

Highways and Transport Committee: Minutes

Date: 5 March 2024

Time: 10:00am to 2.27pm

Present: Councillors Alex Beckett (Chair), Neil Shailer (Vice-Chair), Geri Bird, Piers Coutts, Steve Criswell, Claire Daunton, Lorna Dupré, Mark Goldsack, Neil Gough, Bill Hunt, Brian Milnes, Simon King, Catherine Rae, Alan Sharp and Mandy Smith.

Venue: New Shire Hall, Alconbury Weald, Huntingdon, PE28 4YE

197. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies were received from Councillors Peter McDonald (Councillor Neil Gough substituting), Councillor Jan French (Councillor Mark Goldsack substituting), Councillor Ian Gardener (Councillor Mandy Smith substituting) and Councillor Anne Hay (Councillor Steve Criswell substituting)

Councillor Simon King declared an interest as a member of the Cambridgeshire Local Access Forum.

198. Minutes – 23 January 2024 and Action Log

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2024 were agreed as a correct record subject to a spelling correction on page 12.

The Committee noted that an item would be brought forward to the July meeting of the Committee in relation to the A1421 and the motion presented to Full Council by Councillor Bill Hunt.

The updated action log was noted, together with the following updates provided at the meeting.

- A briefing note would be circulated following the meeting regarding hemlock weeds.
- The March Performance Monitoring Report should have totalled 39 and not 49.
- Briefings would be arranged where they had been requested as per the Action Log.
- 190 technical assessments had been undertaken by the Council's contractor; Milestone of peat soil affected roads. A briefing would be provided to members that would provide information on risk assessment along the routes.

199. Petitions and Public Questions

There were 14 public questions and no petitions. The public questions were heard during the relevant agenda items. The questions and responses are attached Appendix A to these minutes.

200. Puddock Road Safety Scheme

The Committee received a report that summarised the options assessment that had been undertaken to improve safety at Puddock Road. The Committee was asked to approve the preferred option and its implementation. The presenting officer informed the Committee that in seeking to reduce vehicle speed the severity of incidents would be reduced and that by reducing the number of vehicles using the road, the number of incidents would reduce.

The Committee received public questions on this item. The questions and responses are attached at Appendix A to these minutes.

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

- Welcomed the report as it was a notorious accident site.
- Attention was drawn to a letter received from a local resident highlighting the issues along the route and emphasised the importance of implementing a solution quickly.
- Commented that it was a significant road safety issue and questioned why the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) element was being proposed ahead of the civil enforcement powers being granted and the coroner's letter. -The presenting officer advised that the change to the speed limit could be implemented quickly and the ANPR camera installed in readiness for the provision of civil enforcement powers later in the year. There was no indication as to content of the coroner's letter. However, it was important to act as it could influence the content of the letter.
- Questioned whether it would be possible to deploy advisory signs for uneven surfaces immediately. Officers undertook to investigate the possibility and enact.
Action
- Sought assurance that the local member would be regularly updated on the progress of the improvements.
- Highlighted the importance of the route to the farming community and the need to ensure that the route remained available to farm vehicles.

It was resolved to:

- a) note the steps already undertaken to improve the safety of Puddock Road, i.e. through the speed reduction measures set out in 3.5.

b) approve the preferred option of a camera enforced closure of Puddock Road that would restrict access to the majority of vehicles and to undertake works next to the carriageway to remove rutting.

c) if the closure is approved, note that consultation would take place informally, and formally through the Traffic Regulation Order consultation and decision-making process.

d) delegate authority to the Executive Director Place and Sustainability in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee to award and execute a contract(s) and any other associated legal agreements or documents to implement the required works on Puddock Road.

201. BP Witchford Road Non-Motorised User Crossing

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the development of a Non-Motorised User crossing at BP Witchford Roundabout. It sought approval to proceed with a feasibility study and to develop a preferred option for the scheme. This was to be funded by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.

Speaking as local member, Councillor Coutts welcomed the scheme that was strongly supported locally and expressed regret that it had not been included within the original design of the roundabout upgrade. Councillor Coutts emphasised the importance of progressing the proposed scheme speedily.

The Committee received questions on this item. The questions together with the responses are attached at Appendix A to these minutes.

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

- Noted the hazard the crossing presented in its current form and drew attention to other crossings in the area such as bridge and subway. The subway was very safe and did not interfere with the skyline. It was also more accessible for a wider range of users and would be the preferred option.
- Expressed strong support for the scheme, however, expressed some concern that the proposed location of a bridge would result in cyclists not travelling the extra distance to the bridge and continue to use a dangerous crossing.
- Noted that the date quoted in paragraph 2.4 of the report should have been November 2023 and not November 2021.
- Concern was expressed regarding the estimated £6.6m cost for a bridge. Officers explained that estimates at that stage of a project were uncertain and included a 40% optimism bias within it. The budget was inflated with good reason, and the

risks would require further work. Officers provided assurance that a thorough procurement process would be undertaken to achieve best value for the scheme.

- Attention was drawn to the 16 options presented to the member working group that considered the project and requested that the consultant's report be shared with the Committee. **Action**
- Highlighted the issues faced by local people crossing the junction in its current form and how it discouraged active travel. The options presented in the report appeared reasonable and feasible. The preferred option would be driven primarily by underlying utilities and ground conditions.
- Sought assurance that the views of all non-motorised user groups would be considered during the design of the scheme. Officers confirmed during the options appraisal, key user groups were engaged with and it was confirmed that all would be done to ensure all groups would be able to contribute to the consultation.

It was resolved to:

a) note the progress that has been made on the options assessment and the procurement plan for the conclusion of feasibility work

b) agree that the Council accept £550,000 of funding from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to undertake a feasibility study to identify the preferred option for a non-motorised user crossing.

c) delegate authority to the Executive Director; Place and Sustainability in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee and the Section 151 Officer to enter a Grant Funding Agreement with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority

d) approve the ongoing development of the design, including consultation with stakeholders.

202. Cambridgeshire's Active Travel Toolkit

Members considered a report which sought approval and adoption of the draft Cambridgeshire's Active Travel Toolkit for New Developments.

The Committee received a public question on this item. The question and response are attached at Appendix A to these minutes.

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

- Noted that types of Non-Motorised Users (NMU) were contained within the toolkit together with the Travel hierarchy.

- Highlighted Soham railway station as an example of where an adequate bus service was not being provided to the station.
- Emphasised the importance of ensuring the toolkit represented Cambridgeshire as a whole and was not city centric.
- Welcomed the examples of managing car parking within the toolkit, highlighting the issue of car parking on new developments, and commenting that it was an enforcement matter and it was not clear how and by whom parking would be enforced.
- Accessibility for disabled people was raised as a concern, particularly cycle parking at bus stops that could cause obstruction together with cyclists continuing to use footpaths rather than cycle lanes.
- Questioned why floating bus stops were being persisted with within the toolkit when they had been the source of issues within Cambridge. Officers explained that there were situations where bus stops had not been considered by developers and were included to remind developers of bus stop provision.
- Questioned whether the toolkit would impact on the level of S106 funding allocated for education and health infrastructure. Officers explained that there was a limit to funding from a developer, however the planning process governed allocations.
- Reminded the Committee that there was more to active travel than cycling and suggested there should be a clearer definition within the toolkit of who NMUs were and a greater recognition of leisure in active travel. **Action**
- Highlighted the importance of connectivity for rural communities through available active travel routes. Furthermore, the Committee was reminded that Cambridgeshire's rural areas were very different to the city of Cambridge. Cars were essential to rural areas due to distances and lack of public transport. Although Fenland had the highest rates of active travel outside Cambridge, it was important to understand that the nature of active travel in the area was very different.

It was resolved to:

- a) Note the feedback from stakeholder and developer engagement on the draft Cambridgeshire's Active Travel Toolkit for New Developments.
- b) Approve adoption of the draft Cambridgeshire's Active Travel Toolkit for New Developments.
- c) Note progress to date and next steps for the high-level action plan and strategic studies within the Cambridgeshire's Active Travel Strategy.
- d) Approve the revisions to the 'Transport Assessment Requirements' document since it was last updated in September 2019. These revisions are intended to

reinforce to developers, the need to promote active travel and passenger transport as the primary method of maintaining network resilience and improving travel choices across the County.

203. Highways Maintenance Capital Programme

The Committee received a report on the Highways Maintenance Capital Programme. The report provided an overview of the capital programme for highways maintenance schemes for 24/25 and 25/26 totalling £48.7 and £46.4m respectively. The report sought approval of the proposed programme of work for 24/25 and 25/26 to be funded from the core capital funding that was made available for highways maintenance from Central Government.

The Committee received 2 public questions on this item. The questions and responses are attached at Appendix A to these minutes.

The Chair propose an amendment to recommendation c) that was received in time and in order. The Committee agreed unanimously to the amendment.

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

- Sought clarity regarding the A1307 de-trunking as the figures within the report appeared to vary. Officers undertook to provide clarification of the figures. **Action.**
- Questioned how Gaist had been used and how it had influenced the hierarchy of schemes to be developed. Officers explained that Gaist data had been used to assist in the prioritisation of mostly carriageway schemes. The system captured high-definition images of carriageways that was used to prioritise maintenance work. However, there were several other factors such as usage, accident data and reporting by members of the public that also influenced prioritisation. Officers undertook to provide a seminar on GAIST and how it was being used. **Action**
- Concern was expressed regarding footpaths that were in a poor state of repair. The presenting officer advised that there was significant funding and a programme to tackle a number of paths that required preventative treatment. There were a range of treatments for footpaths for the different stages of their life cycle.
- Welcomed the additional investment in highway maintenance. It was a limited resource that required absolute clarity on how it was being used and to ensure value for money. It was also an opportunity to explain to residents how the money was being spent and the value gained from it.
- Attention was drawn funding allocated for carriageway, footway and cycleway maintenance in East Cambs for year 25/26. It was suggested that an explanation should have been included within the report to provide clarity. Officers undertook to provide an explanation following the meeting. **Action.**
- Noted the wide variety of technology that was being used and developed in the field of highway maintenance. The Council continually assessed new technology for use.

- Highlighted the different techniques used for road repairs, in particular, techniques that were cheaper but often required repair several times with a particular site returned to 12 times over a 5-year period for repair. The presenting officer explained that there would never be a point at which reactive repairs were not required. However, there was an ambition to reduce reactive repairs as much as possible. In addition to the investment in highway maintenance there was transformation work underway within the service such as systems, support for the frontline workforce to ensure they have the necessary tools, with clear operational standards.
- Queried how peat soil affected roads were being prioritised for repair as there were several affected roads that were not listed within the report. Officers explained the difference between capital improvements and revenue maintenance. The Committee welcomed officers' suggestion for a member briefing on prioritisation.
Action.
- Requested fuller information relating to the maintaining the rights of way network included which were being considered and how they were being prioritised.
- Welcomed the additional funding, however, engagement with residents and parishes appeared to be missing which would build confidence in value for money and communicate the challenges faced. While the prioritisation process, was no doubt, rigorous, it was an internal process and it should be accessible to the public.

It was resolved to:

a) Approve the 2-year programme of highway maintenance capital schemes 2024-2026 as outlined at Appendix One.

b) Note the indicative highway maintenance capital programme for the following 3 to 5 years 2026-2029 as outlined at Appendix Two.

c) Approve the indicative programme for the use of the additional £40m investment made by the Council in highways maintenance as outlined at Appendix Three.

d) Delegate Authority to the Executive Director, Place and Sustainability, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, to finalise the detailed allocations and priorities for the highways capital maintenance programme, in accordance with the Authority's approved asset management policies.

e) Delegate authority to the Executive Director, Place and Sustainability, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, to commission the delivery of the highway maintenance capital programme through existing contracts that have been formally procured.

f) Delegate authority to the Executive Director Place and Sustainability, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Highways and Transport

Committee, to procure and then award contracts and any other associated legal agreements or documents for the delivery of the elements of the highway maintenance capital programme that are not delivered via existing contracts.

g) Delegate authority to the Executive Director Place and Sustainability, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee and the Section 151 Officer, to enter into Grant Funding Agreements with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority where these agreements are associated with the delivery of the highway maintenance capital programme.

204. Transport Strategy Action Plans and Integrated Transport Block Funding

The Committee received a report that presented an update on Performance Management across the Place and Sustainability directorate. The paper outlined the allocation of funding from the Integrated Transport Block of the Local Transport Plan Fund that was passported to the Council from Combined Authority. This enabled the delivery of transport projects that support the Combined Authority and Council's objectives. The Committee was asked to approve the two action plans and the proposed allocation of funding. This would enable the Council to deliver improvements to the local transport network contributing to the Council's strategic ambitions.

The Committee received 2 questions on this item. The questions together with the responses are contained at Appendix A to these minutes.

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

- Expressed disappointment that there was no mention of the re-opening of the March to Wisbech railway line within the report as it was essential to the development of the north of the county. The Committee noted that the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) was the lead authority on March to Wisbech rail and formed part of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) and the rail strategy the Committee approved in December 2023.
- Noted that Appendix 3 to the report contacted DTSA scoring criteria and queried how long it would take a scheme to move up the waiting list. Officers explained that although they were unable to confirm specifically when a scheme would be commenced, there was a general expectation that a scheme would be funded within the next 3 years.
- Although broadly supportive of 20mph schemes, however, expressed reservations regarding their blanket imposition on communities. Concern was also expressed that the £150k budget allocated to deliver the schemes would not deliver many schemes and it was essential to manage the expectations of Parish Councils.

It was resolved to:

- a) Approve the updated transport strategy action plans for Fenland and Huntingdonshire as outlined at Appendix 1 and 2.
- b) Approve the proposed allocation of the Integrated Transport Block funding for 2024-25 subject to the funding being allocated to the County Council by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.
- c) Delegate authority to the Executive Director Place and Sustainability, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee to re-allocate funding to other schemes up to a value of £500,000.
- d) Delegate authority to the Executive Director Place and Sustainability, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee and the Section 151 Officer to enter a Grant Funding Agreement with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority for the Active Travel Fund 4 programme.

205. Procurement of Legal Advice on the Guided Busway

Members received a report which sought authority to procure legal advice, through an appropriate framework, for the Council in relation to the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway.

It was resolved unanimously to:

Delegate authority to the Executive Director Place and Sustainability in consultation with the S151 Officer to award and execute a contract(s) and any other associated legal agreements or documents for the provision of legal advice and extension periods.

206. Electric Vehicle Charging Cable “Crossing-Over” Pilot

Members received a report which informed how enabling Electric Vehicle charging cables to “cross-over” the footway would help to reduce a barrier to the uptake for residents without off-street parking by alleviating the cost of charging. A risk-based review of the options had been undertaken and a proposal for a limited, timebound pilot scheme was outlined in the report.

The Committee received a public question on this item. The question and response is contained at Appendix A to these minutes.

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

- Commented that the key element to the pilot was residents being able access to parking spaces outside their houses.
- Questioned what the financial exposure to the Council would be. The report made reference to residents initially bearing the cost of installation, however, it also stated that the Council would reimburse them if the pilot did not proceed. Officers informed

members that the proposal was for a 2-stage pilot. There was no standard product and it was therefore important to try different solutions and assess them accordingly. There were issues of assets and ownership, and officers were confident they could be overcome. The Committee noted that if the pilot did not progress, then it would be reported to the Committee.

- While accepting there were risks associated with the proposed pilot scheme, there were significant risks with not embarking on the pilot scheme given the increase in the number of Electric Vehicles.\
- Commented that the biggest limitation of the pilot was the availability of the parking outside residents' houses. Residents would be unhappy to have CommPrivate supplies not public. Biggest limitation is the availability of the kerbside to your own house. Can't see how it works. Not unhappy we test it with the pilot. If you can't plug your car in after spending 800 on a plug you'll be annoyed. Also tech is improving where the charging point can identify the car and allocate the billing.
- Questioned why a trial was being conducted when there was evidence and data available from other local authorities that had trialled such schemes. The presenting officer explained that there were many providers and suppliers and more than one solution available. It was essential that the solution met resident's expectation and the Council's policies.
- Noted that a report would be presented to the Committee following the completion of the trial period.
- Highlighted that many Victorian houses had been converted into flats which greatly affected the ratio of car spaces to the number of residents and could present a barrier to any on-street charging scheme.

It was resolved to:

- a) Note the progress to date and the issues surrounding cable crossing-over, including the opportunity cost associated with not allowing crossing-over.
- b) Agree to the further development and roll out of the pilot as outlined at Section 3 of this report.
- c) Delegate authority to the Executive Director Place and Sustainability in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee to launch the pilot, subject to provision of further technical advice and securing suitable licencing (or other contractual) arrangements.
- d) Delegate authority to the Executive Director Place and Sustainability in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee to award and execute any contracts required to deliver the pilot.

207. Pavement Parking

The Committee received a report which provided an update on pavement parking and propose that the committee request that the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) take forward a pavement parking pilot scheme as part of their plans for delivery of an integrated parking strategy. Information is also provided in the report on Red Routes.

The Committee received several public questions and comments that are attached, together with the responses at Appendix A to these minutes.

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

- Welcomed the report, however, expressed disappointment over the areas the pilot scheme would cover as there were areas that could have benefited greatly from it.
- Suggested that targeted small areas of red routes would provide an opportunity to control pavement parking. Officers explained that red routes were a strategic intervention for a whole route. They were not intended for small, targeted areas. There were other options available to the Council that would address the issue.
- Questioned why are funding was being sought from the Greater Cambridge Partnership when it had budgetary pressures.
- Sought clarity on how much revenue was being generated through fixed penalty notice and whether it included bus lane enforcement.
- Questioned why it had taken so long to get to this point. In response it was noted that the report followed a motion to Full Council and had been brought forward. As soon as possible.
- Commented that success would be measured in income reducing over time as it would mean that the policy was having an impact.
- Commented that it was important to recognise that there would be downsides to the pilot as well as benefits. It would likely increase vehicle speeds in areas where there were no longer cars causing an obstacle on the highway. It was also important to be mindful of the local economy when implementing such schemes.

It was resolved to:

- a) request that Greater Cambridge Partnership develop and fund a pilot of pavement parking restrictions in Cambridge;
- b) note the decision-making process regarding this pilot at set out at paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4;
- c) agree that officers, in conjunction with the Greater Cambridge Partnership, investigate the feasibility of Red Routes.

208. Finance Monitoring Report – January 2024

The Committee received a Finance Monitoring Report. Overspend of 1.8m which is a reduction from last month. Winter maintenance park and ride. Capital programme exceeded slippage by 4,2m

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

- Drew attention to a large amount allocated for park and ride maintenance and questioned whether there would be further sums required in future years. Officers explained the capital programme for the coming year reflected current estimates for the busway. For the current financial year there was not the funding available.
- Noted that vacancy information was now included as part of the performance monitoring report that was presented to the Committee at its January 2024 meeting.

It was resolved to:

Review and comment on the report.

209. Highways and Transport Policy and Service Committee Agenda Plan

The Committee received the Highways and Transport Agenda Plan.

It was resolved unanimously to:

Note the agenda plan.

Chair