

**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
12 DECEMBER 2022**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M BROOKES (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors A M Hall (Vice-Chairman), T R Ashton, Mrs A M Austin, K J Clarke, T J G Dyer, R A Gibson, Mrs S Rawlins, Mrs C L E Vernon and R A Wright

Councillors: attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Charlotte Hughes (Senior Project Leader), Helen Reek (Senior Projects Officer), Jonathan Evans (Head of Highways Client and Contractual Management Services), Karl Gibson (Senior Project Leader), Kiara Chatziioannou (Scrutiny Officer), Sam Edwards (Head of Highways Infrastructure), Steve Brooks (Senior Project Leader) and Thomas Crofts (Democratic Services Officer)

Officers in attendance via Teams:-

Verity Druce (Head of Transformation)

39 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor E Strengiel.

40 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No interests were declared at this point in proceedings.

41 MINUTES OF THE RECONVENED MEETING (12/09/2022) HELD ON 24 OCTOBER 2022

RESOLVED:

That minutes of the reconvened meeting (12 September 2022) held on 24 October 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

42 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 24 OCTOBER 2022

RESOLVED:

That minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 October 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

43 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND LEAD OFFICERS

The Chairman thanked officers for facilitating the visit to Lincolnshire Labs on 7 December 2022 and stated that it was an informative and worthwhile visit. Greater Member attendance to visits such as this was encouraged when possible.

44 A16/MARSH LANE ROUNDABOUT IMPROVEMENTS SCHEME, BOSTON AND THE ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME, BOSTON

Consideration was given to a report from Sam Edwards, Head of Highways Infrastructure, which invited the Committee to consider a report regarding the A16/Marsh Lane Roundabout improvements scheme, Boston and the Active Travel Scheme, Boston, which was due to be considered by the Leader of the Council – Executive Councillor for Resources, Communications and Commissioning, and the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT between 14 December 2022 and 16 December 2022. The following matters were highlighted:

- The two schemes had been procured together to save resources.
- Roundabout improvements would create a designated right and left turn into the industrial estate to help improve freight transit.
- Footways would be widened, and a puffin crossing installed to help pedestrian access and encourage active travel.
- The tendering process was scheduled to take place early in the new year, if approved.
- It was anticipated that works would cause disruption with a temporary three-way traffic light system set up to protect the works.
- A good level of communication was being kept with local businesses and residents.

During consideration of the presentation, the Committee raised the following comments:

- Severe traffic noise owed to thinning of the trees line along the A16 was noted- a question was posed around alternative noise cancelling methods. Officers gave assurance that this issue will be investigated further and moreover, the Committee was advised that an effective acoustic barrier should contain c200-300 trees, hence changes implemented did not change the existing picture in that area, therefore there was no impact anticipated from a change in the existing noise pollution associated with the scheme. Officers offered to liaise with residents to explain details of the scheme and to address their concerns.
- A concern was raised about traffic congestion on Liquorpond Street Roundabout which was perceived by residents as being due to receive improvement works; a request was made for clear communications to indicate that the scheme did not involve that site. Officers explained that there was clear communication on the website (bid) and though prior report scrutinised by this Committee which was publicly available; and

welcomed offline communications with Members to support in carrying correct messages across their constituents.

- Concerns were also raised around disruption to local businesses owed to the works, in particular where night-time closures had been scheduled. A two-week notice was not felt sufficient time for businesses to devise alternative methods for business continuity. Officers agreed that engaging with businesses was of paramount importance and underlined that a number of high-risk assessments were carried out and will continue to be carried out to ensure disruption was minimised. Assurance was offered that Officers maintained an active dialogue with businesses; the team was also engaging with the Boston Transport Board where they were discussing this scheme and a number of other with a view to inform businesses and allow them to understand aspects and plan for the future. Officers clarified that there was a longer notice period than that of two weeks and explained that this was a lengthy and complicated process that was carried out with that in mind.
- In relation to diversion routes and congestion and disruptions caused at these, Officers gave assurance that they were in open dialogue with Street Works and Permitting team as to effectively coordinate changes.
- Members applauded the pedestrian and cycling recommendations for lit crossings which were expected to be well received by members of the public who worked (and walked/cycled to work) in the area. A Member enquired whether it was possible to see some improvements along a narrow section of Wyberton low Road which at current had no light provision and was used frequently by school students and pedestrians. Issues with schools and parking outside adding to the congestion of roads were also highlighted by Members. Officers acknowledged that surveys confirmed the use of certain routes by pedestrians; it was argued that the scheme had identified this and continued to encourage use of the appropriate footpath along Marsh Lane. Limitations imposed by housing developments were acknowledged therefore mitigations to encourage appropriate use of routes (i.e., bollards, pedestrian crossings etc.) were put in place to challenge and change traveling habits.
- Comments on future improvements included an exit and entrance on the other end (opposite end) of Marsh Lane and any other mitigations to disrupt use of footpaths by motorcyclists. Officers captured these with thanks.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee supports the recommendations to the Leader of the Council- Executive Councillor for Resources, Communications and Commissioning, and the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT as set out in the report
2. That the Committee's comments be passed on to the Leader of the Council- Executive Councillor for Resources, Communications and Commissioning, and the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT in relation to this item.

45 HIGHWAYS PERFORMANCE REPORT, QUARTER 2 (1 JULY TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2022)

Consideration was given to a report from Jonathan Evans, Head of Highways, Client and Contract Management, which set out the performance of the highways service. With

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reference to the report, specific scheme progress and notable performance data was highlighted to the Committee.

During consideration of the presentation, the Committee raised the following comments:

- Concerning Grantham relief road, additional costs associated with poor ground conditions had not originally been understood. A practical solution was being sought but was subject to commercial and legal sensitivities.
- The impact of inflation meant that the Council was to temporarily struggle to fulfil its strategy. The Council was doing everything possible to secure additional funds.
- No service cuts were anticipated for the forthcoming year however the condition of the asset may decline in the short term whilst inflation pressure remains high.
- The North Hykeham relief road was on schedule.
- Public rights of way were being managed in steady state with meant that works completed kept pace with the rate of deterioration.
- The Highways department were due to carry out a carbon emission study for its maintenance operations.
- An interim SharePoint site was in operation to keep Members informed of highways matters whilst the Highways App was down.
- Staff shortages in technical roles presented an issue. Recruitment was underway which promoted the benefits of the Council's employment terms.
- Complaints regarding highways issues concerning private companies were not logged in the Council's performance reporting. Officers would look to capture this matter in subsequent reports following advice from the Customer Relations team, as it was recognised that oversight was necessary in order to keep the public properly informed.

RESOLVED:

That the report be endorsed, and comments passed on to the Executive Member for Highways, Transport, and IT.

46 TRANSPORT QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT

A verbal report was presented to the Committee by Verity Druce, Head of Transformation Services, on Quarter 2 Transport Performance. The following matters were highlighted:

- The educational travel budget and dashboard had been delayed.
- The number of passengers on busses had increased by approximately 100 last month.
- Emissions information for public transport.
- An update on the review of the Call Connect service.
- A comprehensive report would be presented at the next meeting of the Committee.

During consideration of the presentation, it was raised that a full review of the Call Connect service was underway, which was looking at matters such as including service information on an app. However, longer service hours were not projected to feature.

RESOLVED:

That the verbal update be received.

47 GRANTHAM, SLEAFORD AND SKEGNESS & MABLETHORPE TRANSPORT STRATEGIES 2022

Consideration was given to a report from Karl Gibson and Steve Brooks, Senior Project Leaders, Highways Infrastructure, which provided a final update on the Grantham, Sleaford and Skegness and Mablethorpe Transport Strategies and included the final Grantham, Sleaford and Skegness and Mablethorpe Transport Strategies 2022 and summary document. The following matters were highlighted:

- The strategies were designed to have a 10 to 15 year lifetime and fed into the Green master Plan.
- The chief aim of the strategies was to establish synergy between the towns of Lincolnshire.
- The strategies also identified targeted junction improvements and mobility hubs.

During consideration of the presentation, the Committee raised the following comments:

- Needs and funding reviews were conducted by the Transport Strategy Boards every five years. As such, the transport strategies had to remain reactive documents.
- The Bikability scheme needed to be encouraged at a young age.
- Changes to taxi licensing policies to implement alternative fuel vehicles needed to give companies fair warning and be assessed by stakeholder groups.
- Reliability was paramount to a successful and well used transport network.
- A number of typographical errors were highlighted, including statistical information.
- The role of the Transport Boards needed to be given greater clarity in the strategies.
- The inclusion of eScooters normalised a currently illegal form of transport. Reference to eScooters could be removed from the strategies and add at a later date upon subsequent reviews. It was noted that eScooter trial schemes to encourage proper use had proven successful in other parts of the country, and inclusion in the strategies helped move policies towards a potentially effective form of sustainable transport.
- Skegness and Mablethorpe Transport Strategy:
 - The strategy had to ensure rat running was avoided to protect residential streets.
 - Estimated timeframes for implementation of key aspects of the strategy were to coincide with the Skegness Gateway project.

- Better rail connection between Skegness and Peterborough needed to be established to help towards economic development.
- The inclusion of integrated public transport hubs would help make transfers easier.
- Grantham Transport Strategy:
 - Members were concerned by the closure of Doncaster Sheffield Airport, and its impact on effective transit and commerce.
 - Reference to speed humps should be removed, as they contributed to vehicle damage.
 - Members were concerned that quiet lane strategies were not enforceable. It was noted that it was early days, conceptually, for this initiative, and some Members attested its successes in the south of the county.
- Sleaford Transport Strategy:
 - Some ambitions should be achievable now, such as the implementation of active travel schemes and developments.

Members commended the work of the Transport Boards and felt that their work needed to be better promoted.

RESOLVED:

1. That Committee endorse each of the three area Transport Strategies, and comments be noted
2. That the Committee approve the plans contained within each Transport Strategy.

48 HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

It was reported that there had been no changes to the Work Program since the publication.

Members noted the Work programme – the following comments were raised:

- The Anglian Water road and maintenance works and traffic disruption item was to be programmed for the meeting in April 2023 and would include reporting on disruption caused by permitted street works.
- The pavement parking motion, passed at Council on 9 December 2022, would be kept in mind in the in the context of the Committee's Work programme and newly formed Traffic Working Group.

RESOLVED

That the work programme be agreed subject to the amendments above.

The meeting closed at 12.14 pm