

**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE  
28 JUNE 2021**

**PRESENT: COUNCILLOR B ADAMS (CHAIRMAN)**

Councillors A M Hall (Vice-Chairman), Mrs A M Austin, M Brookes, K J Clarke, T J G Dyer, R A Gibson, S P Roe and E W Strengiel

Councillors: attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Simon Evans (Health Scrutiny Officer) and Anita Ruffle (Head of Transport Services)

**60      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Rawlins and Wright.

**61      DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

No declarations of interest were made with respect to any items on the agenda.

**62      MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 8TH MARCH 2021**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**63      ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND CHIEF  
OFFICERS**

No announcements were made.

**64      INTRODUCTION TO SERVICE AREAS REPORTING TO HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Committee received a presentation from Karen Cassar (Assistant Director Highways), which introduced the areas which reported to the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee. Specific topics covered in the presentation included:-

- An explanation of the delivery of Local Highways Services, including advice on how members can report highways faults, an introduction to the 'Fix My Street' app, and an explanation on flooding arrangements;
- The role of the Technical Services Partnership (TSP), including detail of their responsibilities within Lincolnshire;
- Details of the Highways Asset Management team, and their responsibilities. In addition, detail was offered on the expenditure of their £35 million Capital Programme allocation;
- Advice on highways services and the highways work term contract, including the role of service managers and detail of the value of highways contracts from 2020;
- An introduction to the Councillor Engagement App and the functionality it offers members.

Seeking further detail on the process for highways repairs, the Committee asked, how long from being marked for repair was worked typically carried out. The Assistant Director Highways explained that priority for works to highways defects was detailed within the Highways Infrastructure Asset Plan. If works weren't completed within the specified time frame, this would be flagged to LCC's partners.

The Committee felt that they'd appreciate if the performance statistics of the 'Fix My Street' app could be shared with them. The Assistant Director Highways offered to circulate this outside of the meeting.

Raising the issue of grass verge cutting, the Committee sought further detail on the regularity of cuts and what defined a safety cut. The Assistant Director Highways advised that three cuts per annum were typically carried out. She didn't have the criteria for a safety cut to hand, so offered to circulate this outside of the meeting.

Acknowledging the prominence of wild flower growth on grass verges in other local authorities, the Committee asked if there were any plans to promote this in Lincolnshire. The Assistant Director Highways explained that this idea had been raised previously at the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee; Public Rights of Way officers were looking into the possibility. A report on its viability would be brought back to the Committee.

The Committee received a presentation from Anita Ruffle (Head of Transport Services), which introduced the committee to the Transport Services Group (TSG). Specific topics covered in the presentation included:-

- An overview of the TSG, including its 84 staff and £13.8 million budget;
- An introduction to the local bus service, including the legislation requiring the facility, the monitoring of commercial bus networks and an overview to the demand responsive transport (DRT);
- Detail of the Teckal Company, it's governance and it's delivery of services for LCC;

- Information on Community Transport Schemes, including Voluntary Car and Dial A Ride schemes;
- An overview of the Concessionary Travel Scheme and how it's facilitated by LCC;
- An introduction to Client Services Transport and Social Care Transport, including details of safeguarding arrangements and fleet management;
- Information on current projects undertaken by the TSG.

In response to the information on the Concessionary Travel Scheme, the Committee sought advice on the difference between Core Connect and Dial a Ride. The Head of Transport Services explained that LCC previously offered a Dial a Ride facility, however, the cost of facilitating this was high and the criteria for use differed. Whereas, the Core Connect service was dynamic and acted on a 'first come; first served' basis. In a follow up question, the Committee added that users of the Core Connect Service, were dissatisfied that it finished at 7.00 p.m. they asked if there were any expectations to extend it into the evening. The Head of Transport Services stated that, as she understood, the view from central government was that more evening and weekend transport should be offered. It was likely to be considered in the future.

The Committee felt that some bus shelters within the county would benefit from increased maintenance; they sought clarity on whose responsibility their upkeep was. The Head of Transport Services stated that the maintenance of bus shelters would fall under the responsibility of the district councils under the National Bus Service Strategy.

Seeking further information on the facilitation of bus services, the Committee asked, who planned the bus service routes for the county. The Head of Transport Services explained that, LCC planned the bus routes with a specialist piece of software. In a follow up question, the Committee sought detail on the usage of bus services per annum. The Head of Transport Services didn't have the exact figures to hand, but agreed to provide details outside of the meeting.

#### RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

#### 65 PERFORMANCE REPORT, QUARTER 4 - (1 JANUARY 2021 - 31 MARCH 2021)

Paul Rusted, Head of Highways Services, was invited to present the item to the Committee. Attached to the report were the following Appendices for the Committee's consideration:

- Appendix A Major Highways Scheme Update June 2021
- Appendix B Lincolnshire Highways Alliance Performance Qtr4 20 21
- Appendix C National Condition Indicators Q4 2020-21

- Appendix D Highways and Transport Complaints Report Q4

The Head of Highways Services advised the Committee that the Council still had four major highway schemes; however, there were a number of other significant highways infrastructure projects which could possibly affect road users in Lincolnshire. The Committee were also advised the highways performance for Lincolnshire, the Head of Highways Services added that workshops had been arranged to focus on improvement for year two. During quarter four, the Highways Works Contract repaired a further 4,944 faults from quarter three. Customer complaints relating to highways and transport saw an increase from the last quarter of 100 per cent, with an increase of 391 per cent when compared to quarter four of 2019/20.

The Committee registered their concern in the drop in customer satisfaction, adding that issues were raised that residents' bikes and shoes were being marked by the tar chippings used for the concrete. They went on to add that grass cutting had also been a point of concern for residents. The Head of Highways Services explained that the materials used for roads wasn't ideal, but represented value within the current budget. Concerns surrounding grass cutting should be emailed directly to officers.

Referencing the section within the report which stated that low level cycling signals were being trialled in Lincoln, the Committee asked where exactly this would be. The Head of Highways Services offered to provide further detail outside of the meeting.

Issues had been reported recently of anti-social behaviour near the Lincoln Bypass, resulting in rocks being thrown at cars. The Committee sought confirmation that this situation was being addressed. The Head of Highways Services assured the Committee that a resolution would be explored, adding that specialist mesh had been used in other authorities.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

**66      RE-PAINTING AND MAINTENANCE WORKS TO CROSS KEYS SWING BRIDGE**

The Chairman advised the Committee that this item was for pre-decision scrutiny prior to a decision being taken by the Executive on 6 July 2021.

Richard Waters (Principal Engineer for Structures) was invited to present this report to the Committee. He explained that the bridge underwent inspection by the Council in order to ensure it was kept serviceable. Repainting was identified to extend the life of the superstructure. These works would be scheduled for February 2022 and would be carried out by specially trained contractors. The proposed works represented a key decision as the

contract was valued at £1.3 million. Funding for the project would be found from the Bridges Capital Budget.

The bridge was a vital piece of infrastructure within Lincolnshire and offered both commercial and industrial use. Therefore, one of the main implications of the works would be traffic management. Consideration had been given to closing the bridge entirely and diverting traffic via Wisbech. However, a two way temporary signal control on the A17 was implemented during the previous repainting and had been trialled in 2019. This was the preferred method and would be used this for these works. The temporary signal control would be manually controlled to give extended green times to clear backlogs of traffic by reducing unproductive 'all red' periods. Advanced signing would also be included at major junctions between the A1 and A47 advising on the works and potential delays.

There was a risk that the works would coincide with other planned works in Wisbech. Officers had undertaken negotiations with Cambridgeshire County Council and Highways England.

Members of the Committee thanked the Principal Engineer for Structures for his report and asked questions, the following point was confirmed:

- The Committee is pleased to see that single file traffic over the bridge would continue during the works, rather than relying solely on a diversion route.

#### RESOLVED

1. That the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee unanimously agreed to support the recommendations to the Executive as detailed in the report.
2. That the comments listed above be passed on to the Executive in relation to this item

#### 67 HIGHWAYS INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2021

The Chairman advised the Committee that this item was for pre-decision scrutiny prior to a decision being taken by the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT between 30 June and 9 July 2021.

Paul Rusted (Head of Highways Services) was invited to present this report to the Committee. He explained that the Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Plan set out the policies and standards around the maintenance of highways. In the interest in reaching consensus on the direction of Highways, the plan was reviewed annually. Given how established it had become, much of the content of the plan remained consistent with previous years,

The Head of Highways Services went on to explain that, to ensure compliance with the framework set out by central government and maintain the Council's Band 3 status, adherence to a robust asset management plan was important. To continue to receive the maximum funding from the Department for Transport, Band 3 status needed to continue.

In October 2016, a risk based system of guidance titled "Well Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice" was published. The guidance encouraged local authorities to develop a bespoke style of standards and levels of service based on evidence based risk assessments. Many of the prescribed standards, which were in the previous code, had now been removed entirely. Consequently, empowering and encouraging highways authorities to adopt a risk-based maintenance plan.

The Committee noted the content in the report, but didn't feel that they had anything further to add before it was considered by the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transportation and IT.

#### RESOLVED

That the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee unanimously agreed to support the recommendations to the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transportation and IT as detailed in the report.

#### 68 WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman invited Simon Evans, Health Scrutiny Officer, to present this item to the Committee.

Referring to the traffic issue on Dixon Street, Lincoln, the Committee noted this issue had been raised previously with no resolution. The Health Scrutiny Officer offered to include it on the Committee's work programme. The Head of Highways Services advised that, to properly address the issue, significant work was required. Unfortunately, other issues were agreed as greater priorities by the Council.

Noting their concerns that unsuitable roads in Boston were being used by Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV) which exceeded the weight limits, the Committee asked what could be done to address this. The Head of Highways Services explained that the Council didn't have the authority to enforce such adherence; however, he offered to discuss this with the Local Highways Manager.

Expressing their concern surrounding the South Hykeham bypass, the Committee sought detail on what, if anything, could be done. Adding that they understood responsibility sat

with the Highways Agency. The Head of Highways Services offered to provide the Committee with further detail outside of the meeting.

The Committee noted that Overview and Scrutiny Management Board would have been expecting an update on traffic issues in Barkston. The Health Scrutiny Officer agreed to follow this up.

Acknowledging the support from the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transportation and IT, the Committee suggested that a task and finish group should be commissioned to consider the issue of speeding. The Health Scrutiny Officer advised that further discussions could be undertaken at 19 July meeting of the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 19 July 2021.

#### RESOLVED

That the work programme presented be agreed.

The meeting closed at 11.58 am