



**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
25 OCTOBER 2021**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR A M HALL (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors Mrs A M Austin, M Brookes, K J Clarke, T J G Dyer, R A Gibson, Mrs S Rawlins, S P Roe, E W Strengiel and R A Wright

Councillors: R Davies attended the meeting as an observer

Councillor C Perraton-Williams attended the meeting remotely via Teams as an observer

Officers in attendance:-

Kiara Chatziioannou (Scrutiny Officer) and Robert Close (Democratic Services Officer)

The following officers joined the meeting remotely via Teams:-

Karen Cassar (Assistant Director Highways), Sam Edwards (Head of Highways Services) and Paul Rusted (Head of Highways Services)

29 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor B Adams.

30 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of interest received.

31 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 21 SEPTEMBER 2021

That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

32 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND CHIEF
OFFICERS

The Assistant Director - Highways advised that the public consultation for the local transport plan had begun on 25 October and would last until 1 December.

33 RED LION SQUARE, STAMFORD

Consideration was given to a report from the Head of Highways Infrastructure on the proposed improvement scheme at Red Lion Square, Stamford. The scheme was originally completed in 2007 with a number of other improvement schemes in Stamford. This area has installed paving stone setts, however thinner setts, stand bed and joints were used due to funding limitations. Through increased vehicle movements, setts had moved and been damaged. Increased maintenance fees and safety concerns were noted. Following requests from local members and the Executive Councillor, options were explored to improve the area. A number of options were considered but ultimately, following consultation with Heritage England, the option to replace the existing 100mm thick York stone setts with 150mm thick York stone setts with a new concrete foundation, new mortar bed and new mortar joints. This was originally desired in 2007. This scheme would reduce the maintenance liability for the County Council and maintain the aesthetics. The existing setts would be stored for reuse elsewhere in the county. The original material used, Cromwell Stone, was no longer in use, however an alternative had been identified. Formal approval would be sought from Heritage England. The scheme only sought to change the carriageway, the original footway would be untouched. Within the £1.49 million budget, £435,000 of risk was identified. However, this was expected to reduce as the scheme progressed. If approved by the Executive, a formal contract would be entered into with EUROVIA, who had completed a number of public realm schemes previously with the Council.

The Committee considered the report, and during the discussion the following comments were noted:-

- Members requested clarity in relation to the risk figure (predominantly construction risk) of £453,000 described in the report. Officers explained that a quality risk assessment produced this value; key elements included in this were the potential for utility diversions. There currently was a quotation which was a process with utility companies. Initial discussions with these did not indicate the need for diversions. Confirmation of this was anticipated in the coming three to four weeks and would see figures dropping significantly. Additional elements accounted for in that same risk figure were weather conditions; material price increases, which were being mitigated in advance by entering a contract with EUROVIA and placing orders early for costs to be fixed; and also, availability of contractors and professional staff, which was looked at being mitigated in similar ways by entering contracts with contractors early.
- Members requested clarity in relation to the £260,000 cost estimate on fees. Officers summarised that the figure included designer fees (including designing and supervising consultancy), project management fees, supervision fees, as well as lower figures relating to engaging with planners and obtaining legal advice.
- Assurance was sought in relation to the works being completed in a timely manner, within the presented cost estimates and with guaranteed workmanship. Officers stated that designing and supervising consultancy served as a testing regime that also

ensured the quality of workmanship. Certainty of time could not be guaranteed due to unforeseen circumstances such as weather (e.g., flooding), utility damage, lack of materials or delayed delivery of these. These were expected in any construction projects, however, as the scheme was moving forward, greater definition was being input in relation to timescales. Assurance was given that the works programme was reflecting and scrutinising that. Lastly, robust costs and estimates were put into this report; the significant amounts around risk were to ensure staying in line with the budget. A direct correlation between costs and unforeseen circumstances was drawn which may affect the works programme significantly. Assurance was provided that the Executive Councillors remained informed as the scheme developed, and works were carried out.

- Concerns were raised by Members over the balance drawn between health and safety risks in other areas and improving the aesthetic appearance of this square. Officers affirmed that, without regular maintenance, there was a significant safety concern at this site; there had been isolated incidents, including pedestrian crossing points, where sets were pulled out which left holes behind. Measures had been taken to address these issues, however, degradation was growing in greater frequency and was presenting a significant safety concern. Assurance was given that the existing aesthetics were maintained.
- It was queried whether a potential success of this scheme would make a case for other similar schemes for areas across the county with cobbled streets. Officers clarified that schemes emerged anywhere in the county which relied on steer from Members and available resources in place as to be taken forward; that was irrespective to the success of this particular scheme.
- Members noted that the stones at the footpath and those of the highway were a different type of stone and asked if the stones proposed to be laid were a match. Assurance was given that Officers had met with the supplier of the cobbles and ensured that the look, texture and size were similar to the existing and aesthetically sympathetic towards each other. Approval from Heritage England was also sought.
- Assurance was provided that marketers and local businesses, the Civic Society and various other organisations were consulted to ensure that businesses would not be disrupted, and impact would be minimised.
- A Member emphasised the importance of being clear on what happened to the old cobbles that were being removed and received assurance that these were being stored in highway depots for being repurposed in maintenance needs elsewhere across the county.

RESOLVED

1. That the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee unanimously agreed to support the recommendations to the Executive as detailed in the report.
2. That the comments listed above be passed on to the Executive in relation to this item.

34 ANNUAL UPDATE ON LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO TRANSPORT STRATEGY DEVELOPMENTS

Consideration was given to a report from the Head of Highways Infrastructure on the annual update on Lincolnshire County Council's approach to transport strategy developments. Since the committee's last update in October 2020 the Gainsborough Transport Strategy, Grantham Traffic Model, Sleaford Traffic Model and Skegness and Coastal Area Traffic Model were at, or near, completion. This year the Grantham Transport Strategy, Sleaford Transport Strategy and Skegness and Coastal Area Transport Strategy had commenced.

The Committee considered the report, and during the discussion the following comments were noted:-

- Members asked why cycle ways had not been joined up when they were planned highways, noting particular issues on Skellingthorpe Road for example. It was explained that a number of highways sections, including Skellingthorpe Road, were not actually managed by the Council but were managed by National Highways. Discussions were on going to resolve issues. It was stressed that a number of walking and cycling strategies were also underway within Place which aligned with the Transport Strategy. Representatives from each project teams attended stakeholder engagement events to ensure that the same questions were not asked of the public. The walking and cycling strategies included details cycle ways needed to connect to make a full network, however, funding would need to be secured to make this achievable.
- Observing the detail in the report that listed the plans that had already been completed, Members asked if a combined document could be circulated to the Committee and how much of Lincolnshire was not included by a strategy. In addition, clarity was sought on how these strategies related to the Local Transport Plan, currently out for consultation. It was explained that the Local Transport Plan acted as an umbrella document for various other plans including the Transport Strategies. Neighbouring villages to cities and towns were also picked up through plans. Areas that did not fall under transport strategies and Route Action Plans (RAPs) still fell under the responsibility of the local highway officers and local members. A funding pot was available for works to those areas where necessary. A map of these strategies would be circulated to the Committee.
- With a view to encouraging model shift, Members stressed the importance of including appropriate footways in highways designs. Particularly ensuring safer means of crossing if footpaths terminate. It was advised that, a project of any nature had to follow a set of safety features in addition to the various stage road safety audits conducted by Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership. Head of Service consider the road safety audit and make any amendments arising.

RESOLVED

That the Committee's comments be noted.

35 HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received a report from the Scrutiny Officer, which enabled the Committee to comment on the content of its work programme for the coming year to ensure that scrutiny activity was focussed where it could be of greatest benefit.

It was noted that, on 16 October 2021, a Member raised a query regarding a motion adopted by the Council, on 17 September 2021, that the Council would defer to the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee for consideration of its speed polices in relation to a use of 20mph speed limits and how the Council could support communities whom wanted to enact a '20 is plenty' campaign. Members were reminded that a review of traffic management in Lincolnshire was suggested as a topic to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board in September 2021 and subsequently was allocated for review for a Scrutiny Panel. The Committee were asked if they would like to see an interim report on speed limit polices.

Members agreed that they would like speed limit polices to be reviewed, however felt that, as a wider review was not to be expected until the end of the municipal year, an interim report should be brought to the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee.

In addition, a Member requested that the issue of reinstating street lighting in built up areas be reviewed and a paper be brought back to the Committee. It was however noted, that a regular report had been received by the Committee previously.

RESOLVED

That the work programme be noted as amended.

The meeting closed at 10.57 am

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