

HIGHWAYS AND INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY AND SERVICE COMMITTEE:
MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 4th December 2019

Time: 10:00a.m – 11:25a.m

Present: Councillors I Bates, I Gardener, R Hickford, S King, M Shuter (Chairman) and G Wilson.

Apologies: Councillors: M Goldsack, L Harford (Substituted by Councillor Roger Hickford), B Hunt (Substituted by Councillor I Bates), I Manning, T Sanderson and J Scutt.

143. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were noted as recorded above. There were no declarations of interest.

144. MINUTES AND ACTION LOG

The minutes of the meeting held on the 8th October 2019 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

Individual Members raised the following issues in relation to the minutes and action log:

- queried whether the Committee would be reviewing the current set of Performance Indicators (PIs). The Service Director, Highways and Transport confirmed that a report could be brought to a future Committee meeting. **(Action required)**.
- stated that the current Risk Register was not very useful and queried whether Officers were going to provide the Committee with a revised version of it at a future meeting. The Service Director, Highways and Transport stated that the Risk Register was scheduled to be presented to the Committee in May 2020. The Chairman stated that it would be reviewed at the next internal meeting and a report would be brought to a future Committee meeting.
- requested a review of the online Highways Fault Reporting Tool be put onto the Committee's Action Log as a number of fault reports on the site were being closed before the work had been completed. The Member also requested that a link between this site and 'FixMyStreet' be investigated. The Chairman stated that work to resolve this issue was ongoing and would be raised at the next internal meeting. **(Action required)**

- ✓ Action 136. - Minutes and Action Log - Sought more information regarding the creation of a document outlining the relationship between Cambridgeshire County Council's (CCC) and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authorities (CPCA) Transport Plan. The Service Director, Highways and Transport stated that this document had been produced. However, work was still ongoing to simplify it before it was circulated to Members. He confirmed that the document would be circulated once ready. The Member suggested that the document should not be simplified as Members needed to have a full understanding of the relationship between the two Transport Plans.
- ✓ Action 138. – Finance Monitoring Report – August 2019 – Stated that he had not been contacted by his Local Highways Officer regarding the tree playing process in his division. The Chairman commented that it was tree planting season and that this issue would be followed up.
(Action required)

145. PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No petitions or public questions were received.

A Member raised concerns regarding an email he had received from a member of the public who had been refused permission to ask the Committee a question about the recent incident on the B1040. The Chairman reported that he had declined permission for the question at this stage in order to wait for the outcome of the police investigation. The same Member asked the Chairman whether he could notify the Committee in future when such a decision was made. The Chairman reminded the Committee that he, under the Councils Constitution, had absolute discretion to grant or refuse permission for a member of the public to speak at the Committee.

146. FINANCE MONITORING REPORT – OCTOBER 2019

The Committee considered a report presenting the October 2019 Finance Monitoring Report for Place and Economy (P&E) Services. The Strategic Finance Manager stated that Place and Economy services were forecasting a bottom line underspend of £2.9m. In relation to Waste Management, the forecasted underspend had increased by £1.1m from £1m to £2.1m. This was due to a number of reasons, a £500K penalty charge had been placed on the waste contractor (AmeyCespa) as the bio-degradability target had not been met last financial year. £400K of the additional forecast underspend reflected an increase in recycling and a reduction in packaging. The final £200k was due to an adjustment for stones at the bottom of an In Vessel Composter (IVC) being cleaned and put back in, therefore the Council did not have to pay to put them into landfill. On the Capital side there had been no significant changes since the last report that was brought to the Committee in October 2019.

Individual Members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- raised concerns regarding the delay in installing Mobile Vehicle-activated signs (MVAS). He suggested that the Council should be dealing with these simpler schemes much more effectively. The Assistant Director, Highways commented that this issue had been experienced in previous years. To help resolve this issue, this year Officers had placed a bulk order of MVAS. He confirmed that the exact number of the signs needed should be known once the LHI bids had been approved by the Committee. He was unsure as to why the MVAS had not been installed, he stated he would take this away and find out. Another Member expressed concerns as he had been told 2 years ago that the Council had been bulk ordering MVAS. **(Action required)**
- suggested it was hard to believe that a bulk order of MVAS had been placed at an appropriate time. He requested that Officers investigate this, he also requested that the Committee have sight of the Purchase Order (PO) which would provide more information on the delivery arrangements. The Service Director, Highways and Transport confirmed that both these actions would happen. The Chairman informed the Committee that in some cases the MVAS could not be installed as there was inadequate infrastructure at the site. The Assistant Director, Highways confirmed that this was the case for some sites. However, the MVAS should be in the depots ready to be distributed. The same Member suggested that he didn't believe that the lack of adequate infrastructure was the issue. The Chairman commented that it would be easier to deliver schemes like this before the winter season, whilst there was good weather conditions **(Action required)**
- requested clarity regarding the equity of approved Local Highway Improvement (LHI) bids across the County. He drew the Committees attention to the Chesterton division that had five LHI bids approved. The Service Director, Highways and Infrastructure believed that the LHI process was as equitable as it has ever been. He explained that the City and each District received a certain amount of money for LHI schemes based on their population. He acknowledged that there seemed to be a higher number of schemes in an Electoral Division in Cambridge City. However, confirmed that the amount of funding the City received was fair compared to other districts. The Service Director, Highways and Transport went on to explain that as the Divisions in Cambridge City were unparished, there was a difference in the way LHI Schemes were identified compared to the Districts.
- raised concerns regarding the inequitable nature of the LHI Bid process. He informed the Committee that one large Parish Council in his division could only put forward one LHI Bid. He suggested that Officers should review these sorts of anomalies. The Chairman suggested that the Officers should establish whether there was any way to resolve anomalies like this. He also suggested that the LHI process needed to be reviewed to make sure that this issue of equity was resolved. **(Action required)**

- requested more information regarding the LHI application process. The Assistant Director, Highways provided a detailed explanation of the LHI application process in Cambridge City. He suggested that it was not unreasonable to suggest that one Electoral Division in the Cambridge City area appeared to have more approved LHI schemes compared to other Divisions. He stated he would provide more information to the Member outside the meeting.
- queried the lessons that had be learnt in respect to the LHI application process. The Member appreciated that some LHI schemes were more difficult to deliver, but suggested that the process needed to be tightened up so less schemes were labelled as 'not delivered within the target completion date'. The Assistant Director, Highways explained that every year, Officers review the LHI process, they then take on board and implement the lessons learnt from these reviews. The Service had monthly LHI Board meetings that monitored the delivery of schemes, they had introduced a feasibility stage which established whether a scheme was viable before it was taken to a LHI Panel. He explained that the Council worked much more closely with Skanska in order to improve the delivery of the schemes. Previously they had been struggling to employ Project Managers and Engineers, but the Service was now more adequately resourced and therefore they were now able to deliver LHI schemes more effectively. He stated that there were ongoing historical schemes that were still marked as 'not delivered within the target completion date', Officers were working with colleagues in Parish Councils and Cambridge City to resolve these schemes. He informed the Committee that the aim was to wipe out the schemes that had been carried forward from previous years which would make it easier for Officers to deliver the schemes that had been approved for the current year. He suggested that one problem Officers had encountered while delivering LHI schemes was that on occasion the Parish Council or Area Committee would change what they wanted from the scheme. This had increased the complexity and the amount of time taken to deliver the scheme, this issue would hopefully now be ironed out at the feasibility stage of the process. The Chairman suggested that it was beneficial that this question was raised. He informed the Committee that compared to this time last year, they were in a much better position, but there was still room for improvement. He suggested that Officers add a comparative chart in the report that would compare their LHI delivery performance from last year to the current year. Officers confirmed that this could be discussed at the next internal meeting **(Action required)**
- In relation to a LHI Scheme in Abbots Ripton, sought more information regarding why the Council were waiting on agreement from Cambridge City Council regarding a LHI scheme in the Huntingdonshire District. The Service Director, Highways and Transport stated he would take this away and clarify, the outcome would be circulated to Members of the Committee **(Action required)**

- requested more information regarding the progress of the LHI schemes which had been submitted using the A14 Legacy Fund by villages whose roads had been damaged by HGVs due to the ongoing work on the A14. The Assistant Director, Highways stated that he was not aware that Highways England had provided an update on this issue. He confirmed that he would take this away to clarify. The Chairman requested that Officers update all Members and Substitute Members of this Committee regarding this issue. **(Action required)**
- welcomed the fact that the Council were now looking into these damaged roads. He informed the Committee of the damage caused by HGVs in his division, he stated that a significant amount of money from the Council would be needed to repair these roads. He stated that they needed to keep pressing Highways England to make these repairs. The Assistant Director confirmed that the Highways team were now collecting evidence of the damage to feed into the discussion they would be having with Highways England. The Chairman requested that Officers write to all Local Members to help them gather evidence of this damage. **(Action required)**
- suggested that it would be beneficial if future reports contained information highlighting the change in the number of true vacancies in the Service each month starting at the beginning of the 2019-20 Council year.
- requested more information regarding the implications of the vacancies found in Major Infrastructure Delivery and Business Support. The Service Director, Highways and Transport clarified that the Major Infrastructure Delivery Team did not deliver LHIs. He explained the implications of these vacancies was that it became more difficult to deliver the services they were required to do. Currently there was a number of Interim posts and agency workers in the Major Infrastructure Delivery Team, who were covering the gaps. However, this was never going to be a long term solution as it was costly and the Service required a continuity of skills, in the future they would be recruiting directly to these posts. In reference to the Business Support team, the Service Director, Highways and Transport believed that the data in the report was out of date as around two years ago they performed a significant restructuring to the team. They had removed Personal Assistance (PAs) and Business Support Assistance and replaced them with three Executive Assistances (EAs). He suggested that that he would take this away and check whether the data in the report should be updated. **(Action required)**
- in relation to a LHI Scheme in Fowlmere, informed Officers that the Local Member should be Councillor Peter Topping. Officers confirmed this would be amended.

- informed the Committee that the work on Bellamy's Bridge in Fenland had been completed. Councillor King thanked the work of Jacob Hobbs (Assistant Engineer, Fenland and East) and Ruth Raper (Project Manager, Fenland and East) for the work they undertaken on this scheme.

It was resolved unanimously to:

review, note and comment upon the report

HIGHWAYS & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE REVIEW OF DRAFT REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUSINESS PLANNING PROPOSALS FOR 2020/21 TO 2024/25

The Committee agreed to go into confidential session for this item due to Appendix 1 of the report containing tables that were of a confidential nature. It was also agreed to move this item to the end of the agenda.

147. PERFORMANCE REPORT – QUARTER 2 - 2019/20

The Committee received a report providing performance monitoring information on selected performance indicators. The Senior Business Intelligence Analyst drew the Committees attention to the contents of the report. It was highlighted that there had been a number of changes to the performances of some indicators.

Individual Members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- raised concerns regarding the commentary found on Indicator 39 – 'Principal roads where maintenance should be considered'. He stated that even though this indicator was performing better than target by 5%, he would not want to encourage this Committee or General Purposes Committee (GPC) to reduce their efforts in this area.
- expressed concerns regarding Indicator 40 – 'Classified road condition – narrowing the gap between Fenland and other areas of the County. He suggested that the indicator did not provide any beneficial information. He also queried the reliability of the machine condition survey methodology used to measure this indicator. The Chairman stated that currently, this was the only method they had for measuring the road conditions in Fenland. He commented that there was always going to be a margin of error with the measuring equipment. He suggested that they could introduce a more detailed measure that outlined the specific issues found in Fenland and the work that was being undertaken to try and resolve them. The Assistant Director, Highways explained the Indicator 40 currently compared A, B and C class roads in Fenland with A, B and C class roads in the rest of the County. It was highlighted that the road condition gap was narrowing for A and B class roads. However, there was still a significant disparity between the C class roads in Fenland compared to the rest of the County.

- following on from this, the Member suggested that going forward, the report could contain three separate charts for this indicator that compared the road conditions of A, B and C class road between Fenland and the rest of the County. The Chairman confirmed that they would look into this.

(Action Required)

- requested more information on the Linear Forecast line found on Indicator 40. The Service Director, Highways and Transport suggested it charted the indicators previous performance and used this to predict how it would perform in the future. He understood Members concerns and explained that the Service was looking at how to improve the road conditions in Fenland with the resources they had available. He commented that himself and the Assistant Director, Highways had been discussing this issue with the Chair, Vice-Chair and other Members of the Committee to agree how this issue could be addressed going forward.
- sought confirmation regarding whether the roads used to travel from Ramsey to Peterborough were included within this PI. The Chairman confirmed that this road was not located within the Fenland District and therefore was not included in this PI.
- expressed concerns regarding the increase in killed or seriously injured (KSI) casualties between March and April 2019. He asked Officers how the new road safety strategy would help reduce these figures. The Assistant Director Highways, explained that the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Road Safety Partnership were putting together a new five year strategy, as the current strategy ended in March 2020. He stated that the Council had been investing in greater safety measures at the known cluster sites. However, he suggested that the cluster sites would take much more investment to develop them fully. The Service were working closely with their partners in the emergency services and District Councils to try and tackle this issue.
- sought more information regarding the fact that two LHI bids submitted this year by Parish Councils requesting to reduce the speed limit in certain cluster sites had been rejected by the Police. He commented that he believed that the Council needed to review their relationship with the Police. The Chairman understood the Members concerns and believed that it was inequitable to be told that reduced speed limits could not be introduced as the Police would not be able to enforce them. He stated that he had previously questioned the Police regarding this issue. The Chairman confirmed that he would continue to raise this issue at the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safety Partnership meeting.
- stated that it was important for the Council to be engaging with the constabulary while developing their new Road Safety Strategy.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note and comment on performance information take remedial action as necessary

148. HIGHWAYS AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE AGENDA PLAN

A Member requested more information regarding why the review of parking charges paper had been delayed until the Committee meeting in January 2020. The Chairman confirmed that the paper was deemed politically sensitive and thus delayed due to the pre-election period (Purdah).

The Chairman informed the Committee that Councillor Steve Count would be stepping down from the Fenland Rural LHI Panel, he would be replaced by Councillor Janet French.

The Committee considered its agenda plan.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note the Committee Agenda Plan

149. HIGHWAYS & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE REVIEW OF DRAFT REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUSINESS PLANNING PROPOSALS FOR 2020/21 TO 2024/25

It was resolved to:

- a) note the overview and context provided for the 2020/21 to 2024/25 Business Plan revenue proposals for the Service, updated since the last report to the Committee in October.
- b) comment on the draft budget and savings proposals that are within the remit of the Highways & Infrastructure Committee for the 2020/21 to 2024/25, and endorse them to the General Purposes Committee as part of consideration for the Council's overall Business Plan
- c) comment on the changes to the capital programme that are within the remit of the Highways & Infrastructure Committee and endorse them to the General Purposes Committee as part of consideration for the Council's overall Business Plan.

Chairman