



**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
18 APRIL 2016**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M BROOKES (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors A G Hagues (Vice-Chairman), C J T H Brewis, D Brailsford, K J Clarke, R G Fairman, R J Hunter-Clarke, J R Marriott, N M Murray and A H Turner MBE JP

Councillor R G Davies attended the meeting as an observer and spoke when necessary

Officers in attendance:-

Steve Blagg (Democratic Services Officer), David Davies (Principal Maintenance Engineer), Matt Jones (Parking Services Manager), Anita Ruffle (Group Manager - Passenger Transport Unit), Paul Rusted (Infrastructure Commissioner), Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer) and Steve Willis (Chief Operating Officer, Development Services)

80 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

An apology for absence was received from Councillor M G Allan.

The Chief Executive reported that under the Local Government (Committee and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, he had appointed Councillors C J T H Brewis and R G Fairman to the Committee, in place of Councillors Mrs A M Newton and R L Foulkes, respectively, for this meeting only.

81 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillors M Brookes and C J T H Brewis requested that a note should be made in the minutes that they were both members of the Local Government Association's Public Transport Consortium.

82 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 7 MARCH 2016

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee held on 7 March 2016, be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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83 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND IT AND THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Executive Councillor R G Davies made the following announcements:-

1. The County Council had been allocated £1.8m by the Government, to repair potholes.
2. The importance of members attending the forthcoming Highways Divisional meetings to hear about proposed changes to highways and transport services.

Officers read out details of an announcement by the Roads Minister, that the Council, together with Durham County Council, as a result of the Department for Transport Self-Assessment Process, had been placed in band 3, the highest band. This meant that the Council would continue to receive additional funding for highways compared to a local authority in band 1.

Executive Councillor R G Davies responded to comments by the Committee as follows:-

1. He was unaware of the £1.8m additional funding from the Government prior to the setting of the national Budget and that the Department of Transport would be able to provide an explanation of how this money was found.
2. Members could inform their Town and Parish Councils about the County Council's being placed in band 3 for capital maintenance grants. Officers agreed to circulate the letter from the Department of Transport on this matter to all members.
3. The Combined Lincolnshire Authority was responsible for allocating its grant but the £15m received each year was not a significant amount in the context of the other priority areas which the grant had to cover.

The Chairman welcomed the announcement in connection with the Council's placement in band 3 for the capital grants settlement and placed on record his appreciation to everyone involved in getting this award.

The Chairman stated that it was not uncommon for additional funding to be found following the settlement of the national Budget.

84 MAJOR SCHEMES UPDATE

The Committee received a verbal update from officers in connection with major schemes.

Issues highlighted included:-

1. Boston Quadrant – the draft South East Lincolnshire Local Plan consultation had recently ended and responses to consultation were being analysed. A joint County and Boston Borough Council funded survey, to confirm strategic traffic movements in and around Boston, had taken place and the results would be used to inform the review of the Boston Transport Strategy.

2. A17/A151 Peppermint Junction, Holbeach – planning permission had now been granted and a start on site was expected in March 2017, providing that there were no objections to legal orders.
3. Street Lighting Transformation Project – this project had now commenced with an expected completion in March 2017. A communications plan had been prepared and various bodies had been informed including Councillors and Parish Councils.
4. Lincoln East West Link – the scheme was currently on programme to be completed in September 2016. The Tentercroft Street Bridge and the Heritage Building were on track for completion.
5. Lincoln Eastern Bypass – there was an emerging issue concerning Network Rail's inability to confirm the Disruptive Track Possession required to deliver that element of the Spalding Line overbridge (road under the railway) and a response was awaited from Network Rail.
6. Lincoln Footbridges – the High Street Footbridge was expected to be completed in June 2016. With regard to the Brayford Wharf Footbridge Network Rail had now confirmed that funding was available for this scheme and a planning application was expected to be submitted in the Summer of 2016.
7. Grantham Southern Relief Road – with regard to King31, phase 1 had been extended to include elements of phase 2 with an expected completion in June 2016.

Officers responded to comments by the Committee as follows:-

1. With regard to the Street Lighting Transformation Project Parish and Town Councils and local Councillors would be informed about proposals affecting their area.
2. Further to the concerns raised about the problems caused by the time the level crossings were closed on Doddington and Skellingthorpe Roads it was agreed to submit a report on Network Rail's guidance on the closure of level crossings to a future meeting and that a representative from Network Rail should be invited to attend the meeting when this report was considered.

RESOLVED

That a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee in connection with Network Rail's guidance on the closure of level crossings and that, if possible, a representative from Network Rail be invited to attend the meeting when this report was considered.

85 CCTV PILOT SCHEME - PARKING ENFORCEMENT OUTSIDE SCHOOLS

The Committee received a report on the proposed use of CCTV outside schools to improve the safety of pedestrians, assist in the improvement of traffic flows and help to reduce highway congestion. The CCTV vehicle could also help to improve safety at pedestrian crossings and other keep clear areas.

Discussion between the Committee and officers included the following topics:-

1. Irresponsible parking in the vicinity of schools was a countywide problem and should be a higher priority for the Council.

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2. It was important that the pilot schools identified in the report were involved in the arrangements for the introduction of the CCTV in order to try and solve the problems of irresponsible parking. Officers stated that all of the effected pilot schools would be consulted about the proposals.
3. Sir Francis Hill School, Lincoln had a "no go" area because of anti-social incidents. Did "no go" areas exist elsewhere in Lincolnshire? Officers stated that there had been some incidents of anti-social behaviour at this school and the Police had been involved. However, there were not any "no go areas" in the county.
4. The Council had a duty to help its own run schools before Academies and Academies should be asked to make a financial contribution to solving this problem.
5. Walking buses were an excellent way of getting children to walk to school and should be encouraged.
6. Could CCTV be used at different locations, e.g. zebra crossings with zig zags? Officers stated that it was possible to utilise the CCTV enforcement vehicle to monitor other keep clear areas such as pedestrian crossings.
7. Should agreement be sought from the school before the scheme was implemented? Officers stated that the problem was so acute for local residents that it was important to start the project as soon as possible.
8. Emergency vehicles had problems accessing roads near schools due to irresponsible parking.
9. Could the scheme be started earlier? Officers stated that the delay in the implementation of the proposals was due to the fact that the On-Street Civil Parking Enforcement Contract was due to be renewed later in the year and this proposal would be included in the new contract.
10. The problem of irresponsible parking should be raised with Parish Councils first to save money? Officers stated that the problems of irresponsible parking had been raised with schools and Parish Councils but the County Council had a responsibility to local residents to tackle this problem.

Executive Councillor R G Davies commented that the problem of irresponsible parking was worse in rural areas where more people needed to use a car, He added that the Council was not in a financial position to extend the scheme countywide because of the cost and to take no action at all was not an option because so many local residents were effected.

RESOLVED (Note: Councillor J R Marriott requested that his name should be recorded to only supporting the funding of Local Authority Schools)

(a) That the pilot CCTV enforcement scheme as proposed in the report be supported and that the Committee's comments on the proposals be passed to the Executive Director for Environment and Economy before a decision to proceed is made.

(b) That a progress report be submitted to a future meeting.

86 WINTER MAINTENANCE-END OF YEAR REPORT

The Committee received an end of year report on winter maintenance 2015/16 and the Committee was invited to discuss potential changes for inclusion in an updated Winter Maintenance Plan.

Discussion between the Committee and officers included the following topics:-

1. Should it not be the contractor's responsibility to find HGV drivers? Officers stated that the winter maintenance budget had been protected in recent years but because of the continuing financial challenges facing the highways service had meant a reduction in the amount of work and hence drivers for highway construction.
2. There was a national shortage of HGV drivers and local authorities should work together across county boundaries to share salt usage. Officers agreed that there was a national shortage of HGV drivers; that some firms who had gone to the expense of training drivers were placing a stipulation that the driver remained with the firm for a certain period of time; that the opportunity to share salting facilities was being explored and an example of this was at North Lincolnshire's proposed depot at Kirton in Lindsey.

The Committee agreed to the establishment of a Working Group of Members to examine the current Winter Maintenance Plan.

RESOLVED

(a) That responses given by officers to comments made by the Committee, be noted and that a review of the Winter Maintenance Plan be supported.

(b) That a Working Group of Members be appointed to consider and review the current Winter Maintenance Plan (issued in July 2013) with the following scope:-

1. To make recommendations on areas of possible savings, with particular focus on the equipment available for severe weather events;
2. to consider and review suitable options for continued publicity to encourage suitable LGV licensed drivers to join Kier leading up to the 2016/17 winter period and
3. to report back to the Committee at its meeting on 12 September 2016.

(c) That the Working Group comprise the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, Councillors, K J Clarke (or Councillor N M Murray), R J Hunter-Clarke and A H Turner MBE, JP.

87 HIGHWAYS FUTURE OPERATING MODEL

The Committee received a progress report on work to develop a Future Operating Model for highways services. Initial work began on its development as a response to a Strategic Value for Money Assessment of the service in 2013 and it now incorporated the further change required to accommodate the efficiencies and savings required by the Fundamental Budget Review and recent Financial Challenge. The Committee also received a presentation on this matter.

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Officers' responses to comments by the Committee included:-

1. The areas covered by District Managers would correspond to District Council boundaries and therefore there would be a proposed reduction from ten Area Highway Managers to seven District Managers.
2. The highways authority was proposing a more proactive approach to asset management with a corresponding reduction in its reactive approach.
3. Communications with the public about decisions made on highways maintenance needed to be improved.

The Committee agreed that a progress report should be submitted to the Committee after October 2016.

RESOLVED

That the responses to comments made by the Committee be noted and that the Committee receive an update after October 2016.

88 HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received and considered its Work Programme.

RESOLVED

That the Committee's Work Programme be noted subject to the addition of the following items:-

1. Report by Network Rail on level crossings closure times – 13 June 2016.
2. Winter Maintenance, report back of the Member Working Group – 12 September 2016.
3. A progress report on the implementation of the CCTV Pilot scheme – 28 November 2016.
4. Highways Future Operating Model – Update Report – after October 2016.

89 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That under Section 100 (A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended.

90 PASSENGER TRANSPORT MARKET MODERATION UPDATE

The Committee received a report which had been considered by the Executive at its meeting on 5 April 2016 in connection with Passenger Transport Market Moderation.

RESOLVED

That the recommendations detailed in Appendix A of the report approved by the Executive at its meeting on 5 April 2016, be supported.

The meeting closed at 12.40 pm

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