

ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Thursday 11th January 2018

Time: 10.00 a.m. to 10.40 a.m.

Present: Councillors: D Adey, D Ambrose-Smith, I Bates (Chairman),
L Harford (substituting for Cllr Fuller) N Kavanagh, S Tierney, J Williams
and T Wotherspoon (Vice Chairman).

Apologies: D Connor, R Fuller and D Giles

72. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

73. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th December 2017 were agreed as a correct record.

74. MINUTE ACTION LOG

The following updates since the agenda publication were reported:

Minute 16 - Bikeability Cycle Training – there was no update to report from that included in the report.

22nd September Committee Minute 40 land North of Cherry Hinton –request for a new developments seminar

Democratic Services drew the Committee's attention to the seminar held on 2nd October on the County's role in Growth and Development with the Committee asked to consider whether those who attended considered it had covered the main issues raised by one Councillor or whether officers still needed to organise a further seminar. It was clarified that the specific points raised in the original request had not been covered, and therefore it was suggested that it would be appropriate to schedule a seminar on new developments later in the year.

There was also a request to hold a future seminar to clarify the restrictions on using 106 monies.

The Chairman and Vice Chairman would consider the additional seminar requests in discussion with officers outside of the meeting.

Minute 42 Request to Review Performance Indicator – Out of Work Benefit Claims
– the indicator has been reviewed and updated to include the information about the actual proportion of people claiming out of work benefits in both the most and less

deprived areas, as well as the gap. The updated version was included in Appendix 7 of the Finance and Performance Report (Item 7 on the agenda).

Minute 57 - St Neots Master Plan queries – It was highlighted in a briefing note to the Committee that a “Steering Group” to own the Masterplan had now been established with Huntingdonshire District Council being the lead delivery partner and that currently the Chairman of the Group had proposed that Councillor Ian Gardener be invited to sit on the Group as the County Council representative. The Chairman explained that he would be discussing this further with officers outside of the meeting (as this was an appropriate appointment to be made by the Committee or through the delegation already in place to him and the Vice Chairman and the Executive Director on outside bodies’ appointments within the remit of the Committee).

Minute 63 - Integrated Transport Block Funding – allocations - Air Quality - An e-mail was sent to the Committee on 10th January as a part response providing details of the allocation process. (This is included as Appendix 1 to the minutes).

The Minutes Action Log as updated at the meeting was noted.

75. PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No petitions or public questions were received.

76. PARK AND RIDE AND GUIDED BUSWAY GROUND MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

In 2015 the Park & Ride and Guided Busway grounds maintenance contract was re-tendered in partnership with South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) to achieve economies of scale and simplify the pre-existing contract. As a result, a single contractor was procured for a 3 year term which led to overall savings for the Park & Ride/Busway budget of 6%. As it was due for renewal from October 2018, the report sought approval to commence a procurement process to secure a contract to cover two distinct operations; the Park & Ride/Guided Busway and SCDC Housing and grounds maintenance to be managed separately for a period of five years. It was hoped this increase in contract length would minimise inflationary pressure on budgets and encourage contractors to offer greater savings through investment in more efficient specialist equipment such as tractor and flail type machinery to speed up certain aspects of grounds maintenance currently undertaken (especially along the Busway).

In discussion an issue raised for officer consideration for the new contract specification highlighted by the Council’s Cycling Champion was requests he had received from cyclists that there should be more regular cuts to vegetation running alongside the Busway. The suggestion was that this should be as part of a planned proactive programme rather than reacting to notifications of areas which had particular issues with brambles etc.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Agree the re-procurement of the Park and Ride / Guided Busway Grounds Maintenance contract;

- b) Delegate authority to award the contract to the Executive Director in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee.
- c) Agree that the contract should be for a minimum of 5 years commencing on 5th October 2018.

77. CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL RESPONSE TO THE HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL; DRAFT LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) were undertaking a consultation exercise on their draft Local Transport Plan. The report provided a proposed draft response for comment and endorsement as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

It was highlighted that:

- North east Hertfordshire and South west Cambridgeshire share a common boundary in the vicinity of Royston with significant travel between the two counties along the A505, A10 and A1198 corridors. The town of Royston lies in close proximity to the southern boundary of Cambridgeshire with many surrounding South Cambridgeshire villages using it as their nearest local centre for many essential services as detailed in the report.
- The two counties also share a common interest in the improvement of national and major interurban railway lines as detailed in the report and therefore HCC's transport proposals could potentially have a large impact on the transport network in Cambridgeshire.

The County Council response broadly supported the themes, objectives and principles set out in Hertfordshire's draft Local Transport Plan and:

- Welcomed a greater focus on the important transport and service links between Royston and South Cambridgeshire villages in the border area.
- Supported the continued community transport provision in Royston.
- Recommended that Hertfordshire be mindful of the wider catchment area for primary care services delivered by the three Royston General Practitioner practices
- Supported Royston as a Cycle Infrastructure Improvement Town.
- Welcomed the continued partnership working on the Royston to Cambridge cycleway scheme,
- Would like to see the strategic transport evidence that had been produced to demonstrate the impact of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan within Cambridgeshire.
- Would like to see options at the A505 / Station Road junction at Odsey investigated to address safety concerns.
- Drew attention to the proposed Cambridgeshire funded A505 to A11 Royston to Granta Park Strategic Transport Study and invited HCC's involvement in this study.

In the subsequent debate issues raised included:

- Asking whether HCC were as part of their transport plans taking into account the large scale employment growth proposed cross border in in Cambridgeshire and its impact on likely travel from their county into Cambridgeshire, especially for those seeking employment e.g. the bio-medical campus at the Addenbrooke's Hospital site. In response the Chairman indicated that he had met up with this opposite number from HCC before Christmas and gave his assurance that they were very aware of the various new business / science / medical park developments.
- The Vice Chairman highlighting his support for the proposal for a cycle bridge over the A505.

It was unanimously resolved to:

Endorse the response to the Hertfordshire Draft Local Transport Plan as set out in Appendix 1 to the Officer's report.

78. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – NOVEMBER 2017

Economy and Environment Committee received the latest Finance and Performance Report for the period to the end of November 2017 to enable them to both note and comment on the projected financial and performance outturn position.

The main issues highlighted were:

Revenue: There were no material changes to that at the end of October with at this stage of the year ETE was forecasting an overspend of £6k at year end.

Capital; The forecast spend on Huntingdon – West of Town Centre Link Road for 2017-18 had slipped by £845k given the land cost claims were unlikely to be resolved until the new financial year. ‘

Performance: on the Twelve performance indicators: one was currently showing as red (the average journey time per mile during the morning peak on the most congested routes) three were showing as amber, and eight green. At year-end the current forecast was that no performance indicators would be red, five would be amber and seven green.

In discussion:

- One Member highlighted that national published statistics on travel by bus indicated that nationally they were the lowest for 10 years which highlighted that Cambridgeshire was bucking the national trend.
- There was discussion regarding whether the continued increase in passengers on the Guided Busway masked decreases in passenger numbers on other bus routes. This was certainly the case in rural areas where many routes had been discontinued and was also reflected in the fall in the number of concessionary bus fares. **The Chairman undertook to provide details for the Committee** of a recent satisfaction survey into guided bus patronage which amongst its findings had

highlighted that nearly half of those who travelled on it had indicated that they would have travelled by car if it had not been available.

- In respect of the review of contracted bus services and community transport provision previously being undertaken by this Council the Chairman wished to place on record that this study had now been taken over by the Combined Authority. As a follow up question one member asked what the timescale would now be as the study (agreed at the August 2017 Committee) had originally a target date to report back within 9 months. In response it was indicated that while an outline bid for the study had been prepared the work had not yet been commissioned and therefore in that it was to be a six month study a report back on it was now not expected until at least September. The County Council and Peterborough City Council had been asked to continue to subsidise those bus services previously agreed for 2018-19 and was therefore currently business as usual for the next year.
- In respect of page 59 under the heading 'Cambridge Cycling Infrastructure' the County Council Cycling Champion drew attention to the text explaining the underspend in the programme of section 106 funded cycling projects in Cambridge where funding was generally not time limited and underspends were rolled in the next year. His concern was the next part of the text reading "The delivery team's priority had been to complete projects that have some time limited funding associated with them such as the DFT 'Cycle City Ambition' funded schemes and St Neots Northern foot and cycle bridge as well as to progress some of the higher profile projects such as the Abbey Chesterton bridge". He asked if the Committee could be given an update on the progress on cycle projects and made reference to a meeting he had attended the previous evening where there was concerns raised regarding the Chisholm Trail and issues with perceived threats to local wildlife. His concern was that delays could result in loss of funding on some time limited projects.
- A question was raised regarding the impact of using underspends in other budgets to help offset the waste pressure in the current financial year and whether this would have a detrimental impact for the Transport Development Plan. In response the Executive Director clarified that money was not being taken away from the Highways budget but that he had a duty to look at the whole budget and that where there had been unexpected underspend / gains, they needed to be used initially to help any overspend areas in order to balance the Directorate budget. The intention was that the underspends identified as set out in the paragraph 2.2.1 would only be used for the current year.
- In response to another Member question it was confirmed that there was nothing to stop town / parish councils subsidising local bus services and in fact it was the case that some already were. In response to this, another Member suggested that increased co-operation from district and parish councils would be enhanced from specifying that some section 106 monies should be identified to support community transport.

Having reviewed and commented on the report, it was unanimously resolved:

- a) To note the report.

- b) To receive an update outside of the meeting on progress on time limited cycle projects such as the Department for Transport Cycle City Ambition funded Schemes and any threats to funding. **Action: Mike Davies**

79. ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE TRAINING PLAN

The current Training Plan was as set out with the additional clarification that the Combined Authority training seminar had been pushed back to March and would be a training seminar for all members of the Council not just E and E Committee and would be organised by them, although the date had not as yet been confirmed.

In seeking Members views on whether they wished any additional seminars to be added to the current programme the Cycling Champion highlighted that he had previously raised with lead officers the possibility of receiving a seminar topic on the bus services bill and the constraints and pressures on bus companies providing services. The Chairman suggested this would be more appropriate following the review outcomes report from the Combined Authority. The Vice Chairman recommended to the Committee MP Daniel Ziechner's blog which provided excellent information on the bus bill.

It was resolved;

- a) To note the Training Plan.
- b) To add as a future seminar, to be held after the report back on the Combined Authority review of supported bus services, explaining the economies and constraints of running a commercial bus service.

80. ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE FORWARD AGENDA PLAN

Having received the forward agenda plans as set out in the agenda it was resolved to note the agenda plan with the following changes:

Rescheduling the Ely Bypass Costs report from 8th March to 12th April Committee.

The following change of title for reports to the February Committee meeting:

- Report currently titled 'Ely-Cambridge Transport Study – report recommendations and proposed next steps' changed to 'Recommendations From The Ely-Cambridge Transport Study'
- 'Ely North Junction Level Crossings' changed to 'Queen Adelaide Traffic Study'
- 'Transport Scheme Development Prioritisation Process' shortened to 'Transport Scheme Development'

81. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING 10 A.M. THURSDAY 8th FEBRUARY 2018

Chairman: 8th February 2018

Dear Economy and Environment Committee Members and Substitutes

During the discussion on the Integrated Transport Block Funding Allocation Proposals report considered at the December Economy and Environment Committee with specific reference to the Air Quality Monitoring Allocation, there was a request for officers to find out both how the money was distributed and also how much those district councils receiving funding, contributed themselves and to provide this information outside of the meeting.

Having consulted with the District Councils the lead officers are able to provide the following update:

The Air Quality (AQ) 'monitoring' budget of £23k has remained at this level for a number of years. This budget is labelled as for AQ monitoring, but is actually used for contributions towards small scale AQ initiatives (monitoring being a common initiative, as this fits within the relatively small budget). All the Districts have their own AQ budgets, and this particular budget is used to help them deliver smaller scale local initiatives that their own budget may not stretch to. Often, the Local Transport Plan ITB money is used as a contribution towards a scheme or initiative, rather than paying for all of it.

The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Pollution Group meet quarterly and this includes officers from the County Council and all the Districts (plus Peterborough City Council). This group allocate funding from this £23k budget between them, based on that year's priorities. If one or two of the Districts have a number of smaller projects upcoming, they may get priority over another District with less of a requirement for the funding that year (this is then evened up during the next cycle of funding). This decision is usually made at the 'years end' meeting in March/April.

In terms of the actual figures for who has been allocated what amount and how much the Districts have contributed themselves, we have requested that information and will feedback to Members in due course.

If you have any further queries please contact:

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Kind regards

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