

**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY
 COMMITTEE
 6 MARCH 2023**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR

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

Officers in attendance:-

Jonathan Evans (Head of Highways, Client and Contract Management), Kiara Chatziioannou (Scrutiny Officer), Richard Fenwick (Head of Highways Asset and Local Management Services), Steven Batchelor (LRSP Senior Manager), Verity Druce (Head of Transformation - Transport) and Thomas Crofts (Democratic services Officer)

Others in attendance:-

Alistair Mcbeath (Balfour Beatty)

59 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Brookes, Mrs A Austin and E W Strenziel.

It was reported that, under Regulation 13 of the Local Government Committee and Political Groups Regulation 1990, Councillor P Ashleigh-Morris was replacing Councillor M Brookes for this meeting only.

60 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No interests were declared at this point in proceedings.

61 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON

That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2022 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

62 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND CHIEF OFFICERS

There were no announcements made.

63 LINCOLNSHIRE ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP PLAN AND SCHEME FOR BUSES

Consideration was given to a report from the Senior Projects Officer – Transport Services. It was reported that the ‘bus back better’ initiative gave opportunities for local transport authorities to franchise services or look to enhance existing plan and schemes, and that Lincolnshire County Council was choosing the latter. Work was underway to secure further funding, as well as projects to encourage transport as a career.

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

- Members were concerned by the lack of provision of secure locking facilities for bicycles at bus stops.
- Further clarity was sought on how funding was spread across the country in relation to the Local Transport Authorities, acknowledging that 2/3 of these had not received funding. Officers explained that areas including East Midlands, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City and Derbyshire City had received funding as well as urban areas, whereas the North East Lincolnshire region had not received any funding.
- Members inquired what the impact of the £2 adult single fare cap had been in terms of take up by new passengers and queried how that was being monitored. Information suggested that there was an uplift in passenger use, especially for longer journeys. The scheme was under review with a view to being extended beyond June 2023.
- Members noted that improving punctuality was not reflected in the EP Objectives despite that being a fundamental aspect of success. Officers explained that punctuality was a priority for bus operators.
- Further concerns were echoed in relation to lack of night-time or Sunday economy covering services as these affected decisions on business operations. In relation to night-time and weekend economy, there were few services in Lincolnshire outside standard areas. Members argued that the night-time economy was being overlooked.
- In relation to the ‘Freedom Never Gets Old’ Campaign, Members asked what levels of success had been achieved. Officers stated that central government took great interest in this campaign through which bus pass applications increased; however, more analysis was required to reflect on how that translated into movement and use.
- Relevant to the bid of £2.2 million (2023-2026) for the Boston College training scheme, Members asked what number of individuals were estimated to have undergone training through the funding stream. Officers informed Members that the target was set to training and diffusing in the market circa 34 drivers for the 1st year and 30 for the 2nd year.
- Members asked what level of obligation emerged and what powers that could be used to put pressure on organisations which did not maintain effectively bus related infrastructure and assets. Officers responded that the bus shelter audit phase one has been completed, which revealed that there were approximately 6000 pieces of infrastructure across Lincolnshire. Phase two was underway, which aimed at establishing ownership. All repairs were being reported via FixMyStreet app. Comments on engaging with other councils in relation to maintenance of assets they own were taken back for consideration.

- Concerns were raised by Members in relation to car parking that penalised motorists to increase bus usage. Officers explained that the Plan put in the links between car parking and bus usage but there were no further plans for such a scenario in Lincolnshire.
- A point of concern was raised about traffic light priority for buses and the rollout of bus lanes in Lincoln that may negatively impact motorists' ability to enter and exit the city. Officers explained that due to spatial limitations there was no margin for mass roll out of bus lanes; there were no diversion strategies in place and the focus was on integrated transport and getting as many educational travel scholars as possible on to the existing market and network whilst ensuring that the daytime market was being stabilised. It was noted that CallConnect was also employed for educational travel provision.
- In relation to traffic light priority for buses, Officers gave assurance, that there were certain circumstances and technicalities to be met for priority to be enabled. Data-driven analysis looked at links to a phased number of signals and until there were dedicated bus lanes, there was no prioritisation taking place.
- Members asked how the Plan facilitated the development of new services or the extension of existing services in areas, especially bigger towns, between which there are no connections at present. Officers provided assurance that in line with the Plan, there was a network review across the County that was being developed. The review aimed at verifying gaps in service, ability to shift services, to identify which services were commercial and which CallConnect and how these might be filled.
- A point was raised on putting existing resource in better use (i.e., CallConnect) for the purpose of educational travel, avoiding the use of taxis which bore a high cost paid. Officers provided assurance that resource was used as referenced above yet certain scholars still required alternative transportation arrangements due to certain conditions in place (e.g., SEND, behavioural complexities) to meet their needs. Further assurances were required by Members that CallConnect was not overburdened with being used for a multitude of purposes as that was expected to have a negative impact on the service cohort they were designed for. Officers gave assurance that resource switches were reviewed to ensure that a balance was maintained. Officers worked with operators to better understand where the demand emerged, at which times demand peaked and thus insert appropriate mitigations to maintain that balance.
- Members argued that in rural areas, where communities required adjustments to existing services, providers appeared to be inflexible. Officers explained that currently a full transformation programme across transport services was undertaken; this focused on engagement with operators of both strategic and operational level. Officers offered to gather concerns expressed and discuss these with providers in a series of strategic relationship meetings to be held throughout the year.

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee endorse the report.

2. That comments made be shared with the Executive Councillor for their consideration ahead of taking a decision between 27th and 31st March.

64 ROAD SAFETY PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report from the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership Senior Manager on the work being undertaken by the Road Safety Partnership to reduce the number of people killed and injured on county roads. The report provided an update on fatal and serious injury (KSI) casualty figures for Lincolnshire, as well as data on trends, comparisons, and areas of priority.

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

- There was a need to educate all road users about awareness of motorcyclists as well as a need to educate motorcyclists about other road users.
- Data showed that no KSI statistics were attributed to the condition of roads.
- Speed camera upgrades were to be undertaken in the next financial year.
- Letters were submitted to motorists caught speeding by community speed watch groups, with the third letter being hand delivered and the motorist confronted.
- Patrol cars were able to detect and evidence instances of motorists using mobile phones whilst driving.
- Members agreed that potholes posed a safety risk, especially for smaller vehicles. This matter was accounted for in road safety defect recording.
- Fostering strong communities helped deter speeding.

Members agreed that better coordination was require concerning different works scheduled for each area, so as to avoid instances where infrastructure renovations were dismantled not long after completion for a separate renovations or upgrades.

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee endorse the report and expresses satisfaction with activity and service provision.
2. That comments made be taken under consideration by the relevant officers and Executive Portfolio Holder.

65 HIGHWAYS - QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT (1 OCTOBER TO 31 DECEMBER)

Consideration was given to a report from Head of Highways Client and Contractual Management Services on the performance of the Highways Service including the Major Highway Schemes Update, Lincolnshire Highways Performance Report and Transport Complaints Report.

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

- Traffic regulation orders had not previously been recorded; however, the aspiration to record timeliness of processing was a priority and this data would feature in subsequent reports once reporting had been established.
- Complaints relating to works that the Council was not responsible for, such as works undertaken by Anglian Water, needed to be captured so there was a full picture of residents' concerns.
- Progress concerning the Spalding relief road were to be reported under the highway maintenance update at a subsequent meeting – works were on task at present.
- The Lincolnshire Coastal Highway needed to be completed to a quality standard to evidence a strong positive cost benefit ratio so as to help secure sufficient funding.

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee note the report and expresses satisfaction with the performance for quarter 3.
2. That comments made be taken under consideration by the relevant officers and Executive Portfolio Holder.

66 HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED

That the work programme presented be agreed.

The meeting closed at 12.10 pm