was made on if the Government had indicated when it was likely to provide their part of the funding for the North Hykeham Relief Road? Officers stated no additional funding would be communicated to local highway authorities until the budget setting process had taken place on 11 March 2020 and this funding also included funding for potholes and major schemes.
- An enquiry was made in connection with the generated savings in Concessionary Fares Scheme. Officers stated that there had been a reduction in the volume of journeys made and that this appeared to be a national trend. Also, due to changes in the pension arrangements affecting the women over 60 meant that the demand for concessionary bus passes had reduced.

RESOLVED

That the comments by members be noted and passed to the Executive for consideration on 4 February 2020.

52 HIGHWAY FEES AND CHARGES REVIEW

Consideration was given to a report detailing a benchmarking review of the Council's fees and charges. Officers stated that the report outlined the reasons for the proposed increases and additions to the current charging regime, the need for future reviews and linking charges to inflation. The proposals would help to ensure services were delivered within a robust financial framework and help to reduce budget pressures.

Officers stated that any comments made by this Committee would be passed to the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT who make a decision between 23 January and 30 January 2020.

Comments by members included:-

- There was an error in the table on page 21 of the report ("Proposed charges"). Officers agreed to rectify the arithmetical error.
- Following an enquiry, officers explained the different parts of the Highways Act 1980 and which sections of the Act affected different parts of the highway.

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- An enquiry was made about the difference between statutory and discretionary charges. Officers explained that statutory fees and charges related to the exercise of statutory powers such as highway works and discretionary charges could be determined by the Council and monies raised reinvested in highway services.
- An enquiry was made in connection with the high fee for the review of a proposal for the installation of dropped kerbs. Officers explained that the fee was high due to the officer time required to ensure that the design was correct because damaged highway structures were expensive to repair. Officers stated that contractors had to be approved before a licence was issued, that they met the criteria and follow-on inspections were carried out.
- An enquiry was made in connection with the damage caused by parking on verges. Reference was made to the power London Boroughs had to enforce no parking on verges and there was a wish to see these powers extended to the rest of the country.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the comments by members be noted and passed to the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT.
- (b) That the recommendations to the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT, detailed in the report, be supported.

53 LINCOLNSHIRE RESIDENTS' PARKING POLICY AND PARKING REVIEW
IN GRANTHAM

Consideration was given to the provision of various types of parking restrictions within Grantham and their current suitability to support a vibrant town centre. There was a need to survey and review town centre parking provision, including measuring the suitability of access for residents, visitors and businesses. A proposed countywide Residents Parking Policy document had been drafted to enable the Council to widen its offer of parking solutions.

Officers stated that some residents were suffering from all day parking especially in Castlegate, near the railway station, and that the cost of examining parking in Grantham was estimated at £100k.

Members welcomed the proposals and especially the Residents' Parking Scheme and the use of Penalty Charge Notices to tackle parking problems was noted.

The Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT stated that the proposals had originated from the Grantham Transport Board and other Council Transport Boards were using the process used here across the county.

RESOLVED

That the recommendations to the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT, detailed in the report, be supported.

54 PERMIT SCHEME ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

Consideration was given to a report in connection with an overview of the Council's operational performance of its Permit Scheme in its third year. The report was a statutory requirement as required by the Department for Transport for each of the first three years of a Permit Scheme. The next statutory review was due in April 2023 and the Permit Scheme would follow the financial year in the future.

Officers stated that since the introduction of the scheme the number of permits issued had increased, there had been a reduction in the days roads were closed, a reduction in the number of days that works overran, an improvement in the quality of first time finished work, a reduction in the number of Fixed Penalty Notices and that the scheme was cost neutral. Officers stated and that since its introduction in communication between the Council and utilities had improved.

Comments by members included:-

- Standards of repair seemed to vary and it was hoped to see an improvement in the future.
- An enquiry was made if there was a timescale for works to start as there were issues in the South Holland where signage had been installed but no work was taking place. Officers stated that work could not start until a permit had been issued and that cancellations of work by utilities were difficult to manage.
- Following an enquiry about a broken sewer in Spalding which had existed for some time officers stated that they would respond to the member outside of the meeting on this matter as the Permit Scheme was not applicable in this particular case.
- Openreach's performance was questioned. Officers stated that Openreach tended to sub contract a lot of its work to small contractors who were already overwhelmed with work and therefore unable to meet performance targets. Officers added that they had no powers to change OpenReach's procedures. Officers were monitoring Openreach's work and applications from them for permits could be refused if they did not meet the criteria.
- Following an enquiry about the Fixed Penalty Notice charges officers explained the amounts which could be charged for different scenarios.
- Some utilities were finishing work early but still keeping signage in place and that fines should be imposed in such circumstances. Officers were talking to utilities about this issue and it was accepted that improvements had taken place since the Permit Scheme started.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the comments by members be noted.
- (b) That the publication of the report on the Council's website be supported.

55 CCTV PILOT SCHEME FOR PARKING ENFORCEMENT OUTSIDE
SCHOOLS

Consideration was given to a report in connection with the CCTV enforcement trial implemented outside eight schools in the county and the subsequent findings of the CCTV Pilot Scheme Working Party.

The appreciation of the Committee for the work undertaken by officers and the members of the CCTV Pilot Scheme Working Party was placed on record.

Comments by members included:-

- Restrictions outside of schools should be made enforceable.
- An enquiry was made about whether it was possible for Parish and Town Councils to make a contribution to parking enforcement.
- An extension of the mini-police scheme to educate parents was welcomed.
- Parents had prime responsibility for their children but there was a need for schools to take more responsibility for parking outside of their school.
- Members should liaise with their local PCSOs to help with parking issues.
- The location of new schools needed more consideration and it was noted that some schools were building on their own car parks which caused more on-street parking issues.

The Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT stated that a more holistic approach was required as family lifestyles had changed with fewer children now walking to school, that the closure of school car parks to all but staff had caused problems and many schools took no interest about what happened outside of the school boundary.

Members noted the various solutions outlined in the Working Group's report and supported Option 5 (additional Civil Enforcement Officer foot patrols). Members noted that this would ensure the safety of young people outside schools, greater parking compliance, provide more mobile patrols, be more visible at key times, offer greater Enforcement Officer coverage and would assist in keeping areas outside of schools free from traffic.

Officers stated that they supported consultations with Town and Parish Councils about extra enforcement but additional funding would be required from them.

Officers stated that any comments made by this Committee would be passed to the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT who make a decision between 23 January and 30 January 2020.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the comments made by members be noted.
- (b) That the CCTV Parking enforcement outside schools Pilot Scheme Working Group's recommendation to support Option 5 (Additional Civil Enforcement Officer foot patrols) be supported by the Committee for consideration by the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT.

56 HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the Committee's Work Programme.

It was noted Ian Kitchen, former Strategic Transportation Manager, would not be present at the meeting of the Committee on 27 April 2020 when rail issues were due to be considered because he had retired. Members placed on record their appreciation for his contribution to the work of the Committee and wished him well in his retirement.

Councillor E W Strengiel requested that his apologies should be noted for the meeting on 9 March 2020.

RESOLVED

That the Work Programme be noted and updated accordingly.

The meeting closed at 11.25 am