

MEETING OF HIGHWAYS AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY AND SERVICE COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 12th January 2016

Time: 10:00am-12:45pm

Present: Councillors Ashwood, Butcher, Chapman, Connor, Criswell, Gillick, Hickford (Chairman), Hunt, Kavanagh (Cllr Scutt substituting), Moghadas, Reeve (Vice-Chairman), Rouse and Taylor

Apologies: Councillor Scutt (Cllr Kavanagh substituting)

Also present: Councillors Bates, Cearn, Nethsingha and Tew

162. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

163. MINUTES AND ACTION LOG

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st December 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The following updates to the Action Log were noted:

- Item 160 (letters to Town/Parish Councils on School Crossing Patrols) – had been completed;
- Item 148 (cat's eyes) – this had been discussed at the Highway Improvement Working Group, with sites being dealt with on a case by case basis;
- Item 148 (A14 public inquiry and HCV signage) – should be resolved at a meeting on 19/01/16.

The Action Log was noted.

164. PETITION

There were no petitions.

165. STREETLIGHTING ENERGY SAVINGS CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

The Committee received a report on the streetlighting energy savings stakeholder consultation exercises. Members were reminded that the savings from turning off streetlights on residential roads between midnight and 6am, and increasing the period of streetlight dimming, were identified for the Business Plan 2015/16, but implementation was deferred to allow for a period of consultation with local councils and the public. It was clarified that the switch off would not include streetlights on

main traffic routes, areas covered by CCTV cameras, or where there were traffic calming measures.

Of the 24 of the 40 local councils that had responded to the consultation, eight confirmed they would be prepared to contribute to costs, 14 stated that they would not, and two councils asked to defer the decision until after the proposal was implemented. Responses had also been received from the University of Cambridge, Cambridge Business Against Crime and the Cambridge Colleges' Bursars. It was also noted that research suggested no evidence of a relationship between the number of incidents of crime and streetlight being switched off/part-time night lighting. However, the consultation indicated that there were concerns in some areas and by some individuals that streetlighting was necessary for safety, so Members were recommended to consider reducing the overnight switch-off to between 1am or 2am until 6am. This would, however, reduce the savings achievable annually by £49,000 (from 1am) or £98,000 (from 2am).

The Chairman invited Councillors Bates and Cearns to address the Committee.

Councillor Bates commented that the night time economy was not just relevant to Cambridge but also the market towns, which also had substantial night time economies, especially those served by railway stations e.g. Huntingdon, March and Ely.

Councillor Cearns advised that he had met with representatives of the student community, and he and City Councillor Bick had also undertaken their own consultation, and he outlined the key findings from that consultation. It was noted that the favoured option was to leave streetlights dimmed but on all night. Whilst being mindful of conflicting demands from communities to protect services and budgetary pressures, he urged the Committee to opt to keep them on until at least 2am, if they could not be kept on all night.

The Chairman commented that there had been a lot of debate and public interest on this issue, and he had been working with officers to find a compromise that would address the concerns of some residents. He therefore proposed an amendment, to change the switch off period from the current proposal of midnight to 6am, to 2am to 6am. It was clarified that whatever was agreed would need to be implemented countywide, although Parish/Town/City Councils could opt to fund lighting for an extended period (or request an earlier switch off time). The Chairman had discussed this issue with the Executive Director, who had concluded that the £98,000 required to extend lighting to 2am could be identified through further efficiencies in the Economy, Transport & Environment (ETE) budget. Councillor Criswell seconded the Chairman's amendment.

Councillor Taylor proposed an amendment to not switch off streetlights overnight at all. She commented that the Liberal Democrats had consistently opposed the night-time switch off, for the reasons why those responding to the consultation opposed the switch off e.g. for shiftworkers and those who did not have the option of using taxis. She commented that it would have been good to see a response from Addenbrooke's Hospital, given that there were staff working 24 hours a day, and she felt that the Council owed a duty of care to those people caring for the Council's residents at Addenbrooke's. She agreed that any policy should be countywide, pointing out that those unfamiliar with the county could be confused if they moved

from one area which was lit to one which was unlit. Councillor Taylor's amendment was seconded by Councillor Ashwood, who commented that her particular areas of concern were Cambridge city centre and lighting along the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway in the city.

Individual Members raised the following points during the debate on the amendment to keep lights on all night:

- asked how the £276,000 required to fund Councillor Taylor's amendment would be funded. It was suggested that it would need to be from further efficiencies from operational savings, although officers commented that the higher the figure, the more difficult it would be to find the funding, whereas they were confident that a smaller total such as the £98,000 required to extend lighting to 2am would be easier to identify;
- Councillor Reeve commented that his Group had always supported keeping streetlights on all night, but he felt that this proposed amendment had come too late in the day, as there was insufficient time to identify funding. He felt that the 2am proposal was a workable compromise. The eight authorities identified in the report had already taken the decision to pick up the costs of funding lights to be kept on all night;
- pointed out that whilst it had been widely known for years that savings need to be made over an extended period, residents had not come forward with many proposals, but one recurring query was why streetlights were left on overnight. Whilst many Members did not entirely support this or many of the cuts, a balanced budget had to be produced, and the 2am proposal was a good compromise. Street lighting in residential areas was not a statutory service;
- suggested that those areas where there was not a lot of activity at night probably benefited the most from having streetlighting. The Members suggested that 2am was a good compromise;
- spoke in support of the amendment, observing that Cambridge City Council was subject to the same budgetary pressures as other local authorities, although it was to their credit that they had proposed to contribute to keep the streetlights on. The Member also suggested that these matters should be looked at holistically e.g. the broader implications for the NHS due to injuries caused by people walking or cycling on unlit roads, pavements and cycleways, especially given the deterioration of road surfaces due to other budget constraints;
- observed that both streetlighting and the absence of streetlighting had respective advantages and disadvantages in urban areas, e.g. where there were streetlights, people were more likely to congregate. In rural areas, people tended to provide their own means of lighting for safety.

It was clarified that although the original proposal was to keep streetlights on between midnight and 6am, in practice, especially in the summer, lights switched off earlier automatically, when the ambient light reached a certain point. However, the cost estimates of budget savings stated in the report reflected this.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that the intention was to have a consistent policy applied across the county, with the option to vary this locally i.e. Parish/Town Councils could ask for lights to be switched off earlier, or if the Committee agreed to switch lights off, local Councils could opt to pay for hours of streetlighting to be extended.

Councillor Taylor thanked Members for their comments in support of her amendment. She commented that another way of funding would be to increase Council Tax further than currently being proposed, and the Liberal Democrat Group would be submitting an amendment to the budget with proposals to that effect. She also observed that the Council had benefitted from the savings of a mild winter so far, i.e. from not having to grit so frequently, and streetlighting should be retained through the hours of darkness in those areas where people needed them. The Executive Director confirmed that there was no strategy in place for the £276,000 savings that would be required to keep the street lights on all night.

Members voted on Councillor Taylor's amendment to not switch streetlights off at all overnight. Six Members voted in favour of the amendment, six against, and there was one abstention. The Chairman used his casting vote to vote against the amendment, so the motion fell.

Returning to the Chairman's original amendment to extend streetlighting to 2am, the following points were raised by individual Members in debate:

- commented that Parish Councils could not determine whether they would fund streetlighting if they did not know the number of streetlights within their Parish. Officers confirmed that this information was available and had been sent to all Parish/Town Councils. **ACTION: Tom Blackburne-Maze to liaise with Councillor Chapman;**
- observing the comment in the report that evidence did not support perceived fears about switching off streetlights, commented that people would still be afraid, and were therefore more likely to use their cars rather than walk. The Member felt that it was wrong to increase public anxiety. The Member pointed out that Cambridge was also unusual in that it had a significant student population, and many of those students were cyclists;
- expressed surprise that the University of Cambridge was not offering to contribute;
- expressed support for the proposal, given Cambridge City Council's commitment to finance streetlighting for the rest of the night i.e. 2am-6am. One of the objectives of the City Deal was to reduce car usage, but the consultation indicated that switching off streetlights would lead to people driving more;
- suggested that inconsistency in streetlighting between areas did not cause crashes, and that most of rural Cambridgeshire had no streetlighting whatsoever, but vehicles relied on their headlights. The Member also pointed out that streetlighting would still be available for long periods e.g. under this proposal, in the winter there would be streetlights from around 4pm to 2am, and then from 6am – lights would be on when people were most likely to be out and about.

In response to a Member question, it was confirmed that when lights were switched off at 2am, they would be switched off altogether i.e. not gradually, as lights would already be dimmed to the maximum.

In response to comments on the increased likelihood of accidents and injuries on unlit city pavements and roads, a Member suggested that in many of the rural areas of the county, there were no streetlights, pavements or cycleways, but key areas such as main roads would still be lit.

The Vice Chairman commented that he had regrettably not been able to support Councillor Taylor's amendment because it was not backed up with the necessary financial information, which would result in putting officers in a very challenging position. In contrast, he was aware that the Chairman had worked hard with officers to find what savings could be made realistically, and this had resulted in the proposed sensible compromise based on real figures. The extension of hours also provided leverage with local Councils, who would not have to pay as much if they wanted to keep streetlights on all night.

Members voted on the Chairman's amendment to extend streetlighting to 2am. Following a show of hands, Members voted unanimously to extend streetlighting until 2am.

The Chairman thanked the Vice Chairman and other Members for their comments, and commended the work that had been undertaken by the Executive Director and other officers to make this extension possible.

It was resolved unanimously to:

1. note the feedback from the local Councils, Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership, Police Service and Public Consultation exercises;
2. agree to reduce the hours of street light switch off by two hours to 2am to 6am.

166. TRANSPORT DELIVERY PLAN 2016/17 TO 2018/19

The Committee considered the Council's three year Transport Delivery Plan for the period 2016/17 to 2018/19. The Plan provided the forward programme for all capital highway maintenance and improvement schemes for the relevant period, and was a key component of the implementation of the Authority's Asset Management Strategy and Policy. The Plan also allowed sufficient flexibility to move projects between years, if necessary, under circumstances that accord with the Asset Management Strategy.

Arising from the report, individual Members:

- observed that there was only one reference to a scheme in or around St Neots, and given that St Neots was the largest population centre in the county after Cambridge, with significant development planned, the Member suggested there should be more investment by the County Council to highways and infrastructure

in the town. Officers responded that the Transport Delivery Plan was based on the County Council's Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan, which sought to maintain all roads in the county on the basis of need, rather than allocating percentages to specific areas or communities. **ACTION: Tom Blackburne-Maze to contact Councillor Chapman to discuss further.**

- commented that whilst fully supporting the measures proposed for Hills Road, that road had been resurfaced in August 2013, but within eighteen months of being resurfaced, the surface had completely broken down. Officers explained that there had been no failure of the resurfacing, the issues were attributable to the utilities works, and officers were liaising with the utilities companies. **ACTION: Tom Blackburne-Maze to contact Councillor Taylor to discuss further;**
- thanked the Head of Assets & Commissioning and his team, for developing the Plan which maximised resources, given the difficulties they were operating under. However, he noted the emphasis on roads, but there was no mention of cycleways;
- commented that the Committee had taken some very bold strategic decisions, and could very easily have opted for localised budgets, but instead sought to maximise the dwindling resources that were available, and ensure that those areas with the greatest needs get investment. This strategy should ensure that the Council meets the requirements of the government's Incentive Fund, and secure additional funding.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Assets and Commissioning and his team for developing this very comprehensive Plan.

It was resolved, by a majority, to approve the Transport Delivery Plan 2016/17 to 2018/19 as set out in Appendix A to the report.

(Councillor Chapman asked that his vote against the approval of the Transport Delivery Plan be recorded).

167. SERVICE COMMITTEE REVIEW OF DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN PROPOSALS FOR 2016-17 TO 2020-21

The Committee received a report providing an overview of the draft Business Plan Revenue proposals for Economy, Transport and Environment Service and specifically, the elements of that budget that were within the remit of the Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee. The report also provided an updated summary of the budget consultation results, and an update on the Capital Programme, the latter being dependent on funding announcements regarding various capital grants.

Members were reminded that at their December meeting, the Committee recommended that proposed savings be removed from the budget proposals for ETE for reactive and cyclic highways maintenance and mobile libraries, i.e. those budgets be retained, and there was an assumption that those items would be funded corporately. Members' attention was drawn to a table in the report (section 3.1/pages

6-7) which set out further proposed changes, and the reasons for those changes were explained. All of these points were included in the balanced budget. However, the decision under item 167 would add an additional £98,000 to the budget, but it was anticipated that this would be covered by other savings in the budget.

Councillor Bates was invited to speak on this item. He advised that he had no School Crossing Patrols (SCPs) within his division, but he had listened to the strong and compelling support across the county for SCPs, and he felt that it was not the right time to make that cut, without fully exploring the risks and safety and transport issues.

Members discussed this issue, noting there were still options for local communities or schools to operate or fund SCPs. Councillor Criswell proposed that SCPs were withdrawn from the proposed ETE savings, and this was seconded by Councillor Connor. Officers confirmed that having reviewed the overall budget, it should be possible to accommodate this saving.

A number of Members expressed support for this amendment, suggesting that there needed to be an assessment on a case by case basis. Members also pointed to accidents involving children on their way to school, and the likelihood that parents would be more likely to drive their children to school if SCPs were withdrawn.

A Member queried whether the Community Impact Assessment (CIA) on School Crossing Patrols was still valid, as the CIA suggested that money would be better spent on providing preventative measures. Officers confirmed that the CIA was still valid.

In response to a Member question, it was confirmed that general efficiencies could be made to accommodate the reinstatement of part of the School Crossing Patrol budget in the budget proposals, and that the figures presented were prudent, based on increased income expectations from the proposed permitting scheme and the potential for operational savings. A Member commented that Members needed to be reassured that there was a genuine change of opinion and circumstances, as this issue had caused significant concern to some local communities.

A Member expressed support for the reinstatement of part of the School Crossing Patrol budget, and urged caution on seeing volunteers as a long-term solution, suggesting that there needed to be either a paid or technical solution in the long-term.

Following a show of hands, Members voted unanimously to support the amendment to take out the proposed savings for School Crossing Patrols out of the 2016/17 budget proposal. It was clarified that this was in addition to the savings proposals already taken out of the budget, i.e. highways maintenance, mobile libraries and the table of further proposed changes set out in Section 3.1 of the report.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) note the overview and context provided for the 2016/17 to 2020/21 Business Plan proposals for the Service, updated since the last report to the Committee in November;

- c) comment on the changes to the capital programme that are within the remit of the Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee and endorse them;
- d) note the ongoing stakeholder consultation and discussions with partners and service users regarding emerging business planning proposals.

It was resolved by a majority to:

- b) comment on the draft revenue savings proposals that are within the remit of the Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee for 2016/17 to 2020/21, and endorse them to the General Purposes Committee with the exception of the withdrawal of County Council funding for school crossing patrols (ref: B/R6.114) as part of consideration for the Council's overall Business Plan.

Councillor Hunt left the meeting.

168. GREATER CAMBRIDGESHIRE CITY DEAL EXECUTIVE BOARD DELEGATIONS

The Committee received a report on the delegation of powers to the Greater Cambridge City Deal Executive Board. Full Council on 16th December 2014 approved the formation of the Greater Cambridge City Deal Joint Assembly and Executive Board, and agreed to delegate certain functions to the Executive Board as the decision making body for the Greater Cambridge City Deal. This item had been considered by Constitution & Ethics Committee, and that Committee had suggested that it would be helpful for both Highways & Community Infrastructure and Economy & Environment Committees to have a view.

There was a discussion on which Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) were considered by the Executive Board, and which would go to H&CI Committee or Cambridge Joint Area Committee. The Executive Director confirmed that any TROs related to the City Deal would go to the Executive Board, whilst other TROs would go through the normal channels. Members stressed that they were keen for there to be full local member and community engagement embedded in the Executive Board's decision making processes, e.g. for issues such as the cross-city cycle routes. **ACTION: Executive Director to forward Executive Board's protocol to Committee Members.**

In response to a Member question, the Committee was advised that the Executive Board comprised Cambridge City, Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire Leaders, plus representatives of the business community and the University. The Executive Board was scrutinised by an Assembly, with representatives from the same bodies.

Whilst acknowledging that one of the advantages of the Executive Board may be quicker decision making, Councillor Reeve advised that his Group did not support increased delegation and any move towards unelected individuals taking decisions, so his Group would be voting against this proposal.

It was resolved by a majority to endorse and propose to Council that:

- a) the powers for promoting and exercising Compulsory Purchase Order powers for City Deal infrastructure schemes is confirmed as being delegated to the Greater Cambridge City Deal Executive Board;
- b) the powers for promoting and exercising Side Roads Orders for City Deal infrastructure schemes is confirmed as being delegated to the Greater Cambridge City Deal Executive Board; and
- c) the power to promote Transport and Works Act Orders for City Deal infrastructure schemes is confirmed as being delegated to the Greater Cambridge City Deal Executive Board.

(Councillors Gillick and Reeve voted against the recommendations, and asked for their votes to be recorded)

(Councillors Butcher and Connor left the meeting)

169. REVIEW OF HIGHWAYS & COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR 2016/17

The Committee considered a report on the key performance indicators to be included in the Council's Strategic Framework as set out in Appendix A to the report.

It was noted that the review of Highways & Community Infrastructure (H&CI) indicators was taking place in parallel with those monitored by the Economy & Environment Committee. Each indicator had been reviewed to ensure these linked to at least one of the Council's Operating Model outcomes. The report proposed that three of the Indicators were withdrawn (i) Municipal waste landfilled; (ii) book issues per head of population – narrowing the gap between the 10% most deprived wards and others; and (iii) number of problem rogue traders brought back into compliance. The rationale behind their removal was detailed.

It was resolved unanimously to approve the proposed Highways & Community Infrastructure key performance indicators for the Council's Strategic Framework as set out in Appendix A to the report.

170. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee received a report setting out financial and performance information for Economy, Transport and Environment as at the end of November 2015. Members noted that for the areas under the stewardship of the Highways & Community Infrastructure Committee, a £62,000 underspend was forecast for the year-end in relation to the revenue budget. For the Capital budget, a year-end slippage of £33.3M was predicted, mainly due to programme adjustments because of changed circumstances e.g. Ely Bypass.

It was resolved unanimously to note the report.

171. PARKING POLICIES – PETITIONS PROCEDURE

The Committee received a report on how petitions on parking issues were to be dealt with, in response to new statutory guidance. It was noted that a proposal had originally been submitted to the Constitution & Ethics Committee in response to the statutory guidance, but this had been rejected. The proposed way forward was to treat parking petitions in the same way as other petitions e.g. they would be considered by either Highways & Community Infrastructure Committee or Cambridge Joint Area Committee, with the same thresholds for speaking, etc.

In response to a query on the process for dealing objections to Traffic Regulation Orders on parking, it was confirmed that this was unrelated and therefore unchanged, as the report related to petitions.

It was resolved unanimously to agree and note the clarification to current processes in response to the statutory guidance on how to deal with petitions on parking issues, as set out in the report.

172. COMMITTEE TRAINING PLAN

Members considered the Committee Training Plan. A number of dates were being scheduled and would be circulated to Committee Members.

Members noted the Committee Training Plan.

173. AGENDA PLAN AND APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

It was noted that the item on 'Member Reference Group – Library Income Generation' would be moved to the March agenda. This meant that the only item on the February agenda was 'Eastern Highways Alliance Framework 2', but this was time critical so could not be deferred until a later meeting.

Members noted the Agenda Plan.

Chairman