

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: 10 November 2020

Time: 10.00am to 11.30am

Present: Councillors I Bates (Chairman), H Batchelor, D Connor, R Fuller, J French, Lynda Harford, M Howell (Vice-Chairman), N Kavanagh, S King, I Manning and A Taylor

41. Apologies for absence and Declarations of Interest

There were no apologies or declarations of interest.

42. Minutes – 6th October 2020

The minutes of the 6th October 2020 were agreed.

43. Highways and Transport Committee Action Log

The Committee noted the Action Log

The following points were raised:

It was suggested that reference should be made to Cllr Manning's and Howell's Motion at Council, as it had been agreed it would be considered by Committee within three months. Action required: Democratic Services.

Two Members queried the withdrawal of the report on verge maintenance. It was confirmed that a workshop was planned, and that would feed into a report on verge maintenance at a future meeting, prior to the next cutting season.

With regard to the updated cycle map of Wisbech (Action no. 30), work was underway and further details would be shared with Councillor King. Action required.

44. Petitions and Public Questions

There was one request to speak which was considered under the relevant item.

45. Joint Professional Services Framework

Members considered a report which informed them of the outcome of the procurement process for the Joint Professional Services Framework. The report also sought approval to award contracts to the two preferred bidders.

Members noted the background to the procurement process, from the original decision in January 2019, to the establishment of a Project Board comprising various partners, the development of an options appraisal and subsequent procurement process. The scoring for the six final bidders was included in the confidential appendix to the report. It was proposed that the contract would go live on 1st February 2021 for the delivery of services.

A Member asked about the contract notice in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU), what this entailed, whether this was an official requirement for these type of procurement exercises, and whether it would be necessary, post-Brexit? Officers advised that contracts above a certain value had to be posted in the OJEU so that companies across the EU were aware of the opportunity. It was unclear what the process would be post-Brexit.

One Member indicated that he had not seen the confidential appendix, and it was agreed it would be circulated following the meeting. **ACTION REQUIRED.**

In response to a question on Net Zero Carbon reduction, it was noted that this was part of the qualitative assessment. The Member clarified that his query related more to the successful organisations' own zero carbon ambitions. Officers agreed to follow this up and respond to the Member. **ACTION REQUIRED.**

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note the procurement process for the Joint Professional Services contract;
and
- b) Approve the award of the framework contracts as set out in the confidential Appendix A in the report.

46. Lancaster Way Consultation Outcome

The Committee received a report that sought approval for the revisions to the Lancaster Way roundabout, including the addition of a signalised pedestrian crossing on the A142.

Introducing the report, officers advised that the main issue in the consultation had been opposition to the lack of crossing facilities across the A142 for pedestrians and cyclists. Responding to this, it was now proposed that a signalised crossing facility should be included in the scheme.

The Chairman drew Members' attention to the appendices to the report, which provided the detail of the consultation responses and a preliminary design. Officers emphasised that this was a Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) scheme, and that the detailed design work had not been undertaken at this stage.

There was one Public Question from Mr John Powell of the Ely Cycling Campaign. Mr Powell's statement covered the concerns of the Ely Cycling Campaign with the solution proposed in the report, and a recommendation that a crossing suitable for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders be installed on the western side of the roundabout. Presentation of the question and ensuing debate can be found at the YouTube recording <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BHwLy6nfiI0>

The Chairman thanked Mr Powell for his presentation.

Members had also received written representations from Lynda Wrath of the British Horse Society, who had proposed that there should be a Pegasus crossing, which was a signalised crossing that could be used by horse riders. A Member asked Mr Powell if he would support such a crossing, and Mr Powell confirmed that he would. He also confirmed that a scheme which featured a crossing on the western side of the roundabout would be supported by both the Ely Cycling Campaign and the Cambridge Cycling Campaign.

Councillor Dupré was invited by the Chairman to speak as a Local Member. She commented that the main purpose of the Lancaster Way scheme was to achieve improvements for motorised transport, i.e. to increase the capacity and speed of cars. If employment increased in the area, as forecast, the majority of those additional employees would be travelling by car, and active travel would become more dangerous. The original design ignored the relevant local, national and international guidance, all of which promoted sustainable transport and reduction in car use, and positive examples of appropriate signalised crossings elsewhere in the county, e.g. on the A1307 in Babraham. She agreed with the speaker's proposal of a crossing for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders on the western side of the roundabout, and she outlined the many benefits this would bring. Councillor Dupré referred to the recent nearby work at the BP roundabout, which she said had caused months of misery for residents living adjacent to unofficial alternative routes, and asked that residents be protected as much as possible when the final scheme was implemented.

In response to a Member question, Councillor Dupré confirmed that livery businesses she had referred to were south of the A142, between the roundabout and A10.

Councillor Manning proposed an amendment to the second recommendation:

"Approve the addition of a signalised Pegasus crossing to the west of the roundabout within the scope of the project and cover this with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority through a change request. Officers should consult with Ely Cycling Campaign and the British Horse Society on the design of the crossing."

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Batchelor.

Councillor Howell proposed a further amendment:

"Cambridgeshire County Council to explore the option of a combined pedestrian, Toucan and Pegasus signalled crossing with the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough

Combined Authority. Advice should be sought from the Ely Cycling Campaign and the British Horse Society on the design of the crossing.”

Councillor Howell’s amendment was seconded by Councillor Harford.

A Member asked how the Amendments differed. Councillor Manning confirmed that his amendment specified that the crossing should be on the west side of the roundabout. The Member asked why it was important to specify which side the crossing was on, when ultimately this was a CPCA scheme. Whilst acknowledging that ultimately CPCA would make the decision, Councillor Manning commented that there was always a danger that the strong support for a crossing on the western side would not be made clear in the decision making process.

Following discussion, Councillor Manning amended his amendment slightly to read:

“Approve the addition of a signalised Pegasus crossing to ~~the west of~~ the roundabout within the scope of the project and cover this with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority through a change request. Officers should consult with Ely Cycling Campaign and the British Horse Society on the design and location of the crossing.”

Councillor Howell seconded Councillor Manning’s amendment, as amended, and all Members indicated their support.

Officers commented that the Committee needed to be aware that the final scheme would need to be appropriately designed and safety audited, and urged a degree of caution in specifying a particular type of crossing, as it could not be guaranteed at this stage that this specific type of crossing could be achieved at the favoured location; moreover, this was ultimately a decision for the CPCA. Members acknowledged these points and understood the constraints, in particular the need to take account of land, costs and safety constraints.

A number of Members thanked the Chairman for helping the Committee identify a way forward.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note and comment on the outcome of the public consultation
- b) Approve the addition of a signalised Pegasus crossing to the roundabout within the scope of the project and cover this with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority through a change request. Officers should consult with Ely Cycling Campaign and the British Horse Society on the design and location of the crossing.

47. Cambridgeshire County Council’s response to Network Rail’s consultation on the Ely Area Capacity Enhancement Scheme

The Committee considered the proposed County Council response to the Network Rail Consultation on the Ely Area Capacity Enhancement Scheme Consultation. Presenting the report, officers outlined the background and objectives of the Network Rail scheme, the various proposals to improve capacity, and the nature of the consultation process.

Members noted comments in support of the proposed submission from Local Member Councillors Dupré and Every, which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

A number of Members commended the proposed consultation response, stating that it was very comprehensive and well worded, stressing that this was a once in a lifetime opportunity, and that it was vital to take a joined up approach.

There was a query on the number of potential new dwellings (1080) and the number of new jobs (1080). It was confirmed that the second figure was incorrect, and should read 557. Officers reassured Members that the final response would include the correct figure.

One Member was delighted to see two references in the response, highlighting the Council's strong support to the Wisbech Rail reconnection.

A Member praised the emphasis throughout the report to the Council's opposition to any scheme which could adversely impact on the residents of Queen Adelaide, Prickwillow and surrounding areas. The Chairman advised that he had attended a public meeting in Prickwillow, which must be unique nationally, located in the middle of three railway junctions. He agreed that it was vital to protect the residents and businesses in communities such as Prickwillow and Queen Adelaide.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note and comment on the proposed response to Network Rail Consultation on the Ely Area Capacity Enhancement Scheme Consultation as set out in Appendix A to the report;
- b) Agree the response to be submitted to Network Rail at the close of this meeting;
- c) Delegate the agreement of any minor changes to the response to the Executive Director, Place and Economy in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee.

48. Finance Monitoring Report

The Committee considered a report on the financial position as at the end of September 2020, which included a request to the General Purposes Committee for the additional 2020/21 Highway Maintenance Allocation Potholes Fund of £4.1M from Central Government to be spent on resurfacing schemes in accordance with the County Council's approved Asset Management Strategy.

Members noted the budgetary pressures on the Place & Economy budget, which primarily related to the impact of Covid-19. The bottom line revenue overspend for Place & Economy was £3.3M. On the capital side, government had allocated an

additional £4.1M Highways Maintenance Grant, and it was proposed that this be spent on resurfacing schemes.

A number of Members were pleased to note the additional capital grant, but asked how this would be spread equitably across the county to those areas where the need was greatest? It was confirmed that this funding would be spent within the current financial year, and shared countywide over thirteen schemes. The detail would be communicated to the Committee but in terms of distribution, there were five schemes in Fenland, three in Huntingdonshire, one in South Cambridgeshire, two in Cambridge city and two in East Cambridgeshire. **ACTION REQUIRED.** It was further noted that this year, the government had combined two sources of funding – the Pot Hole Action Fund and also the Challenge Fund. Historically the Challenge Fund had been a competitive process, but this year the funding had been divided up across highway authorities nationally. This funding was specifically for highway maintenance, and was a good opportunity for the Council to make significant improvements in a sustainable fashion, as per the council's approved asset management strategy.

One Member commented favourably on a recent Local Highways Improvement (LHI) scheme, which involved bridleway bridge repairs in Tydd St Giles, and asked if his thanks could be passed on to Jacob, Ruth and colleagues who had helped realise that scheme.

A Member queried the £998K adjustment on the street lighting contract. Officers explained that this related to legacy work that should have been undertaken by Balfour Beatty as part of the core investment period, and gave examples of the type of work involved. Processes had been put in place to ensure that this work was picked up going forward. In response to a further question on timescales, it was confirmed that this work was carried out on a recurring basis, and was not scheduled for a specific year.

One Member asked for clarification on the difference in figures for the Emergency Active Travel Funding in Section 3 compared to the table in Appendix 3. Officers agreed to circulate a response to all Committee Members by email. **Action required.**

A Member queried the backlog of LHI schemes, especially in Huntingdonshire. It was confirmed that this related mainly to the redeployment of staff during the pandemic, whilst a small number related to other issues e.g. land that had not been adopted. In the first Lockdown, government guidance had been for highways authorities to focus on safety critical work. Members were asked to share this information with their Parish, District and County Council colleagues. A number of Members spoke very favourably on the wide variety of valuable roles that Highways staff had undertaken during the pandemic, and the enormous efforts made by the County Council more generally, and urged everyone to be as patient as possible with routine work which may be outstanding as a result. A Member stressed the importance of prioritising staff wellbeing and providing necessary support.

Speaking as a Local Member, Councillor Connor highlighted problems with a LHI scheme in Pondersbridge. £26K of third party funding had been contributed to traffic calming measures, but one of the features was now being removed, as it was considered unsafe, much to the dismay of local residents. Officers agreed to

investigate and report back to the Local Member, the Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman. **ACTION REQUIRED.**

It was resolved to:

- (a) review, note and comment upon the report;
- (b) confirm to General Purposes Committee support for the allocation of the additional £4.1m grant to be used for resurfacing schemes.

49. Highways and Transport Committee Agenda Plan and Appointments to Outside Bodies and Advisory Groups

Members noted that the following two items on the Committee's Agenda Plan would be deferred from the December to January meeting:

- Risk Register Review;
- Coldhams Lane Roundabout

It was resolved to note the Agenda Plan.

Chairman