

HIGHWAYS AND INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY AND SERVICE COMMITTEE:
MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 10th September 2019

Time: 10:00a.m – 11:20a.m

Present: Councillors, D Connor, M Goldsack, L Harford, W Hunt (Vice-Chairman), S King, I Manning, T Sanderson, J Scutt, M Shuter (Chairman).

Apologies: Councillor Ian Gardener (Substituted by Councillor David Connor) and Councillor Graham Wilson.

127. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

128. MINUTES AND ACTION LOG

The Chairman stated that he thought the Committee would be receiving an update on a review of the concessionary fare usage policy for individuals with disabilities before 9:30am. He commented that this was important as all individuals with disabilities should be able to travel to work. The Service Director for Highways and Transport stated that he would take that away and provide the Committee with an update.

The minutes of the meeting held on the 9th July 2019 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

129. PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No petitions or public questions were received.

130. FINANCE MONITORING REPORT – JULY 2019

The Committee considered a report outlining the July 2019 Finance Monitoring Report (FMR) for Place & Economy (P&E). The Strategic Finance Manager informed the Committee that they were forecasting a bottom line underspend of £2.4m. This was mainly due to underspend in Street-lighting and Waste Management and an overachievement of income on Bus Lane and Parking Enforcement and Highways Development Management. The Capital forecast reflected a £16.7m slippage on King's Dyke, which had meant the Capital Program Variation had now been fully achieved.

Arising from the report:

- A Member queried how much of the £328k energy rebate had been paid for by Parish/Town Councils. The Strategic Finance Manager stated that she would take that away and ask officers how much of the rebate has been paid for by other organisations. **(Action Required – Strategic Finance Manager)**
- A Member sought more information regarding the impact of the new Bus Gate on Sliver Street in Cambridge. The Assistant Director of Highways confirmed that the Bus Gate had not been in place long enough to establish its effect to date, he suggested that they would have some more data by the end of the year which could be used to provide the Committee with a review.
- A Member raised her concerns regarding the positioning of the Bus Gate sign on Bridge Street in Cambridge. The Chairman commented that he wanted to ensure that road users were clearly informed about the restrictions of Bus Gates. The Assistant Director of Highways stated they had complied with all legislation and noted that they had produced a number of educational social media videos explaining the restrictions of the Bus Gates. The Assistant Director of Highways stated that he would take this away and check. **(Action Required – Assistant Director of Highways)**
- The Vice-Chairman sought clarification regarding the link between the increase in pensionable age and the potential underspend increase on Concessionary Fares. The Service Director for Highways and Transport stated that in theory with the pensionable age gradually increasing, they could see an increased underspend. However, with life expectancy increasing, individuals would be using their bus passes for a longer period of time. He also stated that Concessionary Fares was a Combined Authority (CA) function that was being levied to Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC). Therefore any savings achieved would be reflected in the CA's budget.
- The Service Director for Highways and Transport followed on from this by suggesting that this underspend was influenced by a complex mix of determinants including; age, bus availability and duration of time the bus pass was used for. The Strategic Finance Manager stated that Concessionary Fares Forecast was closely monitored as was highly likely to change.
- A Member raised her concerns regarding the road works taking place on the Fendon Road roundabout and the effect it had on bus routes to Addenbrookes Hospital. The Service Director of Highways and Transport stated that the Citi 1 and 2 buses had been affected by the work. However, after communicating with Stagecoach, they had ensured that alternative transport would be provided. He noted that residence could now travel to Addenbrookes Hospital via a connecting bus.

- The Member followed on from this and queried whether people travelling to Addenbrookes Hospital using this alternative route would have to purchase two bus tickets. The Service Director of Highways and Transport stated that bus users should not need to purchase two bus tickets but he would take this away to confirm. **(Action Required – Service Director of Highways and Transport)**
- The Chairman sought further confirmation regarding whether this alternative bus route would cost users any more money. The Service Director of Highways and Transport confirmed that this should not be the case.
- A Member sought information regarding the completion date for the work on the Fendon Road roundabout. The Service Director of Highways and Transport stated that the work had a time scale of 29 weeks but would check and then inform Members. The Chairman stated that he would like to have an update on this next meeting. **(Action Required – Service Director of Highways and Transport)**
- The Vice-Chairman raised his concerns regarding the figures found in the report relating to the difference in the number of trees planted and removed. The Chairman commented that they were entering the tree planting season. The Assistant Director, Highways stated that he had met with the appropriate officers and there was a number of steps in place to increase the number of trees planted.

It was resolved unanimously to:

Review, note and comment upon the report

131. WINTER SERVICE PLAN 2019-20

The Committee received a report providing information on the Winter Service Plan for the 2019/20 winter season. The Highways Maintenance Manager stated that it was an operational plan that they were required to update and publish every year. The Committee were informed of the key sections within the 'Cambridgeshire County Council Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan – 2019/20'. He stated that it was a live document and therefore if new infrastructure was adopted such as junction improvements taking place round the A14, they would have to update the plan to reflect this change.

In discussion:

- A Member suggested that outside of the meeting she would like an email from the Highways Maintenance Manager regarding which of her villages in her constituency were participating in the winter gritting volunteer programme. Members also commented that they should be supporting the engagement of more Parish Councils to participate in the winter gritting volunteer programme.

- The Vice-Chairman congratulated the work officers had performed in the last couple of years. He also stated that they should be pro-active with the promotion of the winter gritting volunteer programme.
- A Member raised concerns regarding the number of Parish Councils who had adopted the winter gritting volunteer program. The Highways Maintenance Manager stated that the figure in the report stated that 26 Parish's consisting of 84 volunteers had attended the training in 2018/19. The Member commented that this figure did not elude to how many Parish's had actually adopted the programme.
- A Member sought more information regarding the budget for this municipal year compared to last year. The Assistant Director of Highways confirmed that the budget for last year was £2.067m. The Chairman commented that the budget was slightly higher this year at £2.125m. The Assistant Director of Highways stated that the budget varies slightly every year.
- A Member expressed concerns regarding the number of District Councils who were doing their own gritting. The Highways Maintenance Manger suggested that it could be influenced by historic factors, such as working under an agency agreement or was just the District being more pro-active. He noted that the Council were not restricting Districts from gritting.
- A Member stated that it was positive that the gritting budget was not being reduced this year.
- The Chairman congratulated officers and stated that the gritting teams provide an effective service throughout the winter season.

It was resolved to:

Approve the Winter Service Plan for the 2019/2020 winter gritting season.

132. CAMBRIDGESHIRE HIGHWAYS CONTRACT ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

The Committee considered a report providing an update on the performance and achievements of the Highways Team Services Contract for the period 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019. The Highway Commission Manager drew the Committees attention to the Background and Main Issue section of the report. She then drew the Committees attention to the key sections of the Cambridgeshire Highways Annual Service Review 2018/19. She highlighted that as part of the contract with Skanska, they had clauses that set out a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), in which 78% performing within their targets. They had seen a number of other improvements of KPIs, but some were still not meeting their target. Working groups had been created to help improve these specific KPIs.

In Discussion,

- A Member commented that there was a noticeable improvement in the condition of highways found in Cambridgeshire compared to neighbouring Counties.
- A Member raised his concerns regarding the draught damaged roads in Fenland and the negative impact they had on people's journeys. He suggested that they must now be more effective at repairing them.
- Members suggested that greater communication was needed with the public to inform them about what the positive work the Council and Skanska were doing to improve the roads, especially in rural areas. The Highway Commission Manager stated that they were looking to improve their communications in order to help educate the public on the work of the service
- A Member commented that he wanted to see the Dragon Patchers in Fenland villages more frequently. The Service Director, Highways and Transport stated that it was planned to notify Members when the Dragon Patchers were going to visit their constituencies. The Assistant Director of Highways stated that this information should be coming from your Local Highway Officer. He noted that he would take this away and check. **(Action Required - Assistant Director of Highways)**
- A Member sought clarification as to how people were made aware of the Social Value Fund and how her residents could participate in it. The Highway Commission Manager outlined the process of bidding for Social Value Fund projects.
- A Member requested clarification regarding the Equality and Diversity Implications statement found within the report. The Highway Commission Manager stated that the Council and Skanska both had Mental Health Ambassadors who received regular training. She noted that they could provide the Committee with some feedback on the work of the Mental Health Ambassador. **(Action Required - The Highway Commission Manager)**
- A Member queried the results of the stakeholder survey. The Highway Commission Manager stated that the survey feedback had been shared with the Joint Management Team. Feedback such as improved communication with the public would be taken back to officers, who would be able to identify the improvements made to these parts of the service.
- A Member sought information regarding the sanctions imposed on Skanska if they did not meet a deadline on a Local Highways Improvement (LHI) scheme. The Assistant Director, Highways confirmed that the highway contract was built around a suite of key performance indicators (KPIs). Performance against the KPIs

determined whether or not the contract term was reduced or increased or whether particular service areas were removed from the contract. Whilst Skanska were not penalised for poor performance on individual schemes, the performance was recorded and fed into the KPIs. Progress of LHI schemes were recorded in the monthly finance report and officers worked with Skanska to learn lessons to improve delivery against both time and budget.

- A Member expressed his concerns regarding the quality of the work performed by Skanska in his division. He stated that he had problems with getting Skanska to rectify any issues they had been raised. Going forward he would of liked to see a section in the report that outlines quality control measures taken by Skanska. The Highway Commission Manager stated that Skanska create a quality insurance plan which outlines how they were going to ensure effective quality control. The Business Director at Skanska clarified that if they did receive a complaint about their work, they would do everything in their capacity to rectify it. The Chairman informed the Committee that a more robust audit trail was being introduced next financial year that would allow for a more effective monitoring and quality control process.
- A Member commented that the online highways reporting tool was unsatisfactory as many issues reported, that had been fixed were not taken off the system. The Chairman agreed that the reporting tool was awkward to use. He stated that at the quarterly meeting with Skanska they had been investigating new technology that could be used to replace this.
- A Member asked whether the body camera for operatives was optional. The Business Director at Skanska stated that all operatives were provided with confrontation training. He noted that operatives had been assaulted by members of the public in the past. He stated that they encourage their operatives to use the camera when necessary as a safety precaution.
- A Member queried whether the service would be receiving further government funding this financial year. The Chairman confirmed that he hadn't received that information yet.
- A Member suggested that green KPIs should not be reported on as the target was already being achieved. He noted that they could be replaced with KPIs that were not meeting their targets. The Assistant Director, Highways agreed and stated that they were focusing on red KPIs. He stated that red KPIs were brought to the Skanska quarterly board meeting in order to establish action plans to fix them. The Chairman stated that he would expect to see the stakeholder survey results improve. He noted that it would be interesting to compare their survey results with other Local Authority's results.

- The Vice-Chairman congratulated officers for the work they had performed and stated that they should aim to provide a perfect service.

It was resolved unanimously to:

Note the 2018/19 annual report

133. PERFORMANCE REPORT – QUARTER 1 2019-20

The Committee received a report providing performance monitoring information on selected performance indicators. The Service Director, Highways and Transport stated that it was a self-explanatory report and would answer any questions that arose.

Arising from the report,

- The Chairman raised his concerns regarding the grading system for the performance indicators. The Service Director, Highways and Transport stated that it was an issue if they were exceeding their target significantly as it could mean they were not setting their target high enough.
- A Member asked Officers whether they had considered a door step collection service for small electrical items to allow people to recycle their unwanted items more easily. The Chairman stated that this was a District Council matter. The Service Director, Highways and Transport stated that nothing could be done regarding a county wide delivery program. He noted that the most effective way to deal with this issue would be through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP). He noted that they could work with district colleagues to encourage them to consider this issue. The Chairman stated he would raise it at the RECAP meeting
- A Member expressed his concerns regarding the classified road conditions in Fenland. He stated that it would be beneficial to have an explanation of what measures were going to be taken to improve all red indicators. The Assistant Director of Highways agreed with the Member and stated that they were bidding for further funding from the Challenge Fund to improve this.
- A Member asked whether the Challenge Fund was used on unclassified roads. The Assistant Director of Highways confirmed that the Challenge Fund did not necessarily have to be used on classified or unclassified roads, but there were specific guidelines on its use.
- The Chairman stated that they were fully aware of the deterioration of road conditions in Fenland and were actively looking at ways to address them. He commented that the roads in Fenland were considerably worse compared to the rest of Cambridgeshire and would

require a more radical approach to fix. He suggested that he would like to see no further damage to the roads.

- A Member sought information regarding the number of N/A ratings on indicator 42. The Senior Business Intelligence Analyst stated that this was because there were no comparators for this indicator. The Member expressed his concerns as to how these indicators were being created. The Senior Business Intelligence Analyst stated that the KPIs were requested by the Committee.
- A Member sought clarification regarding indicator 148.
- A Member requested information regarding Indicator 148. The Senior Business Intelligence Analyst confirmed that a KPI was given an amber rating if it's off target by less than 10%.
- A Member raised concerns regarding the validity of the highway issue reports being received.

It was resolved unanimously to:

Note and comments on performance information and take remedial action as necessary

134. HIGHWAYS AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE AGENDA PLAN AND APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Members requested that the Highways and Infrastructure (H&I) induction presentation was brought to the induction event in November 2019.

A Member suggested that Members of the Committee should contact their Local Highways Officer to establish an effective working relationship. The Chairman suggested that they could write to all Members to arrange an introduction meeting with their Local Highways Officer. The Assistant Director, Highways stated that they had arranged a number of Local Highway Depot open days and encouraged all Members to attend.

The Chairman suggested it would be beneficial for a variety of officers to attend this induction event to answer any questions that arise. A Member stated that they needed to be provided with information regarding how much money was being spent on footways. The Chairman confirmed that they did now have a specific footways budget.

It was resolved to:

Note the Committee Agenda Plan

Chairman