

Highways and Transport Committee: Minutes

Date: 30 April 2024

Time: 10.00a.m. to 12.00noon

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

Present: Councillors Beckett (Chair), Shailer (Vice-Chair), Daunton, French, Gardener, Goodliffe, Gough, Hay, Hunt, S King, Nethsingha, Prentice, Sharp, Slatter and Whelan

210. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies were received from Councillors Bird, Coutts, Dupré and McDonald.

Councillor S King declared a non-statutory disclosable interest as a member of the Wisbech Local Access Forum.

211. Minutes – 5 March 2024 and Action Log

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2024, which included a slight amendment to the published draft relating to the Highways Maintenance Capital Programme, were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair. In agreeing the minutes, Members raised the need to include the following in the action log:

Minute 203, Highways Maintenance Capital Programme

- the need for follow up action with Town and Parish Councils in order to build confidence in value for money. The Executive Director: Place and Sustainability reported that this action was being progressed and that Members would receive invites soon to review the prioritisation of the capital programme.
- the need for more information on the funding allocated to East Cambridgeshire including whether discussion had taken place on the movement of funds with Local Members, and a request for the figures for 2023/2024 to provide a comparison. The Executive Director: Place and Sustainability agreed to provide a written response to the Local Member for Soham South and Haddenham.

In noting the action log, Members raised the following:

- the need to have specific dates or timeframes for actions instead of “ongoing” or “to be organised”.
- the need to include a report to committee on the acquisition of the new reporting system. The Assistant Director: Highways Maintenance agreed to provide a briefing on the procurement of the new Asset Management System for Highways, and the Chair reported that he would discuss this possible agenda item with Spokes.

212. Petitions and Public Questions

The Committee received a 66-signature petition from Ms Katie Betts asking for the footpath from Chettisham Level Crossing to Willow Wood Estate be restored to its former width so pedestrians and those with pushchairs and wheelchairs could travel safely alongside the Lynn Road where the speed limit was 40mph. The pathway had become narrower because of the ingress of earth and weeds and in places was only 60 to 65cms wide. The petition had the support of the Local Member and MP.

The Committee also received a 340 (260 within a 150 mile radius with the majority from Cambourne and Cambridge) signature petition from Mr Mark Seaden calling for the scrapping of 20mph zones on most roads in Cambourne. On the main roads through Cambourne the 20mph limit was very slow but it was acknowledged that 20mph limits might be more appropriate on the side roads or outside schools. A 20mph limit was inappropriate for Lancaster Gate which had a footpath set well back from the road. There were also sufficient bends in the roads to keep motorists to the current 30mph limit in most places. Mr Seaden highlighted that long studies had produced little evidence that 20mph zones had an impact at all on accidents or that there was widespread compliance with such measures.

The Chair thanked both petitioners and confirmed that a full written response would be sent to them with 10 working days of the meeting and published on the Council's website.

The Chair invited Mr John Morris, Leader of Hunts Walking and Cycling Group, to address the meeting in relation to road safety. He informed Members of the recent death of road safety campaigner Mike Gough who was killed on 16 March 2024 when his bicycle was struck by a van in Huntingdon. The Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough had stated that Mike would not be forgotten and his death would be used to influence both himself and other partners to get to a better place in terms of road safety in the area. Mike was founder member of the Hunts Walking and Cycling Group and an enthusiastic advocate for the benefits of cycling, for active travel, and for safe spaces on roads and pavements. Following the death of Denise Hinds on the A1123, Mike had called for action to prevent further deaths. Mr Morris asked how many more vulnerable road users would be killed or seriously injured on roads in Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire before significant improvements to cycling and walking infrastructure.

The Interim Assistant Director: Transport Strategy and Network Management expressed his condolences, on behalf of the Council, to Mike Gough's family, friends and members of the cycling community. It was noted that many of the barriers on the Council's network had been in place a long time. There were pros and cons associated with their use which varied on a location basis. Barriers were considered and assessed as part of a scheme design process; there was no blanket policy regarding their use. The Council supported a full and inclusive policy on active travel. There would be a review if the Council was made aware of any infrastructure which did not support such policies. It was acknowledged that the Active Travel Strategy was at odds with many of the barriers installed throughout the county. Where appropriate the Council should align itself with the guidance in Local Transport Note 120 on the use of access controls. In

conclusion, officers offered to meet with the Hunts Walking and Cycling Group to discuss locations of concern.

213. Department for Transport Approved Automatic Number Plate Recognition Traffic Enforcement Camera Procurement

The Committee received a report that sought the approval for the commencement of the procurement of Department for Transport (DfT) approved Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) traffic enforcement cameras. The use of ANPR enforcement cameras was a key pillar in the Council's toolkit to enforce parking regulations in Cambridgeshire. Attention was drawn to the background to the current contract. Parking services was looking to procure a new service to continue the maintenance of the existing inventory, along with the ability to procure further devices to be deployed at new sites, or to replace current aging inventory which had come to the end of its lifespan. A competition would therefore be undertaken using the Crown Commercial Services Framework. The value would exceed £500k if the Council opted for a four year term contract.

Individual Members noted the following responses to points raised:

- the contract would cover the expansion of ANPR which was already occurring in South Cambridgeshire.
- a link detailing the location of ANPR cameras would be sent to the Committee.
Action Required.
- DfT approved devices were expensive and the long life of the seven year contract was essentially for maintenance. Members were informed that cameras introduced in bus lanes in 2014 were still running. The Council could choose whether to purchase cameras if necessary, but needed the maintenance option to maintain them.
- the primary concept of the life of the cameras was approximately five years so it was very pleasing that some had substantially exceeded this timeframe, which had saved the Council a considerable amount of money. The proposed contract would enable the Council to keep cameras running as long as possible.
- ANPR had been introduced in Cambridge to fully support public transport, which had seen a big improvement. The drop in penalty charges was welcomed, as it showed a positive side of enforcement, and improved the environment for walkers, cyclists and motorists.
- Civil Enforcement Officers had to visually view the contravention recorded by ANPR cameras in order to issue tickets.
- the ringfenced Parking Account was substantial as it also included on street charges. ANPR cameras were significantly cheaper than putting Civil Enforcement Officers on the street. Whilst there had been a sizeable drop in ANPR penalty notices, there would be sufficient numbers to cover the cost of the cameras.

- there was a maintenance charge in the contract which covered the back office system.

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

- concern that the Council was committing this administration and two future administrations to a long contract. The Chair acknowledged the ability to be flexible as and when needed.
- questioned whether restricting motorists would boost the economy of Cambridgeshire.
- highlighted the need for more financial information in the report.
- highlighted the fact that Fenland District Council had been trying to introduce Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) since 2019, and invited the Chair and Vice-Chair to view the situation so that it could be progressed. The Chair agreed that either the Chair or the Vice-Chair would meet with the Local Member for March North and Waldersey in Fenland. Action Required.
- acknowledged that parking enforcement was also in the interest of the motorist as it freed up the carriageway.

It was resolved to:

- a) Authorise Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) to commence the procurement of DfT approved ANPR traffic enforcement cameras for a term of up to 7 years, through the Crown Commercial Services Framework; and
- b) Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Place and Sustainability in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee to award and execute a contract for the provision of ANPR enforcement cameras starting in July 2024 and extension periods.

214. Parking Enforcement and Permits System Procurement

The Committee received a report seeking authority for the procurement of a Parking Information Technology System, which was a key pillar in the Council's toolkit to enforce parking regulations in Cambridgeshire. Attention was drawn to the background to the current contract. A key aim of the procurement was to ensure that the Council had an effective system which could manage the introduction of Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 and allow it to develop processes for environmental charging. A competition would be undertaken using Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation Framework. The total cost of the contract would exceed £500k.

Individual Members noted the following responses to points raised:

- the procurement would include options to extend CPE for any other authority who wanted to join and any other eventualities. The current contract covered all areas

with CPE including South Cambridgeshire. Huntingdonshire District Council was looking to expand its own system and processes to operate CPE independently.

- the legislation regarding the operation of ANPR cameras was very prescriptive and could only be applied for bus lane or bus gate contraventions purely against the motor vehicle. The Council did engage with the police and could provide footage but there was no contravention it could put on the busway. ANPR cameras could be used but not through the noticing system. The Chair reported that there was an item on the agenda plan for CCTV on the busway.
- Section 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 enabled local authorities to enforce with cameras banned turns, no entries and box junctions and issue penalty charge notices.
- the review of contraventions identified by ANPR cameras would ensure motorists moving out the way of emergency vehicles would not receive a penalty charge. The Chair thanked the Civil Parking Enforcement Officers and the Parking Services Team who undertook a difficult and challenging job.

Individual Members also raised the following point in relation to the report:

- expressed concern that the expense of upgrading signage was preventing Fenland District Council from introducing CPE. It was therefore queried what could be done to make it more feasible for the District Council to achieve its aim. The Chair acknowledged the importance of this issue but it did not directly relate to the report.

It was resolved to:

- a) Authorise the procurement of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) services and a Parking Permit System for a term of two years from June 2025 with an option to extend for further two years, through the Eastern Shire Purchasing Organisation; and
- b) Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Place and Sustainability in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee to award and execute a contract for the provision of a Parking Information IT system and any extension periods.

215. Corporate Performance Report

Members considered a report providing an update on the performance monitoring information for the 2023/24 quarter 3 period, to 31st December 2023. It was noted that the Service was reviewing its Performance Management Framework to get a clearer picture for transport matters. Members also noted updates for indicators currently in development, which included cycling and walking, to be reported to the July meeting. Attention was drawn to progress made since the last meeting relating to the following indicators: 239: Highways and Transport Complaints; and 247: Road Cluster Site Analysis. The report also confirmed that 65,219 potholes had been filled over the year leaving 6,908 outstanding. The Service had inspected and cleaned more gullies and identified 1,855 gullies not previously plotted on the system. 91% of safety inspections

of the highways had been completed on time. The Service was working proactively to reduce the number staffing vacancies which currently stood at 40. The number of people killed or seriously injured remained a significant issue and a priority at 318, which was slightly above the target.

Individual Members noted the following responses to points raised:

- the Service inspected all gullies every two years, and used the information collected and entered on Carbon Tech to target areas with known flood issues or focus on gullies which were regularly full. Information detailing where and when gullies were to be inspected and cleaned would be communicated to Local Members and local communities. If gullies were broken or needed substantial repairs, they would be added to a list, which was prioritised and then addressed. The Chair acknowledged that a lot of work had been carried out to identify the scale of maintenance needed but more was still required.
- cyclic emptying of gullies took place on an area by area basis. The Assistant Director: Highways Maintenance agreed to provide a briefing to explain the cyclic regime and the communication process, with a list of gullies by area. Action Required.
- it had not been possible to survey all roads in relation to Indicator 39 as access had been blocked or restricted or the image was not of sufficient quality for survey purposes.
- the new Asset Management System available to Members and the public would show where all defects were located and when they were scheduled for repair. A requirement of the new system was understanding the nature of the repair, the time and the quality.
- the drainage list would be co-designed beyond explanatory text in order to provide a more valuable document.
- acknowledged that the total number of potholes did not reflect the quality of the repairs. The Service was moving to more planned maintenance in order to make the right intervention. The Chair highlighted the amount of work taking place in relation to the quality of repairs in order to achieve value for money.
- the vacancies in Highways Maintenance were due to staff turnover and the Service was recruiting constantly to those roles; a number of new officers were scheduled to start soon. It was important to note that the Service was not seeing an increase in vacancies overall. The Executive Director: Place and Sustainability added that from a management perspective he had a more rounded view of the workforce which included staff turnover, exit interviews and sickness rates that could be reflected in this indicator.
- acknowledged the need to broaden out Indicator 241 Safety of the existing network for non-motorised users (e.g. what proportion of the built-up network has 20mph or segregated cycleways), as it was not just about the number of 20mph limits.

- there was engagement with Parish Councils in relation to Indicator 244 Customer Satisfaction Surveys for Key Contracts but the Service needed to consider how it could attract a better response.
- the Service could provide an operational update as part of a strategic indicator on the vacancy rate for Local Highways Officers (LHO). Enhancements had been made to communicate LHO provision to Members, as part of the patch list. The Service was also looking at how to best deploy resources which maximised resilience and delivery.
- the Service was monitoring and recording the data in relation to a number of indicators with a “contextual” target. The Committee would then be asked in the future whether it wanted to set a target linked to the Council’s ambitions in relation to these indicators. The Chair highlighted the need for an indicator relating to mode share rather than just the growth in cycling or walking.
- Indicators 43a and 43b relating to killed or seriously injured casualties had been moved from Red to Amber because of a change in target methodology aligning the targets with the Vision Zero Partnership. It was acknowledged that road safety would always be red whilst there were incidents on the road network but an indicator was needed to show trends in incidents and the impact of Council interventions.
- the remarking of lines had previously been carried out in a reactive way. The additional investment of £1.5m would improve road markings and signing particularly mandatory roads markings. Members would be kept updated as the work was carried out.
- data was available on collisions involving legal e-scooters but it was acknowledged that there was a need to consider how other collisions with e-bikes were reported.
- the Service did not have a blanket approach to working from home, as for some it was better to be physically co-located. Each Team had a Team Charter which was reviewed regularly. Less members of staff were actually working from home but it depended on the task and specific role. There were processes to ensure the safety and productivity of staff working at home.

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

- welcomed discussion of the new Performance Management Framework in July as some of the data went back to 2021.
- queried whether there was a possibility of identifying from Indicators 43a and 43b fatalities/casualties some form of attribution to areas where safety measures could have been improved or defects. It would then clearly demonstrate how the Service was performing. The Service Director: Highways and Transport agreed to reflect with road safety colleagues on appropriate indicators to cover this point. Action Required.
- highlighted the need to consider what the Council could do in relation Indicators 43a and 43b. There were gradual patterns which could be investigated and addressed

holistically. For example, the number of accidents involving sixth formers had reduced because of the cost of driving. However, there had been increases in collisions involving other categories such as older drivers, delivery vans and electric vehicles. It was therefore not just about the structure of the highway but also working with Public Health, talking to delivery companies, manufacturers of electric scooters and the NHS. The Interim Service Director: Highways reported that this work was undertaken by the Vision Zero Partnership. The Chair highlighted the work of the International Road Assessment Programme in predicting accidents to prevent collisions, and suggested the possibility of bringing a report to a future meeting. Action Required.

- highlighted the need to have an indicator detailing how many times the same pothole had been repaired.
- highlighted the need to repaint the zebra crossing in March.

It was resolved unanimously to note performance information.

216. Highways and Transport Policy and Service Committee Agenda Plan

The Committee received the Highways and Transport Agenda Plan with the addition of the Huntingdon 20mph scheme to the July meeting.

The Local Member for Trumpington asked to see a copy of the draft report on the Southern Busway widening. Action Required.

It was resolved unanimously to note the agenda plan.

Chair