

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
MANAGEMENT BOARD
28 JULY 2020**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR R B PARKER (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors R Wootten (Vice-Chairman), Mrs J Brockway, R J Kendrick, Mrs A M Newton, N H Pepper, E W Strengiel and S R Kirk

Added Members

Parent Governor Representatives: Mrs M R Machin

Councillors: C E H Marfleet, R G Davies and M J Hill OBE attended the meeting as guests.

Officers in attendance:-

Debbie Barnes OBE (Chief Executive), Graeme Butler (Project and Technical Support Manager), Sam Edwards (Head of Highways Infrastructure), Andy Gutherson (Executive Director Place), Tracy Johnson (Senior Scrutiny Officer), Paul Little (Head of Highways Asset Management), Nigel West (Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer) and Emily Wilcox (Democratic Services Officer)

12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs W Bowkett, C S Macey, C E H Marfleet, and Miss Alex Sayer (Parent Governor Representative). It was noted that Councillor C E H Marfleet would be present as a spokesperson for the call-in rather than a member of the Board.

It was reported that, under Regulation 13 of the Local Government Committee and Political Groups) Regulation 1990, Councillor S R Kirk had been appointed as a substitute for Councillor C E H Marfleet, for this meeting only.

13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

14 CALL-IN OF DECISION BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL ON THE A631 MARKET RASEN TO LOUTH SAFER ROADS PRIMARY ROUTE NETWORK

Consideration was given to a report which invited the Board to consider a call-in in relation to a decision by the Leader of the Council on the A631 Market Rasen to Louth Safer Roads Primary Route Network.

The Chairman referred Members to the Call-in procedure which was set out on page 5 of the agenda pack.

The Chairman invited Councillor C E H Marfleet, spokesperson for the call-in to present his reasons for the call-in.

In presenting his reasons for the call-in, Councillor Marfleet explained that although he welcomed the repair work on the A631 Market Rasen to Louth road, there had been a long-standing issue with the safety of various locations/collision hotspots on the road that had not been addressed within the Executive Councillor report.

Members were referred to paragraph 1.7 of the Executive Councillor report, which stated that in addition to resurfacing this stretch of the A631, the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership would also be looking to lower the speed limit, installing average speed cameras and installing reactive speed signs later in the year. It was of Councillor Marfleet's view that the speed reduction measures proposed had not addressed many of the road safety issues that the road posed and that a proposed 50mph speed limit for the entire stretch of road was not necessarily appropriate.

Furthermore, Councillor Marfleet emphasised that a public consultation on the proposed speed reduction measures had not taken place. Until a thorough investigation and consultation had been undertaken into the safety of the entire road and possible alternative solutions, it was not considered appropriate to begin a large scale scheme of work.

Both the Leader of the Council and the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT were invited to address the reasons for the call-in.

In doing so, the Leader of the Council acknowledged the reasons for the call-in, noting that there seemed to be no indication that the spokesperson had an issue with the recommendation to award the main contract for the resurfacing works on the A631 Market Rasen to Louth, but rather an issue with the safety measures that had been proposed within the report. The Leader of the Council also recognised that there had been a lack of consultation on the speed reduction measures proposed within the report, and that it would be beneficial to fully consult with the public on this matter.

Members were informed that as a condition of the road safety funding offered, the government would be expecting that there were some road safety measures included within the scheme, and although there was no direct obligation in order to receive the

funding, it could jeopardise any future road safety funding available to the Council if safety measures were not implemented.

As a response to the call-in made, the Leader of the Council proposed that the physical works commenced as currently planned and a public consultation was initiated at a later stage to determine the most appropriate road safety measures for the road.

The Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT informed the Board that the works had been proposed as the road was one of the most dangerous roads in England. The Executive Councillor emphasised that 50 mph speed limits had been found to be extremely effective on similar roads across the County. It was also noted that local councillors and parish councils had been in favour of a speed limit reduction on the road.

The Highways Asset Manager explained that the Department for Transport's Safer Roads Fund was additional funding and was not meant to replace the existing road safety funding available. The main reason for obtaining the safer roads funding was based on the safer roads initiative for stretches of roads rather than collision hotspots, which is why the 50mph speed limit had been proposed for the whole stretch of road. It was clarified that the additional safer roads funding was used to fund engineering measures to make the road safer. The existing road safety funding was used to look at collision hotspots, and the A631/B1225 junction currently sat at number 48 on the priority list.

The Chairman then invited members of the Board and the spokesperson for the call-in to ask any further questions of Executive Councillors or officers present, of which the following points were noted:

- Members of the Board highlighted the lack of public consultation for the road safety elements of the scheme.
- The spokesperson acknowledged that accident levels may possibly be reduced if the proposals in the report were accepted, however it was felt that some areas of the road were more problematic than others and a public consultation was needed before money was spent on road safety.
- The Board highlighted the importance of taking the opportunity to improve the safety of Lincolnshire's roads where possible and suggested that it may be more appropriate to introduce local measures rather than blanket measures.
- The Leader of the Council was satisfied that repairs for all carriageways were approved subject to Highways colleagues ensuring that a full consultation be carried out on the road safety elements of the scheme. This would provide assurance to Members as well as ensuring that the safer roads funding was spent appropriately.
- It was clarified that any speed limit changes would have to be approved by the Planning and Regulation Committee as per the usual process.

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- The Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT explained that the Department for Transport's Safer Roads Funding would be received subject to a number of conditions and clarification would need to be sought to see whether a particular solution met the requirements. It was possible that the Council would not qualify for the same level of funding should they amend their road safety proposals.
- The Highways Asset Manager explained that funding had been granted by the Department for Transport to carry out specific measures and that the safer roads fund was about building in engineering to look at safer routes rather than specific locations. Justification would need to be provided for any proposed safety measures. If adequate justification was not provided, the Department for Transport may be less receptive and not make available the same level of additional funding as initially proposed.

The Board considered the reasons for the call-in and the responses received. During the debate, the following points were noted:

- Some Members felt that the accident rate provided sufficient evidence that the planned action needed to be carried out on the road and that the evidence outweighed the concerns raised as the reason for the call-in.
- It was suggested that the report was confusing without further explanation. It was suggested that in reports for future schemes Members concerns should be included.
- It was preferable that there was no delay to the work on the roads and that works began as soon as possible.
- Members were concerned about the lack of consultation that had taken place and that the views of local members and local people should be taken into account.
- The Board concluded that the most appropriate solution would be to support the recommendation set out within the report and uphold the decision, subject to the agreement that assurance be provided that adequate consultation be carried out on the road safety elements of the scheme.

The Leader of the Council provided assurance that should the decision be upheld, maintenance works would begin as soon as possible subject to adequate consultation to be carried out on the road safety elements on the scheme.

RESOLVED:

That the Board support upholding the decision by the Leader of the Council on the A631 Market Rasen to Louth Safer Roads Primary Route Network.

The meeting closed at 2.30 pm