

## HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: 22 June 2020

Time: 10.00am to 12.37pm

Present: Councillors Alex Beckett, Gerri Bird (Vice Chair), Steve Corney, Piers Coutts, Jan French, Ryan Fuller, Derek Giles, Mark Howell, Simon King, Peter McDonald (Chair), Brian Milnes, Edna Murphy, Neil Shailer, Alan Sharp, and Mandy Smith

Venue: University of Cambridge Sports Centre

### 1. Notification of Chair

It was resolved to note the appointment of Councillor Peter McDonald as Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee for the municipal year 2021/22.

### 2. Notification of Vice Chair

It was resolved to note the appointment of Councillor Gerri Bird as Vice-Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee for the municipal year 2021/22

### 3. Apologies for absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dew.

There were no declarations of interest.

### 4. Minutes – 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021

The minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

### 5. Highways and Transport Committee Action Log

The Committee noted the Action Log

A Member, in relation to minute 30, and the request for a cycling map of Wisbech. In addition to the request the Member highlighted highways planning guidance for making walking and cycling the most attractive option. It was requested that it be added to the Action Log. **ACTION**

## 6. Petitions and Public Questions

There were several requests to speak that were considered under the relevant agenda item.

## 7. Traffic Regulations Order, Objections Associated with the Cambridgeshire County Council (King's Parade) (Traffic Management) Order

Members considered a report that sought to determine the TRO for King's Parade. The presenting officer provided the Committee the background to the report and highlighted as outlined at paragraph 2.2 of the report, Cambridge City Council was intending to develop a permanent design to replace the temporary barrier. The Committee noted the Order did not specify the design of the barrier.

During discussion Members:

- Questioned what risk analysis had been undertaken. As a method of attack, it appeared to have ceased by 2018. Officers explained that the recommendation was based on advice from the Police and undertook to provide the risk analysis provided by the Police.
- Expressed reservations regarding the barriers, however, recognised the advice of the Police who identified the threat and method of attack. A request was made that a Service Level Agreement (SLA) was entered into and that the Chief Inspector also a signatory.
- Commented that although attacks such as the type the barriers were designed to prevent could take place anywhere in the county, King's Parade would be a prime target.
- Expressed concern that the installation of barriers could make the area more of a target.
- Confirmed that the only option for continued protection was a permanent order.
- Drew attention to the concern regarding the design of the barriers and emphasised the need to ensure that any future design would be passive and fitted in with its environment.
- Noted that the design of the barrier could be amended and that the barriers could be removed, and the order still exist.

The Chair invited Matthew Danish, representing CamCycle to address the Committee. Mr Danish began by noting that the Police had recommended a scheme of this nature.

However, with some essential changes it could create a much better, safer, and more accessible environment for all.

Mr Danish drew attention to the profile of King's Parade, highlighting that it was not only a museum but a heavily used public space and emphasised that it was one of the country's busiest streets for cycling that deserved to have a beautiful and practical design that was also safe and inclusive.

Mr Danish considered Appendix 3 of the report that stated, 'there has been little change in the level of personal injury accidents reported' an unsatisfactory response for the following reasons.

- Almost the entire period of the experimental order had taken place during the COVID-19 pandemic with significantly fewer people were travelling. As normal activities resumed the temporary barriers would be unsuitable given the numbers of people passing through them.
- Personal injuries were rarely recorded if a motor vehicle was not involved and Police were not called to the scene.

In practice, the temporary barriers were creating conflict and the arrangement of them severely reduced accessibility. There were nominally three openings to walk or cycle past the barrier, but at least one was usually blocked which created substantial conflict. The cycle gap was of substandard size and half of it was in the gutter which could cause people to slip and fall while trying to manoeuvre through the tight space.

Therefore if the Council was going to press forward with the scheme then CamCycle requested that the Committee seek a better design for the barrier as it was possible to balance counterterrorism goals with the inclusivity principles of LTN 1/20 to create a workable solution for all. The pavements on both sides should be kept as clear as possible so that all users were accommodated. Within the carriageway, there should be at least two gaps for cycling, northbound and southbound, each having sufficient clearance for cargo cycles, tricycles, and disability-adapted cycles. The surface quality should be even and smooth within those gaps, instead of straddling the gutter.

In conclusion Mr Danish, highlighted the rising bollards that had been deemed suitable for the northern end of King's Parade that would provide a solution at the southern end if installed. However, if it was determined that rising bollards were unsuitable then CamCycle would be happy to work with officers to find a better solution.

The Chair summarised the debate and highlighted actions to be undertaken including:

1. A strategic plan visitor/anti-terror plan including St Johns St/market square provided to the Committee
2. A refreshed consultation on the barrier over and above the 21 (ideally 60) days statutory period for a new/amended order.
3. A revised design for the barrier in keeping with the King's Parade environment.
4. Improved cycling safety/accessibility and disabled access.
5. An amended permanent order taking into account these changes by the end of 2021.
6. A Service Level Agreement entered into signed also by the Chief Inspector

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Determine objections lodged during the formal consultation period;
- b) Implement the permanent scheme as originally published; and
- c) Inform the objectors accordingly.

## 8. A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Development Consent Order Update

The Committee received a report that informed the Committee of progress with the Highways England scheme to upgrade the A428 dual carriageway. Members noted that the Planning Inspector (PINS) had accepted the application following the submission of a Development Consent Order by Highways England. The application would be determined by the Secretary of State. Officers were working jointly with Huntingdonshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council and was liaising closely with local authorities in Bedfordshire on the scheme.

Concerns relating to climate change and the carbon footprint were highlighted to Members as the scheme would add to the carbon footprint of the local area. Furthermore, Highways England only appeared to have undertaken a minimal assessment of the impact of East West Rail and the Cambridge to Cambourne transport proposals.

The presenting officer assured the Committee that following the experience of the A14 improvements, officers were working closely with Highways England to ensure minimal liability and costs for the Council.

During discussion Members:

- Highlighted the impact on the climate, of construction materials that caused black body heat and the robustness of the traffic assessments owing to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Officers explained that although construction materials were important, the increase in traffic would prove to be the largest factor impacting on the climate. With regard to traffic levels, Members were informed that they had broadly returned to pre-pandemic levels. There were, however, significant changes to patterns in areas such as Cambridge, Oxford and Brighton.
- Questioned whether the use of temporary weight restrictions to prevent damage to roads should be expanded. Officers confirmed that if there was an assessed need for a temporary weight restriction then it would be pursued by the Council. Members noted that the Police would not enforce temporary weight restrictions and therefore the Council was assessing Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) as a possible method of enforcement. There was significant damage to the network following the A14 upgrade that affected the taxpayer and the Council and

discussions were taking place with Highways England and the Department for Transport to ensure damage was not incurred.

- Commented that while supporting the upgrade of the A428, it was essential that the lessons of the A14 be learned where roads that were damaged were still awaiting repair. Footpaths needed to be more joined up.
- Drew attention to the re-trunking of the old A428 and emphasised the importance of robust discussions with Highways England to ensure that footways were joined up and that the needs and concerns of residents were considered.
- Requested that officers discussed with the relevant Bedfordshire Councils the possibility of a dedicated HGV route that would serve the proposed developments at Wyboston. Although not part of the A428 scheme, officers undertook to pass the suggestion to the relevant team within the Council to engage with the development.

#### **ACTION**

It was proposed by Councillor King and seconded by Councillor Howell with the unanimous agreement of the Committee that the following additional wording be added to recommendation c), "including but not restricted to temporary weight restrictions".

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note the report, and the likely timescales for the formal consent process;
- b) Consider the summary of points raised and confirm the key areas to support or raise issues;
- c) Confirm the Council's strong in-principle support for the A428 scheme, subject to suitable assurances **(including but not restricted to temporary weight restrictions)** and agreement with Highways England; and
- d) Delegate to the Executive Director for Place & Economy in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Highways & Transport Committee approval of the submission of formal documents related to the enquiry.

## 9. East West Rail Company Non-Statutory Consultation

The Committee considered the proposed County Council response the non-statutory consultation on East West Rail (EWR). Presenting the report, officers outlined the background and objectives of the Network Rail scheme together with the nature of the consultation process. The Committee was informed that although the consultation had closed, the Council had secured an extension for the Committee to consider the proposed response.

The Chair invited Dr William Harold to address the Committee. Mr Harold drew attention to the rejection by EWR of a northern approach to Cambridge due to the number of compulsory housing purchases and number of tracks that would be required.

When challenged EWR stated that the issues were to do with timetabling and not capacity. Solutions had therefore been provided to EWR. Studies of the negative environmental impact of a southern approach were highlighted to the Committee. In conclusion Dr Harold highlighted that no business case for EWR had been provided, no housing or economic plan was forthcoming and there were no forecasts available for freight and passenger levels.

The Chair invited Councillor Sebastian Kindersley in his role as Chairman as Cam-Bed Railroad. Councillor Kindersley drew attention to the work undertaken, campaigning regarding the approach to Cambridge. Throughout the course of the consultation EWR had failed to disclose the business case. It was understood that the business case was in draft form and had been in preparation for three years. However, EWR had refused to publish it. Usually the business case would have been at the forefront of any proposals. Over the course of the last three years costs had increased significantly and there had been no explanation as to why. There was a very strong possibility that the scheme as currently proposed represented exceptionally poor value for money and would severely impact residents.

The Chair invited Councillor Michael Atkins, local Member for the Hardwick division to address the Committee. Councillor Atkins informed the Committee that the residents he represented were some of the most affected by the construction of a new railway line, particularly following the preferred alignments, and many of them had written to him expressing their views and concerns.

Councillor Atkins commented that the consultation process had not been well received. It was scheduled during a time when social distancing rules prevented the most popular forms of engagement. Residents who did attend online events and meetings had reported the experience was disappointing. Information on the website was very difficult to navigate, with the most important details buried in long documents. Residents did not feel that they had been adequately consulted, or listened to, and he requested that the Council push East-West Rail to engage in new discussions.

Councillor Atkins highlighted alternative proposals for a route from Cambourne North to Cambridge North, instead of the East-West Rail preferred alignments from Cambourne North to Cambridge South. This alignment has been repeatedly rejected by East-West Rail, although their reasons for doing so have shifted each time, and at present the critical issue was an alleged timetable clash on the final approach to Cambridge North and therefore contended that a northern route and not been adequately considered.

The preferred alignments would have significant and hugely damaging impacts on the villages Councillor Atkins represented. There was little space in-between the villages, and although the routes had been drawn to minimise housing demolition, the resulting lines passed very close to hundreds of houses, schools and businesses. Councillor Atkins highlighted the road crossings that would be required and the resulting elevation of the track which would increase noise, air and visual pollution.

Councillor Atkins concluded by requesting that the Committee be vigilant and proactive in securing the best outcome for all Cambridgeshire residents.

The Committee noted the written comments of Councillor Dr Alex Bulat local Member for the Abbey division contained at Appendix A to these minutes.

During the course of discussion Members:

- Noted the comments of Councillor Atkins in response to a Member question who stated it was important to take an independent view of route alignments and that residents did not feel they had been consulted effectively. If there was opportunity for further consultation it should be taken advantage of.
- Noted the comments of the Group Manager, Transport Strategy and Funding regarding the vertical alignments that EWR had handled poorly. As it has been presented it was not good but did provide opportunity for something better.
- Expressed disappointment regarding the consultation process that did not reach enough people and was undertaken during an election.
- Commented that an undertaking from EWR to electrify the route was necessary and emphasised the carbon footprint of the scheme.
- Questioned the requirement for a viaduct at St Neots commenting that there had been no reason or explanation provided.
- Commented that all comments made had been captured in the consultation response. It was essential that the consultation response be submitted, and the concerns of the Committee registered.
- Noted that proposed route 'E' passed through the Sawston and Shelford division and would have a significant impact on residents who had expressed concerns over noise and visual impact.

Councillor Milnes proposed, seconded by Councillor Shailer with the agreement of the Committee an amendment to the consultation set out below (additions in bold)

*5. The Council notes the additional work undertaken on the option of entering Cambridge from the north, and the conclusions drawn by the East West Rail Company that it would result in higher costs and lower passenger benefits. The Council would ask that further detail be made available by EWR on the basis for its decision on the preferred route and in particular information regarding the following:*

- **location and quantum of future housing and economic growth**
- **impact on the environment**
- **residential impact of freight traffic**
- **the necessity of 4-tracking of the WAML with a northern approach.**

The Chair proposed with the agreement of the Committee additional wording to recommendation b) to include the addition of feedback relating to vertical alignments, the business case, consultation process and communications.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Approve the consultation response appended to this report; and
- b) Delegate to the Executive Director Place and Economy, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, the authority to agree any changes (**including the addition of feedback relating to vertical alignments, the business case, consultation process and communications**) to the report following discussion at committee.

## 10. Local Highways Improvement Panel Scoreboards

The Committee considered a report that informed the Committee of the outcome of the prioritisation of the Local Highways Improvement (LHI) applications for delivery in 2021/22 by the Member Panels in each District area.

Commenting on the report Members:

- Highlighted that the closure of the window did not take account of Parish Council meeting cycles that did not meet on a monthly basis and therefore requested that it be extended to a date in September. Officers confirmed that they would review the timetable. **ACTION**
- Requested additional guidance or training for Members regarding LHIs and the process that underpins them. **ACTION**

The Chair invited Mr David Stoughton, Chair of Living Streets, Cambridge to address the Committee and ask his question.

Mr Stoughton highlighted a recent report produced by Living Streets that detailed the experience of Cambridge residents of pavements and footways who reported they were of poor repair. Mr Stoughton welcomed the consultation on the local cycling and strategy. However, there was no provision for maintenance, nor did it refer to any plans for immediate or future repairs.

Mr Stoughton concluded by asking for clarity about whether a sustained repair and maintenance programme was being considered by the new administration, alongside proposed capital investment.

The Chair thanked Mr Stoughton for the question and advised that he would receive a written response to the question (attached at Appendix B to these minutes).

It was resolved to:

Approve the prioritised list of schemes for each District area, included in Appendix A of this report.



## 11. Finance Monitoring Report – May 2021

The Committee received the May 2021 iteration of the Finance Monitoring report. The presenting officer highlighted that the report was the first Finance Monitoring of the financial year and reported a forecast underspend of £162,000.

During discussion Members:

- Questioned whether the forecast outturn should be variant.
- Drew attention to A1303 Safety Scheme where a number of trees were removed due to being too close to the carriageway and none had been planted in replacement and queried what was being done to address the situation. **ACTION.**
- Questioned whether there were plans to accelerate the planting of trees. Officers confirmed that work was being undertaken and was a priority for delivery.
- Requested that the local Member for Local Highway Improvement (LHI) schemes be copied into progress reports. **ACTION**
- Noted that it was early in the financial year and there were a number of complex risks that made an accurate end of year forecast difficult.

It was resolved to:

Review, note and comment upon the report and to confirm the updated Capital Budgets to be taken to Strategy & Resources Committee for approval.

## 12. Appointments to Outside Bodies and Advisory Groups and the Appointment of Member Champions

Members considered a report that sought appointments to Outside Bodies, Advisory Groups and Member Champions.

It was proposed by Councillor Smith with the agreement of the Committee that the Cycling Member Champion be renamed to include all non-motorised forms of transport.

It was resolved to

- (i) review and agree the appointments to outside bodies as detailed in Appendix 1 **to be made through delegation.**
- (ii) review and agree the appointments to Internal Advisory Groups and Panels, as detailed in Appendix 2 **to be made through delegation.**
- (iii) **Agree to** appoint **via delegation** a **Non-Motorised User** Cycling Member Champion responsible for promoting the interests of cycling across all

aspects of the Council's work, linking in with the health and well-being responsibilities of the authority.

- (iv) **Agree to appoint via delegation** a Transport and Health Member Champion to promote joined up working on transport issues between the Environment and Green Investment Committee, Highways and Transport Committee, the Adults and Health Committee and Public Health.
- (v) delegate, on a permanent basis between meetings, the appointment of representatives to any vacancies on outside bodies, groups and panels, within the remit of the Highways and Transport Committee, to the Director, Place and Economy in consultation with the Chair, Highways and Transport Committee.

### 13. Highways and Transport Committee Agenda Plan

The Committee considered its agenda plan. Officers confirmed that Highways England would be in attendance at the July meeting of the Committee to consider A14 issues.

A Member requested a report relating to enhanced pothole repair be added to the forward plan. Officers undertook to discuss the scheduling at the forthcoming meeting of the Chair and Vice Chair and Spokes.

It was resolved to note the agenda plan.

Chairman

Most residents who contacted me about the EWR consultation are concerned about the impacts on the environment, human health and the localised impacts of the scheme.

I would like to strongly support the recommendation in the Draft consultation response that the PWOS be updated to commit to electrification from the outset.

I would also like to express my disappointment that the scheme does not have a target to rule out diesel-powered EWR services. In the absence of ruling this out, which is preferable to many residents, can EWR commit to a maximum number of such trains a day?

The consultation material makes high level commitments and it is difficult to assess many impacts, in particular noise and landscape impacts. There is also a lack of measurable targets on climate change and carbon reduction. This Joint Administration committed to a 2030 net zero target so it is important to question the environmental and biodiversity impacts of all projects.

Many questions are still unanswered. In particular, the consultation documents state that ecological surveys are ongoing - will further information on this be shared with the Council and if so, when? It is also concerning to see there is no research referred to which assesses the impact on human health - we should ask for further information on this, as the main priority is to minimise environmental and health impacts of the scheme on our residents. Has this research been conducted already by EWR and if so, when it will be made publicly available - and if not, why it has not been conducted?

Councillor Dr Bulat

Date: 6 July 2021

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Mr David Staughton  
By Email

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Dear Mr Staughton,

Thank you for attending the recent Highways and Transport Committee and posing your question. I hope the following response provides clarity regarding the repair and maintenance programme

At its meeting in February 2021, the County Council agreed an additional £20 million for footway maintenance. This will be £4 million additional investment for each of the years 21/22 to 25/26. It is currently the intention that 50% of this additional funding will be spent on preventative treatments. Such treatments are vital in ensuring that defects such as potholes and trips do not form in the first place and therefore do not require reactive repairs. The remaining 50% of the additional funding will be spent on slurry sealing footways and other resurfacing treatments.

The £4 million per annum is in addition to the pre-existing capital budget of £1.3 million per annum.

All footways are inspected for defects in a predetermined frequency be it annual quarterly or monthly, depending on the hierarchy of the asset. Typically, the busier the footway the more frequent the inspection. These inspections identify defects for repair as described in the Council's Highway Operational Standards Document. As well as regular safety inspections the Council will investigate and respond to any complaints regarding footway condition and these are carried out by the Local Highway Officer for the area. All highway defects can be reported on our report it tool.

[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/highwayfaults](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/highwayfaults)

Yours sincerely