

**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY
 COMMITTEE
 24 APRIL 2023**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M BROOKES (CHAIRMAN)

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

Councillor M J Hill OBE attended the meeting as an observer

Councillors: R G Davies and C L Perraton-Williams

Officers in attendance:-

Ashley Behan (Street Works and Permitting Manager), Jonathan Evans (Head of Highways, Client and Contract Management), Karen Cassar (Assistant Director – Highways), Mick Phoenix (Traffic Manager), Simon Evans (Health Scrutiny Officer), Thomas Crofts (Democratic Services Officer) and Verity Druce (Head of Transformation Services),

Others in attendance:-

Anglian Water: Sean McCarthy (Head of Leakage), Andy Skelhorn (Head of Reinstatement) and Grant Tuffs (Regional Engagement Manager)

67 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A M Hall.

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

68 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No interests were declared at this point in proceedings.

69 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT
 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 6 MARCH 2023

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the inclusion of apologies for absence having been received from Cllr M Brookes.

70 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND LEAD
 OFFICERS

There were no announcements made.

71 ANGLIAN WATER STREET WORKS PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENTS

Consideration was given to a report on areas of cooperation and concern regarding Anglian Water's quality of work and traffic management difficulties, as well as a presentation by Anglian Water on their activities and challenges faced. The following matters were highlighted:

- Anglian Water's performance had fallen over the past 18 months; however, work was underway to rectify the situation including further collaboration with the Council and target investment over the coming year.
- Challenges faced by Anglian Water included:
 - Management of the largest and driest geographic area of any water company in the country.
 - Demand for water was rising but supply remained a static factor.
 - Increasingly frequent instances of extreme weather had resulted in more failures and leaks along the water network and placed greater strain on resources.
 - The 2022 summer drought and the intense freeze-thaw cycles of the winter that followed had caused a 38% increase in instances of burst water mains due to ground movement stresses on materials.
- In order to meet the increased demands, Anglian Water had pledged additional resources to developing better systems, equipment, staffing, training, and performance management.
- Work was on track to reduce the length of time need for road closures and replace outdated software, in line with Anglian Water's performance improvement plan.

The Committee raised the following comments in relation to the report and presentation received:

- It was noted that performance had declined since the introduction of the new Oracle reporting system. It was clarified that the system had been honed to reveal greater viability of performance data, which previously went underreported. Anglian Water pledged a £350,000 investment into areas that had been highlighted by the new data.
- Members welcomed the reactive works being undertaken by Anglian Water to maintain the network but were concerned that proactive approaches were not sufficient. Anglian Water clarified that the renewal of assets was a priority but that an increase in instances of burst mains meant that reactive repairs were a greater priority.
- Anglian Water stated that investments into new software for leak detection and management of the network were underway. Members felt that this was expenditure rather than investment to ensure that systems were fit for purpose. It

was clarified that the procurement of new software had to be based on a robust business case, which considered competing costs and options.

- Anglian Water stated that they intended to sign the Council's Lincolnshire Street Works Charter but wished to have further input before agreeing to it. Specifically, Anglian Water wished to see changes concerning some of the wording that may be considered too prescriptive and inflexible for their needs; however, they welcomed the opportunity for establishing greater cooperation and joint working.
- Members were assured that the Charter would be presented to this Committee for comment at a subsequent meeting and that a progress update would be circulated for the next meeting.
- Anglian Water were having regular meetings with partners to help coordinate works.
- Instances of Anglian Water excavating highways assets without the Council's permission were apparent and fines were issued accordingly. It was clarified that fines were set by the Department for Transport, and that the Council would continue to lobby for increased rates to better enforce compliance.
- Members felt that works conducted by Anglian Water on and near to the highways excessively relied on road closures and that such closures were disruptive and sometimes led to further damage to highways assets. Anglian Water clarified that this was often the most efficient option for the completion of works and that managing traffic around works required additional resources, staff and training.
- Road closures often lasted longer than intended and were not effectively planned around communities – for example, not scheduling works in school holidays. Anglian Water clarified that these works needed tending to as soon as possible and often could not wait to be scheduled.
- Members felt that sites of work were not kept tidy.

RESOLVED

1. That the report, presentation, and comments made be noted.
2. That it be noted that the Anglian Water Street Works Performance – Update on Action Plan is scheduled to be presented at the meeting in December 2023 including an update on progress on road closes.
3. That, in view of the Committee's request to see progress with the Street Works Charter, information on progress be circulated at the next meeting.

72 REVIEW OF TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT IN LINCOLNSHIRE - WORKING GROUP OUTCOMES

Consideration was given to a report regarding activity undertaken by the Traffic Management Review Working Group. It was reported that:

- The Working Group was set up and consisted of the following elected members:
 - Cllr M Brookes

- Cllr K Clarke
- Cllr R Gibson
- The following Evidence bases had been considered by the Working Group:
 - Network and Traffic Management Plan
 - Speed Limit Policy
 - Rural Road Network
 - Speed limit assessments for towns and villages
 - Traffic Policy for School Speed Limits Outside Schools
 - Parking on Pavements
- The Working Group recommend that a Scrutiny Panel be set up in this Council term and that it adopts the specified format and layout in the report to inform the completion of the Review of Traffic Management for 'Managing the Network Safely'.

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

- The Council had the ability to enforce penalties for the parking of HGVs on verges and any resulting damage. However, the enforcement of stopping other vehicles from parking on verges was the responsibility of the police.
- Members felt that residents needed more information to raise awareness of the damage caused by parking on verges, especially in relation to school pick-ups and drop-offs.

RESOLVED

1. That the report and comments made be noted.
2. That the Committee the report be endorsed and the key lines of enquiry, identified to inform the scoping for a potential scrutiny review by one of the Scrutiny Panels, be approved.
3. That an in-depth review entitled Review of Traffic Management in Lincolnshire, undertaken by one of the Scrutiny Panels in this Council Term, be recommended to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

73 TRANSPORT QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2022/23

Consideration was given to a report on Quarter 3 Transport Performance. The following matters were highlighted:

- There had been no improvements in circumstances facing the industry, with inflation remaining high and patronage remaining low.
- Limitations of the Service's IT system had stalled progress made regarding the data dashboard; however, it was anticipated to that this would be rectified and made operational by the end of July 2023.
- 16+ staff vacancies remained within the service, predominantly within the operations function. These vacancies were subject to a second round of recruitment at the end of March 2023.

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

- IT infrastructure for smart ticketing was being explored, such as the use of QR code payment methods on buses. The technology needed extensive testing to be sure that it was effective and sufficiently futureproof – an options appraisal was being planned.
- The Call Connect service was not prioritising transport for education over public use. Services were determined on a basis of demand levels.
- Recruitment remained a significant issue and required close monitoring.
- It was important that the performance data dashboard be operational as soon as practicable to improved service monitoring.

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee be satisfied with the reported performance of the service.
2. That comments made be noted and shared with the Executive Member for Highways, Transport and IT.

74 HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED

That the work programme presented be agreed subject to the following changes:

- Grantham Future High Street Fund Station Approach be moved from the May meeting to the September meeting.
- Refresh of the Bus Service Improvement Plan for Lincolnshire be added to the September meeting.
- Street Works Charter Update briefing paper be added to the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 12.00 pm