

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT POLICY AND SERVICE COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 16th June 2020

Time: 10:00am – 12.50pm

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

Apologies: Councillor Lynda Harford (Councillor Jan French substituting).

1. NOTIFICATION OF CHAIRMAN/WOMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN/WOMAN

It was resolved to note the appointment of Councillor Bates as Chairman and Councillor Howell as Vice-Chairman for the municipal year.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies were received from Councillor Lynda Harford. Councillor Jan French attended as substitute.

Councillor Amanda Taylor declared a personal interested in agenda item 7, COVID-19 Temporary Cycling Proposals as she was a member of the Cambridge Bus User Group, the Cambridge Cycling Campaign and her husband was employed as a driver.

3. UPDATE ON MINUTES ACTION LOG FROM DISESTABLISHED COMMITTEES

A Member queried when a report would be presented to the Committee regarding Fendon Road roundabout. Officers confirmed that it was intended for a report to be presented at the next meeting of the Highways and Transport Committee.

The action log was noted.

4. PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Committee received two petitions and a public question, the responses to which are appended to these minutes. The Chairman invited Mrs Claire Coulson, Head-Teacher at Barton Church of England Primary School to introduce her petition regarding a request for a zebra or pelican crossing on New Road outside of the school.

Mrs Barton, drew attention to the safety of New Road and the levels of traffic which was ever increasing. The results of a recent traffic count showed 100 cars passing in 10 minutes making the road difficult to cross. Many of the children attending the school were from outside of Barton and there had been several

near misses. There were also many secondary school children that needed to cross the road.

In response to a Member question, Mrs Coulson advised that ideally a crossing would be located either outside the school pedestrian gate or by the nearby local shop as many elderly residents crossed the road there.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Coulson for the petition and suggested she consider contacting her local Member to discuss a Local Highways Initiative (LHI) bid. The Chairman advised that she would receive a written response to the petition within 10 working days of the Committee. Thanks were also given to Mrs Coulson and her staff for their work during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Chairman invited the Democratic Services Officer to introduce the second petition requesting improvements on the guided busway cycle pathway to prevent closures due to flooding between St Ives and Cambridge.

Ms Rosalind Lund, representing Arbury Road East Residents Association was invited by the Chairman to ask her public question regarding installation of a modal filter on the narrow stretch of Arbury Road East.

Ms Lund drew attention to the lockdown enforced as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic and how traffic had gradually returned over the course of the last 4 weeks. The 20mph speed limit was frequently broken and the pavements along the section of Arbury Road where she lived were narrow with many cars parked on the pavements and there was no safe space for walking or cycling. Residents were especially worried for the safety of children going to and from schools on Arbury Road when they reopen, because most children currently cycled on the pavements as it was not safe on the road. With the introduction of safe social distancing necessitated by Covid19, it was physically not possible within this narrow stretch of Arbury Road with no cycle lanes to do so. The Secretary of State for Transport had encouraged councils to use measures such as modal filters to create low traffic neighbourhoods. Such a proposal would make the road safe for people to both walk and cycle on their essential journeys. Residents therefore asked that a modal filter be implemented on the narrow stretch of Arbury Road to protect all people in the community. Ms Lund also requested that the Council undertook monitoring of air pollution at school sites, citing a report in a national newspaper linking air pollution and mortality rates from COVID-19.

In response the Service Director – Highways and Transport commented that the work set out within agenda item 7, COVID-19 Temporary Cycling Proposals represented the first tranche of proposals of what would be a much larger programme of work. Arbury Road was an area that had been considered and with particular regard to air pollution, monitoring was undertaken by partners and will inform a scheme in the area and be used to monitor its effectiveness.

Local Member Councillor Ian Manning, commented that there had been large number of meetings with local residents. There were a number of complexities such as the Haydenfield retirement complex and existing residents parking schemes which would impacted and expressed optimism that a successful scheme could be taken forward.

5. A10/ A142 ROUNDABOUT / LANCASTER WAY ROUNDABOUT IMPROVEMENTS

The Committee received a report that sought approval to construct the A10/A142 roundabout and commence consultation on the A142/Lancaster Way roundabout. The Chairman invited Mr Matthew Danish, representing CamCyle and the Ely Cycling Campaign to address the Committee. Mr Danish began by thanking officers and Councillors for the work that had been undertaken with regard to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic with the series of experimental schemes set out within agenda item 7, COVID-19 Temporary Cycling Proposals.

Mr Danish noted that the development of the A142/A10 (BP) roundabout was at a very late stage, however, the design was seriously flawed. The roundabout was one of the major barriers in the cycle route between Witchford and Ely, and the proposed changes would make the crossing more dangerous. Mr Danish expressed concern regarding the robustness of the road safety audits and equality impact assessments conducted on this design. The proposed design forced people to dash across multiple lanes of high-speed motor traffic exiting from the roundabout. The design also contravened requirements set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges which requires the crossing be signal controlled or grade-separated.

Mr Danish highlighted the rapidly changing transport priorities and the need to reconsider prior schemes now that the Department for Transport required councils to reallocate road space in favour of walking and cycling. The report proposed a dangerous roundabout design that would remove an existing cycle route between Witchford and Ely.

In conclusion Mr Danish, requested that the recommendation be deferred until such time that the crossing design could be made safe for people of all ages and abilities.

The Chairman invited local Member Councillor Bill Hunt to address the Committee. Councillor Hunt speaking in support of the scheme, highlighted the overarching need for the improvements and the support it had received from local business and Councillors. The report presented an opportunity to move the scheme forward and ensure its completion by Christmas. Councillor Hunt drew attention to the improvements to cycling infrastructure that had been undertaken in the area. However, there were limits to the amount of available funding and resources had to be allocated equitably to the benefit of all residents.

In response to a Member question Councillor Hunt, was unable to confirm the number of cyclist that try to navigate the BP roundabout. Councillor Hunt commented that crossing the A10 could be made safer through the construction of a bridge, however would be too expensive.

Officers explained that when the Ely Southern By-Pass opened there was a surge of traffic on the A142. However since the completion of the A14 a slight reduction in traffic was anticipated.

Councillor Anna Bailey was invited by the Chairman as local Member to address the Committee. Councillor Bailey informed the Committee that she had been involved in the project over a number of years. The purpose of the S106 funding was to mitigate the impact of future growth at the Lancaster Way Business Park.

The proposed scheme would unlock many jobs that will benefit local people. The BP roundabout was one of the busiest roundabouts in Cambridgeshire and the scheme could not deliver all the necessary improvements needed. Councillor Bailey also drew attention to the favourable benefit/cost ratio score of the project. However, through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) there was opportunity for the necessary improvements to be made through its A10 improvement project.

During the course of discussion:

- Councillor Manning, in drawing attention to the work set out within the COVID-19 Temporary Cycling Proposals report proposed, seconded by Councillor Batchelor, an additional recommendation c). The additional recommendation requested the Committee noted the national agenda to privilege cycling and walking schemes and encourages the contractors for both roundabouts to suggest additional measures that could be added to make cycling and walking at both locations easier, safer and more convenient, and bring those back to a future meeting of this committee. The additional recommendation sought to allow the scheme to progress, however, still allow investigation of active travel options that could take place in parallel with construction.
- Attention was drawn by a Member to the new jobs that would be created on the Lancaster Way Business Park and the need for pedestrians and cyclists to cross the roundabout to reach those jobs. It was therefore essential that they be accounted for within the project to maintain their safety.
- Officers set out the challenges to improving the roundabout for pedestrians and cyclists, in particular the signalisation aspect. Officers highlighted the role of the CPCA as the strategic Transport Authority commenting that it formed part of the work it was undertaking regarding improvements to the A10. Further work would not be something the Council could require of the developer.
- At the discretion of the Chairman, the Committee noted the views of the local Members regarding the proposed additional recommendation, c). While agreeing with the overall sentiment, significant work had been undertaken to improve the pedestrian and cycling experience and also questioned whether the contractor was the correct body to take forward the work. Concern was also expressed that the proposed additional recommendation could cause delay to the scheme and impact upon funding. The regular bus service to the Lancaster Way Business Park was also highlighted.
- The Chairman concluded the debate by highlighting the imperative need to press on with the scheme and the role of the CPCA as the strategic Transport Authority. With the agreement of Councillor Manning, he proposed that rather than adding a separate recommendation, he would write to the CPCA requesting the bring to the attention of the A10 Project Board the vital importance of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure within their proposed designs. **ACTION**

It was resolved to:

- a) agree the commencement of a contract to construct the A10/A142 BP roundabout from July 2020.
- b) approve consultation to commence in July 2020 on the design proposals for the A142/Lancaster Way roundabout, with the outcome presented to this Committee in November 2020.

6. ST NEOTS NORTHERN FOOT AND CYCLE BRIDGE.

The Committee received a report regarding the proposed St Neots northern foot and cycle bridge. The presenting officer drew attention to the original allocation of £1.2m from S106 Developer Contributions towards the development of options for a foot and cycle crossing. A feasibility study undertaken by Skanska in May 2017 estimated that a bridge in the proposed location could cost in the region of £3.5 - £4m. The estimated costs excluded development costs and did not contain contingency funding. Further funding was secured through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) made up of £2.5m for the main bridge project and £600k for a separate project to upgrade footpaths on Regatta Meadow / Riverside. Members noted at that stage, the total funding required would be in the region of £5.5 - £6.5m. There was therefore a funding shortfall of up to £2.28m and other potential sources of funding were actively engaged. As the project moved towards the pre-application stage of the planning process, it identified the requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to be undertaken. A review of the project was undertaken by Balfour Beatty through the SCAPE Civil Engineering Framework in November 2019 which highlighted some severe challenges with the construction of the bridge which would severely impact construction costs. The Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) was therefore adversely affected and became less than 1. Funding from the CPCA had also been withdrawn. It was therefore recommended that the remaining S106 funding be re-allocated to other schemes in St Neots.

Councillor Derek Giles addressed the Committee in his capacity as Local Member. Councillor Giles expressed concern regarding the report, in particular the development costs of the project that were over £400k and requested a breakdown of the costs. Attention was drawn to a report Councillor Giles had produced for Members regarding regeneration of St Neots town centre and highlighted the potential for alternative locations for the bridge between the Falcon Hotel and Riverside Car Park. Further consideration should have been given to a 'bolt-on' cantilever bridge and to the possibility of purchasing a second hand bridge. In conclusion, Councillor Giles requested that the Committee conduct an investigation into the development costs of the project, review and investigate alternative locations for the bridge, assess the possibility of a recycled, second hand bridge and account where the S106 money had been spent.

Councillor Giles, in response to a Member question confirmed that one of the proposals he had circulated to the Committee had originated from a qualified engineer.

The Chairman provided historical context to the development of the proposed crossing and the role of the then local Member Councillor Barry Chapman who was influential in taking forward the bridge proposal.

In response to Councillor Giles, officers explained that the management costs had arisen over the course of the 4 year development of the bridge and all costs were recharged to the project, resulting in a high degree of accuracy. Development costs usually averaged 20% of the total budget and therefore the development costs associated with the project were not extraordinary. The span of bridge required was 62m and it was unlikely that a second hand bridge of that size could be sought. Furthermore, most second hand bridges were foot bridges only and the proposal for St Neots was for a 4m wide mixed-use bridge. With regard to alternative locations for the crossing, owing to a number of water courses in the area, a location at the Falcon would require a significantly longer span in order to cross those water courses. A cantilever option was assessed by engineers, however, due to the presence of pre-stressed beams within the structure of the current bridge, it was deemed too high risk to add to that structure and doing so could have damaged the pre-stressed beams.

During the course of discussion:

- Disappointment was expressed by a Member at the news the bridge would not be going ahead and highlighted the rate of development and growth that was taking place in St Neots. Such rapid growth would result in pressure to build a river crossing in the future. Pressure should therefore be maintained on the CPCA to revisit the need for a second crossing.
- Attention was drawn to the history of the project and the role of the then local Member progressing the project against the advice of Members for the reasons set out in the report. St Neots had effectively lost £1m of S106 funding that could have been better spent. It was essential that the project was drawn to a close and projects that could be delivered were brought forward.
- A Member suggested that the remaining £128k of S106 funding be invested in other walking and cycling projects.

It was resolved to:

- a) To note the scheme development to date, recent market pricing activity and revised forecast budget required.
- b) To halt further development of the project due to the reduction in the assessed value for money identified in the updated business case, following the increase in forecast budget required.
- c) To re-allocate the remaining available allocated s106 funding of £128k to other transport projects in St Neots, subject to further approval of the specific projects by this Committee once identified.

7. COVID 19 TEMPORARY CYCLING PROPOSALS

A report was presented that sought agreement for the immediate implementation across the county of a set of measures that encourages cycling during the COVID-19 crisis and through recovery. The Government had allocated £250m to Local Authorities in England to encourage walking and cycling. There was a fundamental issue that public transport capacity was likely to be between 10-20% of pre COVID-19 levels and it was therefore essential that as many people as possible walked and cycled to work. The road network would also not be able to cope if a modal shift was not achieved. The Council had received funding totalling £420k as part of tranche 1 of this funding. The presenting officer emphasised the exceptionally strict timescales that were associated with the funding that required implementation of the schemes identified within 8 weeks of receiving funding

In drawing attention to the agreed scheme list, the presenting officer once again highlighted the challenging timescales and explained that the opportunity for prolonged consultation and debate on the schemes was limited. It was possible that some of the scheme may prove too challenging and lead to issues that had not been anticipated and therefore recommendation c) sought flexibility to respond to issues as they arose.

The Chairman invited Ms Nancy Minshull-Beech to address the Committee regarding the proposed trial scheme for Nightingale Avenue in Cambridge. Ms Minshull-Beech informed the Committee that she lived at the top of Nightingale Avenue and was a cycling instructor teaching adults and children on the road. Ms Minsull-Beech echoed the views of Cambridge City Councillor Colin McGerty in that she was keen for cycle route for cycle route to be implemented. Lots of cyclist travel along Nightingale Avenue and COVID-19 presented a real opportunity to enhance cycling provision. A cycle route that leads to a junction with Hills Road was referred together with essential traffic calming measures, including a reduction in the speed limit to 10mph which would facilitate walking and cycling. It would also placate residents who were particularly concerned about a total road closure.

In response to a Member question Ms Minshull-Beech confirmed that she and a number of residents were not in favour of a road block for Nightingale Avenue and they would prefer provision for reducing speed.

The Chairman invited Ms Roxanne De Beaux to address the Committee on behalf of CamCycle. Ms De Beaux expressed thanks and gratitude on behalf of Camcycle to officers and Councillors for the work undertaken. Thanks was also expressed to Councillors and Parish Councillors who contributed to the Spaces to Breathe initiative. Ms De Beaux noted the combination of proposed improvements and welcomed the more ambitious measures together with the county-wide programme to improve safety outside schools. CamCycle would continue to engage with its members and urge the Council to implement the proposed schemes as soon as possible. CamCyle was cognisant of the constraints relating to time and funding. However, the schemes proposed were temporary and the need to act quickly was imperative.

During discussion Members:

- Expressed concern with regard to the proposals for the Fenland area, commenting that proper consideration should be given to segregated cycle lanes between March, Chatteris and Mepal. Officers explained that although officers at Fenland District Council had been engaged with, due to the time constraints it was not possible to engage more fully. The permanent measures sought for the area would most likely form part of the second tranche of funding.
- Questioned how emergency services would move through point closures. Officers explained that further powers for Local Authorities regarding the monitoring of cycle lanes through CCTV cameras were being considered by the Government.
- Confirmed that if a scheme was to be made permanent it would return to the Committee for a decision.
- Drew attention to issues relating to 'rat-running' along Nightingale Avenue. The speed limit was currently 20mph and it was unlikely that reducing the limit further would necessarily have much effect. Officers confirmed that in order to lower speeds to below 20mph, hard traffic management measures would need to be engineered into the road.
- Emphasised the need to engage with the public to ensure that the programme was a success, highlighted the model employed in New York which centred on careful planning. It was important to do few well supported schemes rather than many unsupported schemes that risked bringing the programme into disrepute.
- Noted the comments of local Member for Queen Edith's, Councillor Taylor who highlighted the concerns of residents regarding the proposed road closures in her division. She had received approximately 50 emails and a petition with over 200 signatures. Councillor Taylor drew attention to the issue of 'rat running' that affected Nightingale Avenue. Residents had commented that it was unclear as to why closure of Nightingale Avenue had been proposed as closure was a blunt instrument through which to achieve improved safety for pedestrians and cyclists. In conclusion, Councillor Taylor noted the need for a scheme, however, a more targeted approach that avoided a road closure would be preferable.
- Expressed concern and disappointment regarding the level of consultation with Members during the development of schemes for the first tranche of funding.
- Welcomed the inclusion of Coldhams Lane within the list of proposed schemes.
- Noted the comments of the Executive Director: Place and Economy regarding limited time available in which to consult and that the second tranche of funding would set out the engagement that would take place.
- Questioned how feedback would be submitted on the proposed scheme. Officers explained that with Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETRO),

consultation began at the point of implementation of the scheme. If changes to a scheme were made then the 6 month consultation period would be re-set. Information would be provided to the public on how to provide comments as part of the consultation. It was essential that schemes be monitored closely through measures such as traffic counts, data of movement patterns through anonymised mobile phone records, existing camera sites and local sources. Officers noted the concerns of Members regarding access for emergency services and provided assurance that they would be engaged with as the schemes developed. Members noted that the alternative of not implementing schemes could result in delays to emergency vehicles becoming delayed in congestion.

- Noted the explanation of the differences between temporary and experimental TROs. Experimental TROs were being used on this occasion to allow speed of implementation and for consultation to take place in real time. Due to the speed at which the schemes were having to be developed in order to unlock the second tranche of funding there was a risk that the public and Members would not feel they had been engaged with well. However, due to the conditions attached to the second tranche of funding it was essential that work progressed at speed.
- Confirmed that the ETROs would be published and comments received in the normal manner. Officers undertook to ensure that Members were provided the details of how comments could be submitted.

The Chairman, noting the comments of a member proposed with the unanimous agreement of the Committee that recommendation c) be amended to include Lead Members as part of the delegation.

It was resolved to:

- a) Note and comment on the initial list of cycle scheme proposals;
- b) Approve the process for Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders;
- c) Delegate to the Executive Director - Place and Economy in discussion with the Chairman and Vice Chairman and Lead Members of the Highways and Transport Committee, the agreement of any changes to the programme.

8. COVID-19 UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received the most recent iteration of the Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Members requested a breakdown of the numbers of staff that had been redeployed during the pandemic, and where they had been re-deployed to in order to gain an understanding of capacity within the directorate. **ACTION**

It was resolved to:

Note and comment on the progress made to date in responding to the impact of the Coronavirus

9. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE AGENDA PLAN AND APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES AND ADVISORY GROUPS

The Committee received a report that presented the Committee's forward agenda plan, and sought to appoint Member to various Outside Bodies and Internal Advisory Groups.

The Committee noted the additions to the July meeting of the Committee

- Kings Dyke Level Crossing Closure – Award of Construction Management Consultancy Contract
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Road Safety Partnership Strategy
- Fendon Road Update Report

A Member drew attention to the recent abolition of the Cambridge City Joint Area Committee (CJAC) and the need for a new Local Highways Panel to be formed. The Chairman noted the need for a Cambridge panel to be established and encouraged local Members to take it forward.

It was resolved to:

- a) Note the agenda plan and the additions made during the meeting;
- b) Agree the appointments to Outside Bodies;
- c) Agree the appointments to Internal Advisory Groups and Panels;
- d) Agree the appointments of Council Champions; and
- e) Agree as a delegation on a permanent basis to the Executive Director Place and Economy in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee to appoint representatives or change representation to any outside bodies, internal or external groups, panels or partnership liaison and advisory groups within the remit of the Highways and Transport Committee, where an appointment is required to be made before the next scheduled Committee meeting.

Chairman