Highways and Transport Committee: Minutes

Date: 2 December 2025

Time: 10.00 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

Venue: Red Kite Room, New Shire Hall

Present: Councillors Alex Beckett (Chair), Robin Wyatt (Vice-Chair), Alex Bulat, Lorna Dupré, Jonny Edge, Peter Fane, Colin Galbraith, Ian Gardener, Mark Goldsack, Darren Green, Ros Hathorn, Ian Manning, Matthew Morgan, and Tom Sanderson

23. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

There were no apologies for absence.

There were no declarations of interest.

24. Minutes – 14 October 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2025 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

The Committee noted the Minutes Action Log.

25. Public Questions and Petitions

The Committee was informed that two public questions had been accepted and that the questions would be taken at the start of the relevant agenda items. It was noted that both questions related to Agenda Item 8 (Vision Zero and the Council's Management of its Duties in Relation to Road Safety).

The Committee was informed that the Council had received a petition in relation to Agenda Item 4 (Update on Cambridgeshire Guided Busway Safety Works), which would be presented at the beginning of that item.

26. Update on Cambridgeshire Guided Busway Safety Works

The Committee received an update report on progress with safety improvements to the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway, including fencing, flood mitigation, and operational measures such as speed limits and signage. The report also sought approval for revised budget allocations to fund additional crossing points and a five-year maintenance programme.

Sheila Gill was invited, on behalf of Helena Perry, to present a petition with 2244 signatures on its digital version and 199 signatures on its paper version, which sought to save access across the busway for people and nature, and which is attached at Appendix 1 of the minutes. Highlighting the strong local community opposition to closing unofficial crossings in Histon and Impington, Mrs Gill informed Members that residents were concerned that the closures could divide the village, harm community spirit, and negatively impact mental health, especially for those with limited mobility, as the crossings provided safe access to green spaces and nature. Over 90% of respondents used such paths for health and leisure purposes, and many had relied on them for decades. Mrs Gill welcomed the report's proposals for reinstating crossings, wildlife access and the suggestion of a potential new bus stop, urging the committee to approve new formal crossings alongside the planned safety fencing in 2026.

While discussing the report, individual Members:

- Welcomed the way in which the Council had responded to concerns raised by local communities alongside the busway and paid tribute to officers for engaging with residents and local Members to find solutions. Nonetheless, one Member expressed concern that the safety measures were reactive management rather than planned management, arguing that the proposals had created divisions within local communities. Members were informed that short-term, medium-term and long-term maintenance was carried out on the busway and it was emphasised that various levels of engagement had taken place with local communities. While the majority of informal crossings would remain closed along the busway, such engagement had led to the proposal to improve and formalise some of them, although it was not possible to provide a timetable for when this would be carried out. Other Members welcomed the way in which the Council had responded to concerns raised by local communities and paid tribute to officers for engaging with residents and local Members to find solutions.

- Expressed concern about the impacts of the temporary reduced speed limits on the busway and sought clarification on how they were affecting bus services and whether an assessment had been carried out on how they affected the long-term viability of the busway. Members were informed that temporary speed limits of 30mph on the northern section and 20mph on the southern section and at all formal crossings had been in place for two months, causing only a slight increase in journey times. These limits were a safety measure until fencing had been installed, after which they would be reviewed through risk assessments and adjustments would be made as appropriate. It was emphasised that the Council met regularly with operators to minimise any disruption and to maintain busway operations. Diversions were avoided whenever possible, and the aim was to restore suitable speed limits as soon as possible and complete the works quickly to reduce any negative impacts.

- Established that the 0.5m gap on the busway side of the safety fence had been thoroughly risk assessed for any accidental or intentional incursions to the track and would also allow sufficient space to evacuate a bus if required. It was also confirmed that the emergency gates in the fence were strong enough to avoid vandalism, and Members were informed that all bus drivers had the keys and combinations to

unlock the gates when required. The gates were spaced continuously along the route and would be maintained regularly.

- Sought clarification on whether nighttime work for the installation of the safety fence had been considered and included in the project budget, noting that while it would reduce the level of disruption to busway users, it would also be more expensive. Members were informed that nighttime work had not been factored into the budget, although it was emphasised that budgets were regularly reviewed and contingency funds had been put aside, while alternative additional funding could potentially be sought. Any such developments would be reported to the committee either through its regular finance monitoring reports or the biannual reports that would be presented to the committee on progress with the works.

- Drew attention to the unexpected cost of installing safety fencing along the busway and queried what impact it could have on other potential future busways and the wider busway strategy. It was highlighted that the cost of retrofitting additional measures was significantly higher than installing them in the first place, and the programme budgets for other busways would therefore not increase substantially.

- Sought clarification on how members of the public could report defects on the busway or the adjoining maintenance track and whether such reports were dealt with differently to standard highway defect reports. Members were informed that it was possible to report defects via a QR system on the Council's website. While such reports would feed into the same management system as regular highway reports, they would be responded to more quickly due to requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 which applied to the busway. Members suggested that the regular 'Report It' tool did not allow users to submit reports of defects on the busway, and it was argued that the process should be made as easy as possible for residents and users of the busways. It was agreed to investigate why such reports could not be submitted. **Action required**

- Queried whether the Council had written standards for the maintenance of the busway and the maintenance track against which performance and quality could be measured. Members were informed that while there were not currently any such standards, an operational manual was being developed which would include such information. It was agreed to publish those standards on the busway management section of the Council's website once the manual had been finalised, and also to include a specific section on defects and performance of the busways in future corporate performance reports presented to the committee. **Action required**

- Drew attention to the lack of line markings on the maintenance track, despite its popularity as a shared use path, and sought clarification on the level of engagement with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) specifically on the maintenance track, rather than the busway itself. Members were informed that recent engagement with HSE had involved as much attention on the maintenance track as the busway, and as a result additional linage and signage had been installed, although it was acknowledged that further work was required.

- Requested further information on how a speed limit could be implemented on the maintenance track when cyclists and runners rarely had speedometers advising

them of the speed they were travelling at. Members were informed that vehicle activated signage had been installed and would be more widely expanded, which advised people how fast they were going. It was clarified that Traffic Regulation Orders would be used on the bridleway sections of the maintenance track, if necessary, while the exact calibration of the measuring equipment to the speed limit would be checked when converting miles and kilometres.

It was resolved unanimously to:

a) Approve the revised detailed budget allocations for the delivery of the required health and safety works which includes the provision of additional safe crossing points across the Busway;

b) Approve the allocation of the planned Busway Capital Maintenance Investment Programme budget for 2026/27; and

c) Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Place and Sustainability, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, to amend the details of the allocation of budget for the management of the Busway.

27. Procurement of Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the project to deliver electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure funded by the £5.4m Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund. The report sought delegated authority to award a 15-year concession contract for the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure starting in 2026 and extension periods.

While discussing the report, individual Members:

- Considered what would be an appropriate spread of EV chargers across rural and urban areas, with some Members arguing that a higher number were required in rural parts of the county, while others suggested that their impact and use would be greater if they were installed in areas with more concentrated use of EV vehicles. Members were informed that the 930 subsidised chargers would be distributed across districts based on postcode assessments to ensure overall equitable coverage, particularly in rural areas where commercial provision was less likely. The proposed approach combined locations identified by the Council to increase equity alongside additional more commercially targeted sites proposed by the market, meaning that more than 930 chargers could be installed overall. Mapping and demographic analysis had been used to target areas without off-street parking while allowing commercial operators to focus on higher-demand urban locations, and it was agreed to provide Members with information on the results of the postcode assessment. **Action required**

- Highlighted the importance of ensuring the EV chargers were competitively priced against the generally cheaper alternative of charging at home and queried whether the tender could include a cap on charging costs. It was clarified that the proposal

was for a concession contract model, which would shift most risk to the contractor while retaining some control for the Council. A margin cap on charging fees has been included, although it was emphasised that providers could charge less if the market conditions allowed it. Benchmarking work suggested that the cap worked well and further details would emerge after the tendering process, but Members were assured that controls had been built in to keep costs reasonable.

- Expressed concern about the risk that the Council would take on, such as the cost of maintenance of the chargers and whether the income would be sufficient to ensure there would not be an overall loss. Members were informed that the Council aimed to minimise financial risk by ensuring contractors handled the installation, operation, and maintenance of chargers, while the fact that the £5.4m came from government funding meant there was no direct loss to the Council. The proposed model balanced contractor control with Council oversight and included both subsidised and commercial charge points to improve coverage, while offering potential future income, although exact figures would depend on the tender process.

- Highlighted the need to reduce street clutter on pavements and queried whether contractors would be able to use highways for the EV charging infrastructure. Members were informed that normal processes for works on the highway would be followed, such as protecting the asset, consulting and engaging with stakeholders and following any statutory requirements. The tender documents highlighted the significant pressure on road space across the county, while the design approval process, whether for chargers on the pavement or the highway itself, would require agreement from the Council and would need to align with relevant standards.

- Drew attention to the availability and accessibility of chargers, noting that cars would have to wait if another vehicle was already using a charger or if a non-electric vehicle was parked in the relevant space and blocking access to it. Members were informed that there were mechanisms to penalise users through the charging capacity if they overstayed a time period, while contractors would be incentivised to ensure turnover on sites and avoid people viewing chargers effectively as personal infrastructure.

- Highlighted the importance of future-proofing the work and queried whether the chargers would be able to potentially increase the number of outlets they provided, and also whether organisations, such as parish councils, could provide additional funding to increase the number of chargers in an installation. Members were assured that the scheme was being future-proofed as much as possible, particularly given that the bulk of the infrastructure would be underground, and it was noted that the tender documents specified flexibility to include multiple charging sockets on single chargers. It would be difficult to incorporate funding from additional sources to expand the scope of the project, as the government grant was fixed to specific terms, although such discussions with local communities were held regularly as part of other workstreams.

- Considered to what extent the recent announcement of a new pay-per-mile road tax for EVs, scheduled to start in April 2028, could affect the uptake of EVs and what impact it could have on the proposals. Members were assured that the work was necessary regardless of the new tax, particularly given the ban on the sale of new

petrol and diesel cars from 2030, and the inevitable subsequent increase in the number of EVs. While a full assessment of the new tax's impacts had not been carried out by the Council yet, it was emphasised that any such risks would be taken on by the contractor rather than the Council.

- Noted the significant interest in the cross-pavement charging trial for residential properties and queried how people could apply for it. Attention was drawn to the on-street electric vehicle cable channel trial page on the Council's website, which provided information on the trial and how to apply. It was agreed to advise all Members once a launch date had been confirmed. **Action required**

It was resolved unanimously to:

> Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Place and Sustainability, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, to award and execute a fifteen-year contract for the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure starting in 2026 and extension periods.

28. Highways Improvement Programme – Asset and Data Strategy

The Committee received a report presenting the Council's draft Asset Management Strategy, which included the draft Asset Data Strategy as an appendix. Further development of the strategy would take place before the final version being presented to the committee in Spring 2026 for approval.

While discussing the report, individual Members:

- Expressed concern about moving away from short-term repairs and the 'worst first' approach, observing that potholes remained a key issue for residents and affected the Council's reputation. Attention was drawn to survey data showing the high number of reported potholes, and Members stressed the importance of improving patching and queried how reactive repairs fed into strategic planning. It was emphasised that the asset management strategy maintained reactive maintenance alongside planned works and would include improvements in materials and methods to reduce recurrence. It was highlighted that 52,000 repairs had been completed against 16,500 reports in the previous year and attention was drawn to positive survey trends. Condition data and site visits informed capital prioritisation, with sites requiring frequent reactive repairs scoring higher to prevent repeat issues.

- Highlighted the significant number of soil-affected roads in parts of the County and the need to secure funding from the government to address the related problems, suggesting that the draft strategy understated the issue, the level of repair work required and the cost. Members also considered the impact on such roads when used for diversions but acknowledged the lack of practical alternatives in many situations. It was agreed to ensure the strategy included the correct number of soil-affected and clay-affected roads across the whole county. **Action required**

- Expressed concern that the lack of infrastructure, such as pavements or streetlights, could reduce the ranking of rural villages in the prioritisation process, despite the

already increased risk for active travel, particularly in the dark. Members were informed that the recent active travel hierarchy consultation sought to identify such circumstances, which would have scored more highly as a result with regard planned maintenance and capital investment.

- Clarified that grass and vegetation on visibility splays at road junctions were cut four times per year across the county, or even more frequently if on-site assessments considered it necessary. It was also suggested that the cyclical programme of cutting on Public Rights of Way could commence earlier than 1 May, as stated in the draft strategy, in order to align with 'No Mow May'.

- Clarified that road studs did not include solar studs on pathways and requested information on any level of maintenance such solar studs received. **Action required**

- Established that although the strategy included a general section that included miscellaneous items of street furniture, it did not include wands.

- Requested further information on the cyclical gully clearing process, suggesting lists should be available to local Members, and querying whether data would be collected to prioritise gullies that frequently block. Members were informed that improved data and mapping would enable this, with a risk-based approach planned. The gully programme currently included a 21-day target for clearing reported blockages, whereas there was previously no timeline. Data collection was underway and options for managing this were being explored and once complete, silt levels would be monitored to identify gullies requiring more frequent maintenance.

- Highlighted the importance of stakeholder engagement and keeping local communities informed of causes and nature of any works carried out on highways.

It was resolved unanimously to:

a) Review and provide feedback on the Draft Asset Management Strategy and Asset Data Strategy; and

b) Note the thematic approaches, as summarised in paragraphs 3.5 - 3.6 of the report and as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, regarding how the Council's different highway assets will be managed in the future.

29. Prioritisation of the Highways Capital Programme

The Committee received a report which proposed the processes by which planned highway capital maintenance and improvement work would be prioritised for inclusion and delivery in the capital programme from the 2026/27 programme onwards.

While discussing the report, individual Members:

- Sought clarification on whether schemes that were scheduled to be delivered in future years would be re-ranked in each subsequent year's prioritisation process,

potentially leading to a continuous delay to their delivery. Members were informed that the Council was looking to implement an indicative schedule of works for future years to be produced alongside the programme of works for the current year, to ensure that such projects were delivered in line with their original scheduled timeframe, subject to unexpected delays.

- Established that high streets were included in the 'Access to local amenities / site specific issues' scoring categories in the proposed prioritisation criteria set out in Appendix 2 of the report.

- Confirmed that colleges would still be ranked highly in the prioritisation process despite not having young children attending.

- Clarified that pavement was a technical word for road in maintenance terms, and it was suggested that an alternative word could be used to avoid potential confusion.

It was resolved unanimously to:

a) Approve the processes and scoring systems for the prioritisation of planned capital maintenance schemes from the 26/27 financial year onwards, as set out in this report and Appendices 1 to 4; and

b) Delegate Authority to the Executive Director of Place and Sustainability, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, to make changes to the scoring criteria as set out in the appendices to this report.

30. Vision Zero and the Council's Management of its Duties in Relation to Road Safety

The Committee was informed that the published report was incomplete and would be reviewed and republished at a future meeting.

It was proposed by the Chair, seconded by the Vice-Chair, and agreed unanimously to withdraw the motion. It was confirmed that the public questions that had been submitted could be asked when the report was presented at a future meeting.

31. Finance Monitoring Report – October 2025

The Committee received the Finance Monitoring Report to the end of October 2025 for the Place and Sustainability directorate, which reported a total forecast revenue year-end underspend of £2.68m and a forecast underspend of £6.121m on Highways and Transport capital schemes.

While discussing the report, individual Members:

- Requested further information on the £717k pressure that was forecast for Parking Enforcement. Members were informed that the Council was not receiving the level of anticipated income through parking enforcement, which included sources such as Resident Parking Schemes, Pay and Display bays and bus lane infractions. The pressure was mitigated by reserves from previous years when income had exceeded anticipated levels, but it was acknowledged that the issue needed to be addressed through a review of such charges.

- Welcomed that the previously forecast pressure on street lighting had been turned into a forecast £33k underspend but expressed concern that issues that had been raised about the impact of LED bulbs on the surrounding area could lead to a future pressure if a significant level of retrospective work became necessary. Members were informed that engagement with residents and local communities demonstrated that while some concerns had been raised about the impact of the installation of LED bulbs, there had also been positive feedback. It was noted that the capital budget included the ability to respond in such circumstances and a provision for additional lighting when required.

It was resolved unanimously to:

Review and comment on the report.

32. Agenda Plan and Appointments

It was resolved to:

a) Note the committee's agenda plan attached at Appendix 1 to this report;

b) Appoint:

(i) Councillor Alex Beckett to the A47 Alliance Steering Group;

(ii) Councillor Colin Galbraith to the Fenland Association for Community Transport (FACT) Board; and

(iii) Councillors Anna Bradnam and Peter Fane to the Local Access Forum.

Chair
20 January 2025

Appendix 1

Save Access Across the Busway for People and Nature

Cambridgeshire County Council is proposing a safety fence along the entire 25km guided busway. It has indicated that it will only allow a limited number of official crossing points. Consequently all other existing well used paths that cross the busway will be closed off if these plans are not changed. Stop the County Council blocking our footpaths that cross the guided busway!

Histon and Impington will be split in half, disconnecting us either from the woodland or the orchard, both planted by our community, for the community and limiting access from one side of each village to the other and the connections to footpaths and villages beyond.

There are two informal crossing points in Histon between the jam factory and St Audrey's crossing and at least 3 commonly used crossing points in Impington between the B1049 and A14 bridge. There are other desire lines further north along the busway

In a county where we have access to just 0.4% of the land, further restricting access to nature is a threat to our mental and physical health.

If barriers must be installed it is also crucial that they are designed to allow safe passage to the rich ecosystem that has developed along this route. This is not purely an environmental issue, but a moral obligation to protect the biodiversity we cherish and live alongside.

We the undersigned call on the County Council to ensure that the proposed busway safety fencing does not block existing footpaths that cross the busway and which are well used by people and animals

[2443 signatures]