

**ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE: MINUTES**

**Date:** Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016

**Time:** 10.00 a.m. to 10.58 a.m.

**Present:** Councillors: I Bates (Chairman), R Butcher (substitute for Councillor Harford), E Cearns (Vice-Chairman), J Clark, B Chapman (substitute for Councillor Mason), R Henson, D Jenkins, N Kavanagh, M McGuire, J Schumann, M Shuter and J Williams

**Apologies:** Councillors L Harford, A Lay and M Mason.

**244. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

**245. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> July were agreed as a correct record.

The Minutes action log was noted and the following issue raised:

‘Minute 189- Finance and Performance Report November 2015 - Land acquisition and licence agreements to allow construction to commence on Yaxley To Farcet cycleway / walkway’

Councillor McGuire highlighted that the last update on progress on the agreement as set out in the update had been on 4<sup>th</sup> August. He found that the local members were still having to chase up the officers in respect of receiving updates which the Committee had previously agreed should be on a fortnightly basis. While his understanding was that the necessary agreements with the landowners to enable building to commence was close to being finalised, the detail provided in the updates was often of a business sensitive nature that could not be passed on to the public. What was required was the local members being provided with a likely date when building work would commence so that information could be passed on to local residents. The Executive Director undertook that officers would write to the local members copying in the full committee with details of a projected start date **Action Graham Hughes**

**246. PETITIONS**

There were no petitions to be considered.

**247. SERVICE COMMITTEE REVIEW OF THE DRAFT 2017-18 CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

This report provided an overview of the Draft Business Plan Capital Programme for the Economy, Transport and Environment directorate as part of the process enabling the Council to alter and refine capital planning.

Sections 1 and 2 explained the purpose of the Strategy and included details of the

investment appraisal process undertaken on each capital scheme. This allowed schemes within and across all services to be ranked and prioritised against each other, taking account of the finite funding resources available and ensuring they aligned with the Council's priorities. The approval process would require review by General Purposes Committee in October with a further report coming back to service committees during November and December and a final report on the Budget to be considered in January.

Section 2.2 set out details of the Transformation Fund. Each transformation proposal is required to go through the same governance process to ensure appropriate challenge.

Section 3 provided details of the revenue implications with section 4 the summary of the revised draft Capital Programme by Service block showing projections over the next five years. This section detailed each Service Blocks' allocations, the funding sources to be used and provided an update on how each Service's borrowing had changed since the 2016-17 Capital Programme was set. As an oral update it was highlighted that in paragraph 3.3 the level of revenue debt charges for the next five years was limited to around £39m which was a correction of the figure stated in the report which showed a figure of £35m.

The revised draft Capital Programme for Economy, Transport and Environment (ETE) is as follows:

<b>Capital Expenditure</b>	<b>2017-18 £'000</b>	<b>2018-19 £'000</b>	<b>2019-20 £'000</b>	<b>2020-21 £'000</b>	<b>2021-22 £'000</b>	<b>Later Yrs £'000</b>
Economy, Transport and Environment	63,986	27,243	26,112	20,928	21,660	31,901

This was anticipated to be funded by the following resources:

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>2017-18 £'000</b>	<b>2018-19 £'000</b>	<b>2019-20 £'000</b>	<b>2020-21 £'000</b>	<b>2021-22 £'000</b>	<b>Later Yrs £'000</b>
Grants	38,870	21,500	16,524	17,021	18,021	23,000
Developer Contributions	4,827	5,540	3,303	400	1,200	10,645
Other Contributions	9,758	0	0	0	0	0
Borrowing	5,682	4,321	7,265	3,537	3,269	8,901
Borrowing (Repayable)*	4,849	-4,118	-980	-30	-830	-10,645
<b>Total</b>	<b>63,986</b>	<b>27,243</b>	<b>26,112</b>	<b>20,928</b>	<b>21,660</b>	<b>31,901</b>

\* Repayable borrowing nets off to zero over the life of each scheme and is used to bridge timing gaps between delivery of a scheme and receiving other funding to pay for it. The full list of ETE capital schemes was shown in appendix one to the report with Table 4 listing the schemes with a description and with funding shown against years. Table 5 set out the breakdown of the total funding of the schemes.

Changes to existing Economy and Environment Committee schemes, were set out as follows:

### **Ely Crossing**

Project forecast is for delivery in late 2017. The procurement of a two-stage Design and Build contract has now been completed and a contractor appointed. The Department for Transport (DfT) has approved the Major Schemes Business Case (MSBC) and the release of Growth deal funding, based on the tender target price, on the condition that the construction target price on completion of the design does not reduce the current Benefit Cost ratio in the MSBC.

### **King's Dyke**

Planning permission has been granted and the tender package prepared. Agreeing access to private land for ground investigation surveys has delayed the completion of the works information, but it is anticipated that this will be resolved in September 2016.

### **Investment in Connecting Cambridgeshire**

This programme is expected to extend to the end of 2019/20 but still within the overall funding.

Members comments / questions included:

- In respect of paragraph 7.6 showing the new requirement for officer clearance on decision reports and noting that several, including Health, had been signed off with the wording "No Chris Malyon confirmed" further explanation was sought. it was explained that as this was the first round of reports requiring this new sign off process in some cases due to timing issues the Chief Finance Officer had agreed that they could go out signed in his name. For future meetings the sign off would be sought from the responsible implications contact officer. It was confirmed that for the same report going to the Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee later in September, clearances had been agreed.
- With respect to the Investment Appraisal process described in paragraph 1.4, it was queried whether there was any Member involvement in respect of the re-prioritisation of schemes. In response it was indicated that there was no current input, but details of the current procedure could be provided to all Members following the meeting. **Action Sarah Heywood.** The same Member queried whether there should be Member input and in further discussion it recognised that this was an issue that would need to be looked into further. It was explained that currently the Council was not at the maximum amount on the borrowing limit. The Vice Chairman added his support that Members should be involved and have the opportunity to support the Transformation Programme. Another Member

highlighted that the Assets and Investment Committee had undertaken workshops and had asked for a template to be produced for investments projects to help ensure a consistent approach.

- Several Members raised the issue of a Member Review being set up in respect of analysing completed cycle schemes, including the use of floating bus stops and the crossings created for them, to ensure they represented value for money and to give confidence to the public that best practice was being adopted. The Executive Director suggested that this could be an item on the next Spokes agenda to discuss the scope of the review and the proposals for appointing Members. **Action: Graham Hughes.** It was suggested Members should also be provided with details of the report already produced on floating bus stops. **Action Mike Davies**
- Page 46 Table 4 Capital Programme – With reference to B/C 4.024 Soham Station where no expenditure was shown until 2021-22 a query was raised whether this was linked to the Ely Junction discussions with Network Rail. In response it was explained that the line in the programme was currently more a marker for the scheme as it was not currently possible to provide a start date. Members were assured that ongoing discussions were being undertaken with East Cambridgeshire District Council and Network Rail over a host of issues, with the aim of delivering the scheme as early as possible. If greater progress was achieved, then the intention would be to move the scheme earlier in the programme.

Having commented on the draft proposals for the Economy, Transport and Environment's 2017-18 Capital Programme report,

It was resolved to:

- a) Note the overview and context provided for the 2017-18 Capital Programme for Economy, Transport and Environment.
- b) Endorse their development.
- c) To agree to spokes discussing setting up a Member Led Review to assess the success of recent cycleway schemes / floating bus stops and crossings.

## **248. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT - JULY 2016**

This report with the detail included in Appendix 1, provides the financial position for the whole of the ETE Service up to the end of July 2016.

The headlines set out in the covering report were as follows:

**Revenue:** As this stage of the financial year there were no significant variances and ETE was showing a £75k underspend forecast variance.

**Reserves Schedule:** Following endorsement from this Committee for the proposed use of ETE Reserves, the July General Purposes Committee had approved the retention of £2.452m of reserves for specified schemes in ETE. Of these reserves, £2.015m had been vired into revenue to be spent on the agreed schemes (detailed in 2.4 of the report). The residual £437K, relating to Community Transport and Cambridgeshire Future Transport, remained in reserves pending a decision on how it should be allocated.

**Capital:** The capital programme was forecast to be on target and £2.8m of the estimated £10.5m Capital Programme Variation has been met. King's Dyke had a forecast variance of -£2.6m. It was anticipated that additional slippage would start to appear to contribute further to the Capital Programme Variation in future months.

Of the fourteen performance indicators, two were currently red, two amber and ten were green. The indicators that were currently red were:

- Local bus journeys originating in the authority area.
- The average journey per mile during the morning peak of the most congested routes.

At year-end, the current forecast was that one performance indicator would be red, eight amber and five green.

It was highlighted that pages 72-73 showed the Capital Funding Variations with officers having reconfigured the programme to try to make the profile as realistic as possible.

Members Comments included:

- In respect of the Kings Dyke reconfiguration the Local Member present suggested that as the scheme was dependent on land acquisition, the report estimate of the opening being Summer 2017 was misleading to the public, as in his opinion its opening would not be achieved until 2018 and suggested the timetable required updating. In response the Executive Director stated that negotiations were likely to be concluded in the current month but agreed to go back to the Team for a revised timetable to be reported back to Members. Another Member requested that if the timetable was changed, reference should also be made to the original date. The Executive Director agreed this could be shown, but would require explanation on the reason for the revised date.

**Action: Graham Hughes**

- Page 76 - One Member making reference to the disappointing drop in bus patronage numbers (Performance Indicator titled 'local bus journeys originating in the Authority area') suggested that until 'City Deal' schemes were up and running to address the issue, other temporary measures should be considered to encourage greater participation including rationalising routes, better signage at Drummer Street bus station and repairing damaged bus shelters. In response,

and as a general point, it was explained that Cambridgeshire and parts of London had for the last 15 years bucked a national trend of declining bus passenger numbers and while the current drop was disappointing, it was not a significant drop. With City Deal proposals coming on stream, it was hoped that the decline would not be a long term. The Executive Director was happy to take back all the comments raised on bus issues with the operators to feed into future discussions to improve the bus experience for passengers.

- Page 76 – Guided Busway Passenger Figures - while congratulating officers on the increase in the numbers, one Member highlighted that currently the buses were often full and questioned how, once the Northstowe development started to be populated, the extra passenger numbers expected would be accommodated, and whether the bus company was including them in their future business plan proposals. In response it was explained that the County Council could not dictate on what was a commercial decision, but highlighted that there had been a doubling of bus capacity since the Guided Busway route was originally opened. He confirmed that the Stagecoach had a business plan to increase bus numbers further in response to increased demand, but that there might be an initial time-lag as they needed to see a recognised consistent upward trend in numbers before committing increased capital outlay in new, additional vehicles.
- Page 76 – Additional Jobs Created Performance Indicator – A Member queried whether more up to date figures were available as the current figures were only up to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014. Officers agreed to look at this further and report back following the meeting. **Action: Graham Amis**
- Councillor Chapman a substitute Member at the meeting highlighted the need for a joined up approach to housing growth, employment opportunities and the need for sufficient public transport provision. He highlighted the issue of providing job opportunities locally in areas of large growth outside Cambridge to help reduce the number of people having to travel by car to seek employment in Cambridge. He suggested congestion could be decreased if bus routes were extended from Cambridge to the population growth areas, such as St Neots. He also suggested the need to extend the boundary of the City Deal beyond Cambourne. In response, the Chairman brought the Committee's attention to the work being undertaken with Highways England to look to improve the route between the Caxton Gibbet Roundabout and the Black Cat Roundabout with the expectation that works to expand to dual carriageways would commence by 2020. He also highlighted the role that the District and Town Councils had in encouraging / lobbying bus companies to increase the scope of their routes. The Executive Director highlighted the continued dialogue undertaken by the County Council to encourage bus companies, but as already explained, could not insist on their investment direction as these were commercial decisions. He also noted that a significant part of the A428 corridor was included within the City Deal area. The

expectation was that officers in the relevant authorities would continue to make the bus companies aware of where the high demand was predicted to come from, with the expectation that if they believed these would be profitable, the bus companies would increase investment.

Having reviewed and commented on the report:

It was resolved to note the report.

## **249. ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE TRAINING PLAN**

The Committee received details of the training programme already undertaken for the Committee, inviting Members to suggest future training requirements. As an update to the report the Business Workshop referred to had taken place on 24<sup>th</sup> August.

One Member who had already raised the issue in an earlier item suggested the need for a session on aspects of Capital Programme expenditure to provide Members with a better understanding of the different reasons / circumstances of why slippage occurred in some capital schemes which then led to the need to readjust their expected completion date. He suggested that the session should also provide examples of capital schemes which met their target completion date to be able to analyse the reasons.

Another Member suggested the need for a training session to explain to Members the legal complications and potential timescale issues that could arise on proposed developments that required the acquisition of additional land. It was agreed that this could be linked to the previous suggestion and covered as part of the same training session. Democratic Services were asked to contact the relevant officers and to then look for suitable dates. A proviso was that any presentation from Legal should be provided in simple, non legal lay person's language. **Action: Rob Sanderson / Emma Middleton** to make contact with Legal

The Vice-Chairman asked that if any Members had suggestion for additional training linked to the work of the Committee they should raise them at Spokes or take them up with Democratic Services or approach the Chairman or himself. He highlighted that the Council's Diversity Group were currently looking at suggesting revisions that could be made to Community Impact Assessments which would be helpful to the Transformation agenda.

It was resolved:

- a) to note the upcoming training session date as listed in Appendix one.
- b) Note the need to sign an attendance sheet when attending training sessions, so that Member's attendance is accurately recorded.
- c) To ask officers to look to setting up a training session around the Capital Programme:

- to provide examples of schemes where slippage had occurred and the reasons for their delay to help Member's understanding, as well as providing examples of those which had achieved their target date to see if good practice could be more widely applied to other schemes.
- legal implications of proposed developments on the acquisition of land and the potential timescales involved.

d) Democratic Services to clarify the correct dates of the forthcoming Spokes meeting.

## **250. APPOINTMENTS TO LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

This report sought to appoint to two vacancies on the Local Access Forum which were appointments within the gift of the Committee.

As an oral update since the report's publication adding to the information provided that Councillor Adrian Dent had expressed an interest to be considered to one of the two places, Councillor Mandy Smith had also now responded back to a further invitation from Democratic Services to ask that her name also be put forward for consideration by the Committee.

As no further expressions of interest were received,

It was resolved:

To approve the appointments of Councillor Dent and Councillor Smith to the two vacancies on the Local Access Forum.

## **251. ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY AND SERVICE COMMITTEE AGENDA PLAN**

The following updates were orally reported:

### **13<sup>th</sup> October Meeting**

The items listed after the 'Business Planning' Report are likely to be appendices with the exception of 'Fees and Charges' which will now be an appendix to the November Committee Business Planning Report and will be a key decision.

Cambourne West Planning Application and Draft Section 106 Heads of Terms - moved to the November Committee meeting.

Note: The Section 106 Allocations report update report is to be retitled "S106 Prioritisation of Schemes in St Neots".

Councillor Chapman who he was substituting for Councillor Mason, raised on his behalf the question of why the Busway defects issue which he had been promised would come back as a Committee report had not been included as a report item on the agenda plan for the Committee. It was explained that the report was scheduled for the



November General Purposes Committee as the appropriate Committee to receive the report. Democratic Services were requested to confirm this in writing to Councillor Mason. **Action: Rob Sanderson**

Another Member raised an issue of concern from his local residents in respect of the Department for Communities and Local Government inviting developers and local authorities to submit expressions of interest for proposals for garden villages, making reference to one made jointly between Huntingdonshire District Council and a local developer. He sought advice as to the best forum to discuss the issue. In response, the Executive Director suggested that the best way forward would be for a discussion item at a future E and E spokes meeting which could include a joint invitation being extended to the Highways and Community Infrastructure (H and CI) Committee as it overlapped with their responsibilities. He suggested a general discussion could be linked to an update on progress on Wisbech Garden Town which was supported by the County Council. The Vice Chairman suggested the Planning Authority should also be invited. **Action: Graham Hughes**

One Member highlighted that the October Spokes date on the agenda plan appeared to be incorrect. It was confirmed that the date should in fact be the 15<sup>th</sup> and not the 30<sup>th</sup> September. Democratic Services undertook to provide the correct spokes dates outside of the meeting. **Action Rob Sanderson**

It was resolved:

- a) to note the agenda plan as set out, subject to the changes orally reported.
- b) To agree to Spokes receiving a report on progress on the proposal for a Wisbech Garden Village, to include details of the wider issue of garden villages, which as a cross cutting issue should involve an invitation being extended to H and CI Spokes.
- c) Democratic Services to write to Councillor Mason confirming that the Guided Busway defects report would be presented to General Purposes Committee as the appropriate Committee to consider the issue.
- d) Democratic Services to clarify the correct dates of the forthcoming Spokes meeting.

Chairman  
13<sup>th</sup> October 2016