

HIGHWAYS AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 19th August 2014

Time: 10.00am to 12.20pm

Present: Councillors Ashwood, P Brown (substituting for Cllr Hunt), Bullen (substituting for Cllr Reeve), Butcher, Criswell, Frost, Gillick, Hickford (Chairman), Kavanagh, Mason, Palmer, Rouse, Taylor, Tew and van de Ven

Also present: Councillors Ashcroft, Henson and Orgee

Apologies: Councillors Connor, Hunt (Councillor P Brown substituting), Reeve (Councillor Bullen substituting)

22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

23. MINUTES – 15th JULY 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th July 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

24. PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

25. REVIEW OF HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE PRUDENTIAL BORROWING INVESTMENT PROFILING

The Committee received a report seeking approval for re-profiling the remaining Prudential Borrowing investment for Highway Capital Maintenance, in order to deliver the best outcomes in the delivery of the Council's Highway Asset Management Strategy.

During discussion, Members:

- noted that debt servicing was managed corporately, i.e. the interest and administration of servicing the Highway Capital Maintenance contract did not appear in the ETE budget;
- observed that the Council was currently spending £34.1M on financing debt, and this would increase to £44.8M by 2018-19;
- commented that the overall aim of these proposals was to maintain and protect assets, which were still deteriorating. Whilst noting that there may be some inconvenience to the public during maintenance, Members commented that this was sometimes unfortunate but necessary;

- observed that similarly, there was often dissatisfaction with surface dressing applications, and that communications explaining the benefits to the public was key in this regard;
- noting that the report referred to *'the additional funding should be prioritised to dealing with carriageway (road) maintenance'*, asked how much was allocated to pavements and cycleways. Members were assured funding was allocated to pavements and cycleways, and the detailed programme was set out in the Transport Delivery Plan annually. With regard to the cleaning of cycleways, it was confirmed that this was responsibility of the respective City and District Councils, although the County Council did work with City and District partners on these issues.

It was resolved to:

- 1) agree to the principles of extending the prudential borrowing period for Highway Capital Maintenance, as set out in the report;
- 2) approve the carry forward of £3.966 million of prudential borrowing from 2014-15 to future years, to fund future capital expenditure in line with the revised phasing detailed within the report.

26. TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER (TRO) OBJECTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH:

(A) A10 CAMBRIDGE ROAD - HAUXTON

The Committee received a report on objections received to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) associated with the proposed 40mph speed limit on the A10 in Hauxton. The speed limit reduction was proposed as homes and business units were being developed on the former Bayer Crops Sciences site in Hauxton, adjacent to this stretch of the A10.

The background to the proposed scheme, and the outcomes of the statutory consultation process were noted. Members noted a map showing where the improvements would be made.

Local Member Councillor Orgee spoke on the proposals. He explained that two of the objections, from Hauxton and Haslingfield Parish Councils, essentially supported the proposals but suggested that the speed limit should be extended to the motorway junction, and he could see the merits of this approach. Harston Parish Council opposed the proposed reduction in the speed limit, and had suggested that it would lead to increased traffic congestion on the High Street. He and the other Local Member, Councillor Kenney, felt that the speed reduction should be supported. The Chairman advised that Local Member Councillor Kindersley also supported the proposals.

As the Member for the adjacent division, Councillor van de Ven supported the points made by Councillor Orgee, and also saw the merits of a consistent speed limit up to the motorway junction.

It was resolved to:

- 1) approve and make the Order as advertised;
- 2) inform the objectors accordingly.

(B) CAMBRIDGE ROAD AND HINTON WAY, GREAT SHELFORD

The Committee received a report on an objection received to the proposed speed limit reduction on Cambridge Road and Hinton Way in Great Shelford. The project was being carried out under the County Council's Third Party Funding Initiative, with Great Shelford Parish Council funding the work.

The background to the proposed scheme, and the outcomes of the statutory consultation process were noted. Members noted maps showing the stretches of road where the speed limit reductions were proposed. The only objection was from the Police, who had advised on the morning of the meeting that they were removing their objection for Cambridge Road, but not for Hinton Way. The scheme had the support of all Local Members and Andrew Lansley MP.

Sue Russell, a resident of Hinton Way, spoke in support of the proposals. She explained the problems caused by speeding motorists and the findings from a Speedwatch scheme that had been set up, which found that many vehicles were travelling at speeds far in excess of 40mph along Hinton Way. She acknowledged that it would not be possible for the Police to regularly enforce a 30mph speed limit, but felt that such a reduction would lead to a reduction of average speeds of vehicles. She also advised that whilst Hinton Way appeared to be a rural road, there were approximately thirty properties, many set back from the road. In response to a Member question she confirmed that there was no pedestrian crossing on the road but she and other residents would support a crossing if the reduced speed limit was introduced.

Local Member District Councillor Nightingale spoke in support of the proposals. He was primarily concerned with the significant increase in traffic volumes as a result of the Southern Fringes development.

Local Member Councillor Orgee spoke in support of the proposals, and advised that Local Member Councillor Kenney also supported the proposals. He explained that the speed limit coming out of Cambridge was 30mph, which currently increased to 40mph at the boundary with South Cambridgeshire. He felt that it would make sense to have continuity, especially given the number of properties and businesses which had vehicular access on to Cambridge Road. He also explained the particular hazards on Hinton Way, caused by vehicles travelling at excessive speeds, and poor visibility due to the road being on a hill.

In discussion, Members expressed their support for the reduction, and applauded the efforts of both the Parish Council and Speedwatch volunteers in promoting this scheme.

It was resolved to:

- 1) approve and make the Order as advertised;
- 2) inform the objectors accordingly.

(C) ORCHARD PARK, CAMBRIDGE

The Committee received a report on objections received to parking restrictions in the Orchard Park development, a scheme which had been proposed by the Orchard Park Community Council to address concerns over unregulated and dangerous parking.

The background to the proposed scheme, and the outcomes of the statutory consultation process were noted. It was noted that both Local Members, Councillors Jenkins and Mason, supported the scheme. Councillor Mason outlined the parking problems on the development, partly caused by non-residents using the streets to park, and the original planning policy which only allowed parking provision for 1.5 vehicles per household. A Member agreed with Cllr Mason that it was regrettable that such remedial measures by the Community Council were necessary, and there should have been realistic provision for parking from the outset.

One Member observed that there were numerous objections from residents, and nothing to suggest that the scheme was justified on safety grounds.

It was resolved to:

- 1) approve and make the Order as advertised;
- 2) inform the objectors accordingly.

27. PAVEMENT LICENCE OBJECTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH BELLA ITALIA, NEWNHAM

The Committee received a report on objections received to the Pavement Licence application associated with Bella Italia, Newnham Road in Cambridge. The background to the proposed scheme, and the outcomes of the statutory consultation process, and a map outlining the location of the restaurant, public highway and proposed seating were noted.

Bella Italia had placed tables and chairs on the public highway for a number of years, without complaint. It was found that Bella Italia did not have a Pavement Licence, and they were therefore asked to make an application. The application submitted was for 19 tables, which was less than the 27 tables previously placed at the location. A revised plan was submitted for 12 tables, following the original consultation and the advice of the Cycling Officer. The Local Member, Councillor Nethsingha, supported the revised plan.

Local resident, Mr Muirhead, spoke objecting to the proposals. He explained that many Newnham residents used this route to cycle in to Cambridge City centre, but often encountered problems, even when they dismounted, in getting through the diners on this section. These problems were also encountered by those walking through, especially those with pushchairs, who could be made to feel that they were encroaching on diners. He felt that there should be clearer separation or demarcation through this section, as it was public highway, and not the property of Bella Italia,

and he suggested ways this could be achieved. In response to a question from a Committee Member, Mr Muirhead confirmed that he had not complained about this issue directly to Bella Italia.

Committee Members raised the following points:

- observed that Newnham was poorly served by public transport;
- expressed concern that those walking or cycling through the diners were made to feel unwelcome, and this important route and should be kept clear;
- commented that the change from the original 27 tables to 12 tables proposed would make a substantial difference;
- commented that café culture should be encouraged and should be welcomed in Cambridgeshire for tourists and residents alike;
- noted that the Council had a policy with specific criteria for pavement licences, and suggested that pavement licences not only secure income for Council, but were valuable for the economic growth and prosperity of the county. It was clarified that the policy applied across not just Cambridge city but for the whole county, and was clear that the needs of businesses had to be balanced against the needs of the travelling public. It was noted that the scale of charges for pavement licences was revised in January 2014, following agreement by Cabinet, to £100 per m² per annum in Cambridge City, £70 per m² pa in the rest of the county;
- noted that there was no vehicular access to the area in question;
- suggested alternative proposals, including a demarcated area. However, some Members suggested that a clearer path may lead to more problems, as cyclists may cycle at inappropriate speeds. The Chairman reminded Members that the Committee's remit was to determine objections to the current application, not to suggest alternative schemes;
- suggested that the proposals were a recipe for conflict and clashes, especially as it was a licensed premises;
- noted that this was not a principal cycle route.

The applicant's Solicitor and restaurant manager, were both in attendance to respond to questions. It was pointed out that the cycleway was not uninterrupted, and even without the tables and chairs, cyclists had to negotiate bollards at either end, plus a gate, so they had to dismount. The umbrellas over the tables were of a sufficient height that they did not impede cyclists. Waiting staff took orders and delivered food and drink to diners – diners could not order and collect their own drinks from the bar.

It was resolved to:

- 1) approve and issue a Pavement Licence for the proposal shown in Appendix 3 of the report;
- 2) inform the objectors accordingly.

28. CAMBRIDGESHIRE HIGHWAYS ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received a copy of the Cambridgeshire Highways Annual report for 2013/2014, on the highways services contract, which gave a summary of how the

contract worked in practice. It was noted that £1.4 million of efficiency savings had been realised in a variety of ways, including the use of different materials, plant and equipment, and innovations to ways of working. Health and safety remained a key priority, for both Cambridgeshire Highways employees, supply chain partners and the public e.g. all gritters had been fitted with cyclist safety cameras.

Arising from the report, Members:

- praised the communication skills of officers, acknowledging that this was a high pressure job;
- pointed out that sometimes more information on signs was useful e.g. “road closed” signs could give more information on the extent of the closure and timescales. In addition, it was useful to provide information when scheduled dates slipped;
- pointed out that the Cycling Ambition grant was not just for Cambridge City but also South Cambridgeshire;
- noted the relationship between Skanska and Atkins: Atkins had assigned the contract to Skanska, although Atkins retained ultimate responsibility for the contract, and still provided transport planning work;
- noted, in response to a question, that where work could not be carried out, e.g. because of mud on the road, reimbursement was sought from the business responsible.

It was resolved to note the performance of the highways contract.

29. CLAY FARM COMMUNITY CENTRE GOVERNANCE

The Committee considered a report on the governance and funding proposals for entering into a Joint Management Company (JMC) with Cambridge City Council to run the Clay Farm Community Centre.

The key issues were the partners’ respective stakes in the JMC, and the partners’ respective revenue share in the running costs of the Centre. Another consideration was the governance arrangements, for which the proposal was for three Directors (two City Councillors, one County Councillor).

Arising from the report, Members:

- asked why the alternative suggestion of a 3:2 split for Directors (i.e. 3 City Councillors, 2 County Councillors) had not been taken forward. Officers advised that the view was taken that it would be more difficult to recruit a larger Board and that even with a 3:2 split, the City Council would remain the majority shareholder. It was noted that chairmanship would rotate, and that substitutes and proxy votes would be permissible;
- noted the whole reason for the model was to provide flexibility in the use of space between partners, which would be integrated and evolve to meet changing needs;
- noted there was income generating potential, e.g. through room hire. However, it was unlikely that the Centre would be self-funding or realise a significant profit. Members suggested that provision should be included in the governance arrangements so that if a profit was realised, this could be recovered by the

partner authorities. Officers explained that the current proposal was for any such excess to be retained as reserves, to offset or support the Centre when there was a shortfall. Some Members suggested that every attempt should be made to make the Centre profitable;

- noted that the Local Member Councillor Ashwood, the proposed County Council's representative, had a professional background in Library Services, and a great deal of experience in the types of services and facilities that would be offered by the Centre.

It was resolved to:

- 1) agree a 60:40 asset share in the Company (City: County)
- 2) agree a 60:40 share of running costs of the Centre (City: County) capped at £80,000 per annum (index linked)
- 3) agree 2:1 representation on the Board of Directors (City: County)
- 4) agree to the nomination of the local Member for Trumpington to represent the Council on the Board.

30. REGISTRATION SERVICE SCHEME CHANGE

The Committee considered a report on a change required to the Registration Service Scheme from 2nd September 2014, to reflect the outcome of a formal restructure of the Service.

The background to the change was noted, and it was stressed that this was essentially a procedural requirement, and would not impact on the Service in terms of the current number of employees, i.e. there would be no redundancies. Similarly there would be no impact in terms of service to customers, e.g. duplicate certificates would in future only be issued from two locations in the county, although applications for duplicates could still be made at any location.

It was resolved to formally agree to the change to the Registration Service Scheme.

31. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – JUNE 2014

The Committee received a report setting out financial and performance information for Economy, Transport and Environment as at the end of June 2014.

Members noted that Economy, Transport and Environment was showing a £51,000 year end revenue overspend at this point in the year, mainly on the Waste PFI contract, as a consequence of not finding an alternative solution to landfilling of the Compost Like Output (CLO) from the MBT plant.. For capital, an underspend of £3.948 million was forecast against the £90 million Highways Maintenance budget, but this had been covered under the earlier report on Prudential Borrowing, where the Committee had approved a carry forward of £3.966 million of prudential borrowing from 2014-15 to future years, to fund future capital expenditure in line with the revised phasing.

In response to a Member question, it was confirmed that the CLO was a product of MBT plant and not the in-vessel composting process which the Environment Agency had put a prohibition notice on. Various options were being considered to take the CLO off site, including possible incineration out of county.

It was resolved to:

- 1) review and note the report
- 2) agree to receive Finance and Performance reports monthly in future, with reports being circulated electronically to all Committee and substitute Members, if a meeting was not taking place.

32. SERVICE COMMITTEE AGENDA PLAN AND APPOINTMENTS

The Committee noted its agenda plan. The Committee also considered the appointment to the Cambridge City 20mph Board, and noted both the political proportionality and appointments made by Group Leaders to the Cambridge Joint Area Committee.

It was resolved to:

- 1) note the agenda plan;
- 2) appoint Councillor Noel Kavanagh to the Cambridge 20mph Board;
- 3) note the appointments of Councillors Cearns, Kavanagh, Manning, Scutt, Taylor and Walsh to the Cambridge Joint Area Committee.