



**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
24 JANUARY 2022**

PRESENT: A M Hall (Vice-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

Councillor: R Davies attended the meeting as an observer

Councillor: C Perraton-Williams attended the meeting remotely via Microsoft 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), Jason Copper (Transport and Growth Manager), Nicole Hilton (Assistant Director – Communities), Matt Jones (Parking Services Manager), Vanessa Strange (Head of Infrastructure Investment) and Keith Noyland (Head of Finance – Communities)

45 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S Rawlins.

46 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor S Roe declared a pecuniary interest in items five and six as he owned land adjacent to the proposed North Hykeham Relief Road.

47 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 13 DECEMBER 2021

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

48 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND CHIEF OFFICERS

Karen Cassar, Assistant Director – Highways, advised that Paul Little, Head of Asset Management Services, had now retired from the Council. The recruitment process for his replacement had commenced and would culminate in interviews towards the end of February.

Nicole Hilton, Assistant Director – Communities, explained the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), initially scheduled to come to this meeting, was to be deferred until a future agenda. The Council recently received a letter from the Department for Transport (DfT) pausing the scheme until further notice.

Councillor S Roe left the meeting at this point.

49 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET PROPOSALS 2022/23

Consideration was given to a report from Keith Noyland, Head of Finance – Communities, which invited the Committee to consider and comment on the 2022/23 budget proposal implications for the Council's Highways and Transport Services activities. Members were advised that no clarity had been forthcoming regarding Local Government funding reforms, therefore these budget proposals only covered one year. The Council proposed a three per cent increase in Council Tax, which was entirely allocated to adult social care. Members were given a breakdown of the proposed revenue budget for the Council's Highways and Transport services and were advised of a projected two per cent pay inflation subject to any pay award. Furthermore, provision for potential increases in utility costs, including the energy costs associated with signals and street lighting, was made within the Corporate Budgets. The Home to Schools and College Transport delivery and budget responsibility was proposed to be transferred to the Place Directorate from April 2022 and was the source of the most significant cost pressure at £6.546m. There were significant external factors currently impacting on the cost of passenger transport including national living wage rises, inflationary challenges, a national drivers' shortage, a shortage of passenger assistants, rising fuel prices, and higher operational costs for larger suppliers including the requirements of the Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations 2000 (PSVAR) legislation. A transformational programme was underway which focused on external factors, including developing new procurement tools and approaches, market engagement and management activity, improved contract management, an overhaul of routing and demand management activity. These activities aimed to better regulate the supply market, increase competition, and reduce the impact of external factors on costs. The forecast was to secure £1.239m of cost reductions in year one, resulting in a net budget increase of £5.307m in 2022/23. Provision for highways maintenance contract inflation, increased cost of plant, labour, and equipment, driven by the current materials and labour market issues, in addition to the growth of the highways network, results in a cost pressure of £0.760m. Members were given a breakdown of the proposed Capital Programme for 2021/22, the most significant changes coming in the form of material and supply risks in forecasts for the Major Highways schemes. The Highways Asset Protection budget would be

set equivalent to the DfT grant once it is confirmed. The remaining risks of the major highway schemes currently in progress were to be reorganised to ensure the Capital Programme for 2022/23 was affordable.

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

- Members were satisfied that the Major Schemes Programme remained affordable on the back of other schemes being deferred into the future. Members acknowledged impacts of the £12m gap in funding and were pleased to hear that there was ongoing work of Leading Officers and Executive portfolio holders towards a future funding strategy as part of the Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Plan. Members welcomed plans for the allocation of the remainder of £7m out of the £10m funds in 2022 – 2023 in line with the Highways Asset Management Strategy.
- Members expressed a view that the transfer of the transport to school services, that was now brought into the Highways budget, offered a potential for a thorough examination of that service and the cost pressures that were on the rise, to ensure that challenges were mapped, and funds were used in the most effective way. Members were assured that there was a structure and governance model around a fundamental review of educational travel and that home to school transport was one of the major transformation activities for the Council.

RESOLVED

1. That the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee unanimously supported the budget proposals for Highways for 2022/23.
2. That the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee agreed that the comments listed above be forwarded on to the Executive in relation to this item.

50 LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN (LTP5)

Consideration was given to a report from the Jason Copper, Transport and Growth Manager, which invited the Committee to consider and comment on Local Transport Plan Five, prior to a decision being taken by the Executive on 8 February 2022. Members were advised that the last Local Transport Plan was approved by Council in 2013. It was identified that transport was used primarily for its functional utility, as a result, six key and interwoven themes had been identified including supporting economic growth, future ready green transport, promoting thriving environments, supporting safety, security, and a healthy lifestyle, promoting high aspirations, and improving the quality of life. The public consultation resulted in positive and encouraging feedback. The Cycling Modal Strategy had been integrated into the Local Transport Plan Five. There were two appendices in the Plan surrounding rail including the Passenger Rail Modal Strategy and the Rail Infrastructure Modal Study.

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

- Members were satisfied that the consultation exercise that took place as part of the was representative with overall figures in excess of 3000 website visitors and with around 750 actual responses to the online survey. Officers added that this rate of response was really above and beyond expectations certainly higher than previous consultations of this nature. It was positive to hear that a wider audience of the younger population- the under 25s- of the County engaged in this consultation exercise again in relation to previous similar type consultations.
- Members expressed an interest in how partnership working with district councils was envisaged and how it was expected to work in practice. Officers explained that the Council was the Highway and Transport Authority, however, partnership working relied heavily on partners' ability to deliver services they were responsible for. It was emphasised that as a partner, the Council had a list of key desires and requirements that it work closely with other partners to successfully bring these to fruition. A thorough review of all local plans across the whole of Lincolnshire was carried out initially, that identified the aims of these and helped the Council in developing ways for better integrating transport and land use planning.
- Bus services were mentioned as an industry delivered mainly by the private sector. The service usage was noticeably in decline, owed to the Covid pandemic among other factors. The plan focused in reversing this negative picture. It was acknowledged that many of people across the county relied daily on these services and also it was noted that car ownership levels in some areas of the County remained relatively low, notably in Lincoln and in some other more urban areas.
- Absence of passenger transportation services linking particular locations across the county was emphasised by Members, who argued that lack of alternatives to driving were echoed in the consultation. The impact of lack of services to night-time economy was also raised, with Members maintaining that a night-time bus service could have been more effective than a day-time service that was underused by the public. Officers gave assurance that they worked closely with operators as part of the BSIP and that there was an enhanced partnership approach being developed which would enable operators to work more closely in a partnership and with local authorities, with a very clear governance model around it. It was suggested to the Committee that CallConnect was the likely to be one of the most efficient and agile models for a rural area that that and there was no area in Lincolnshire that was not actually covered by a bus service if Demand Responsive Transport was included. This model drifted from the traditional model of waiting for the bus at the stop and enabled the public to access transportation services on demand. The BSIP was currently on hold waiting for a funding decision later in summer 2022, following which the Council would be working closely with stakeholders, including district council colleagues.
- Members asked for clarification in terms of what the LTP 5 implementation plan encompassed, what is already been developed as part of this and how long it was expected to take, whilst acknowledging that the former was a living document and therefore still being developed and optimised. It was also asked that a diagram mapping different strategies was also added to the LTP 5 overarching document, to

which officers agreed. In relation to the former, officers stated that there was a wider plan of suggested ideas and approaches particularly around areas like active travel supporting and passenger transport services improvements including rail network/rail infrastructure both passenger and freight and bus services, that could be adopted across Lincolnshire as part of the implementation plan and that was to be advised at a later stage of this process.

- Members echoed that in terms of prioritisation of areas for development, central government often prioritised housing over roads infrastructure. The implementation plan and strategy were shifting to this direction of travel however, it was argued that the Council would need to swift and streamline partners to that same direction.
- The Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy was discussed, and concerns were raised that the shift to electric vehicles may not be achieved as these would require the installation of fast charging points. Officers provided assurance that work was being carried out to identify suitable locations for installing charging points.
- Members enquired whether clean air zone was investigated as part of the plan and noted that it would be beneficial to review data from the time before the Lincoln Eastern Bypass was operated and after to verify the impact on air quality for the centre of Lincoln.

RESOLVED

1. That the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee - recorded its support to the Recommendations to the Executive, made in the Local Transport Plan (LTP5) report.

2. That the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee agreed that the comments listed above be forwarded on to the Executive in relation to this item.

Councillor S Roe returned to the meeting at this point.

51 CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

Consideration was given to a report from Matt Jones, Parking Services Manager, which invited the Committee to consider and comment on the Annual Parking Report 2020/21. Members were advised that the 2020/21 Covid-19 restrictions had a significant impact on the Civil Parking Service with enforcement being considerably scaled back. The Enforcement Team were then drafted in to provide assistance to the Council with the re-opening of Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs). As restrictions were lifted, East Coast beaches saw significantly increased demand which resulted in a greater need for enforcement of existing parking restrictions. A number of positive comments and feedback was received from appreciative residents. A fair, but firm, enforcement approach continued to be applied following the parking enforcement guidance. Council's CCTV trial scheme came to an end in March 2020 and was being replaced by a physical presence of officers patrolling school sites. Members of the public could now report parking enforcement breaches enabling Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) to respond directly. The introduction of the Business and

Planning Act. 2020 gave powers to mid-tier councils to process the Pavement Licences, however, it was agreed that Lincolnshire County Council would process applications for six of the districts excluding the City of Lincoln. The interactive online maps allowed for detailed Civil Parking Enforcement data to become accessible to members of the public. A reduction of 10,565 Parking Enforcement Notices was noted between the period 2020/21 compared to 2019/20 as a result of reduced enforcement activity. Of the 1,981 challenges received in the financial year 2020/21, 1,931 (97 per cent), were responded to in time. The overall reduction in tickets issued resulted in a deficit of £100,510.72 over 2020/21 and therefore, £58,427.28 was drawn from reserve in line with budget transferred from the Covid grant to the amount of £158,938.00.

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

- Members registered their appreciation of the reconsidered approach to parking violation mitigation outside schools.
- Noting the significant number in parking waivers issued in Lincoln compared to the other district councils, Members sought further clarification. The Parking Services Manager explained that Lincoln's high waiver issue rate for 2020/21 was typical. Historically, waivers were issued from Council offices in Lincoln, and, while the process for waiver dispensing had progressed, the take-up remained the same. It was stressed that the waiver facility was highlighted to all road users.
- Appreciating the demand for short term parking provision in Boston Marketplace, Members asked if there was any capacity to provide such a facility. The Parking Services Manager advised that there were a number of on street charges in Boston. In 2012, Boston Traffic Regulation Order was consolidated after civil parking was introduced, as a result of this, those on street areas that were previously considered as carparks by Boston were classed as on street areas. The income from the bays were managed by Boston District Council while Lincolnshire County Council enforced the bays.
- Members sought further clarity on the enforcement activity against Police vehicles. The Parking Services Manager explained that Police vehicles were exempt from Parking Enforcement Notices providing they were actively on duty at the time of the incident. Furthermore, a number of designated Police bays sat within the county, which, if found occupying, non-Police vehicles were subject to a Parking Enforcement Notice.
- Noting that the 2020/21 £100,510.72 deficit was compensated from Civil Parking Enforcement reserves, Members asked how much remained within the Civil Parking Enforcement reserves. The Parking Services Manager offered to provide the detail of CPE reserves outside of the meeting.
- Following the period of reduced enforcement, Members asked if parking restriction breaches were noted as increasing. The Parking Services Manager explained that during that period, officers conducted a survey of parking restriction breaches, which identified a notable increase in parking violation as the reduced enforcement period progressed.

RESOLVED

1. That the content of the Civil Parking Enforcement Annual Report 2020/21 be noted.
2. That the Civil Parking Enforcement Annual Report 2020/21 be published on the Council's website.

52 HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received a report from the Kiara Chatziioannou, 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.

Members asked if they could be provided with an overview of the impact of the Western Growth Corridor on the Skellingthorpe roundabout. In reference to a future piece of work on the Committee's May 2022 agenda, Speed Limits Review, Members requested that some area specific information, in relation to a pursued reduction of speed limits at the exit from Boston on to A16. The Scrutiny Officer acknowledged Members' requests and offered assurance that these would be considered ahead of the next Committee meeting.

RESOLVED

That the work programme presented be agreed as amended.

The meeting closed at 11.40 am

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