

Highways and Transport Committee: Minutes

Date: 7 December 2021

Time: 10.00am to 14:00pm.

Present: Councillors Alex Beckett, Douglas Dew, Piers Coutts, Lorna Dupre, Janet French, Stephen Fergusson, Bryony Goodliffe, Simon King, Peter McDonald, Mac McGuire, Brian Milnes, Tom Sanderson, Neil Shailer, Alan Sharp, and Mandy Smith

Venue: Multi-Function Room, New Shire Hall

51. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Geri Bird and Derek Giles

There were no declarations of interest.

52. Minutes – 4 November 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

53. Highways and Transport Committee Action Log

The Committee noted its Action Log.

The following points were raised:

- The Wisbech Access Strategy was ongoing and not completed.
- Requested that local Members remained informed of key dates and milestones regarding Local Highway Improvements.

54. Petitions and Public Questions

The Committee received 2 petitions from CamCycle and public questions and taken during the relevant agenda item. The questions and responses are contained at Appendix A of the minutes.

The Committee received comments from Mrs Sarah Lambert regarding the A10/A142 'BP Roundabout'. Mrs Lambert emphasised the urgent need for improvement works at the location to ensure that the roundabout was safer for all users. Improvements could not be linked to the A10 dualling, given that the project would have a long timescale and would encourage more traffic. Mrs Lambert urged the Council and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to work together to design a safety improvement for the crossing of the roundabout in the very near future.

55. A10 Ely to Cambridge Outline Business Case

The Committee received A10 Ely to Cambridge Outline Business Case that sought the Committee's agreement to progress the Outline Business Case (OBC) work on improvements to the A10 between Cambridge and Ely, subject to the agreement of scope of work, timescales, and funding.

The Chair invited a representative from CamCycle to address the Committee. Commenting on the scheme, CamCycle were supportive of improvements to cycling and active travel along the A10 route. CamCycle encouraged the 'quick win' outlined within the report to be progressed as a priority to rectify the issues found at the A10/A142 roundabout.

CamCycle noted and agreed with the statement from the Department for Transport that the needs of all road users had to be considered and agreed that alternatives to dualling should be considered given the climate emergency and the need to reduce motor traffic in the region. Any dualling of the A10 would result in increased motor traffic capacity that would induce demand and result in ever larger traffic issues along the corridor and present a huge setback in efforts to reduce carbon emissions. In conclusion, CamCycle requested the Committee ensure that the OBC should pursue low-carbon and sustainable transport based solutions for the Ely/Cambridge corridor.

The presenting officer drew the Committee's attention to the funding arrangements for the project between the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and the Department for Transport (DfT). Members noted the conditions of funding at that there was no guarantee that dualling would be the preferred option for the DfT. The resource implications were highlighted to the Committee. There were significant surveys that had to be completed at certain times of the year which would cause pressures.

During discussion Members:

- Confirmed that the proposed cycleway would be developed for all non-motorised users.
- Drew attention to the BP roundabout that was of great concern to residents and had been regarded by them in a recent survey as the most dangerous junction in East Cambridgeshire for pedestrians and cyclists. It presented a barrier to active travel. De-coupling the roundabout from the A10 proposals was welcome, however, concerns remained regarding the timescales and it was essential that the situation was remedied.
- Commented that road construction needed to be considered in the context of carbon neutrality, environmental factors, and biodiversity. Making a road more attractive encourages more people to use it. Congestion in Cambridge was a key concern and there were too many cars entering the city.
- Welcomed that the Department for Transport (DfT) were assessing a 'junctions only' option.

- Highlighted Mere Way in Waterbeach and confirmed that facilities for equine users would be maintained. Officers informed the Committee that a pre-commencement planning condition existed in relation to the Waterbeach development that secured the Waterbeach station relocation had been resolved. The delay was with the developer relating to the funding. Discussions were taking place with the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) and it was confirmed that the station had planning permission.
- Expressed hope that infrastructure to support active travel was used as there were examples where provision had been made but it was hardly used.
- Sought clarification regarding funding, specifically the arrangements contained at paragraph 2.7 of the report and what the implications would be if funding did not come forward and if there was an overspend where costs exceeded £4m and the further £2m was not forthcoming. Officers provided assurance that the scheme being developed was in line with DfT expectations. The greater risk to the scheme was overspend. The purpose of the report was to provide a clear spotlight of the potential risks in order that they were understood.
- Highlighted the needs of older people and people with disabilities. There would be a significant section of the population that would not be able to take advantage of active travel options. Officers commented that both the Council and the Combined Authority were working together on the issue to ensure that provision was designed into the scheme during development and not bolted on later.
- Questioned how achievable the timescales were in relation to the project. In response officers explained that certain requirements of the business case necessitated on-site survey work to be undertaken such as ground conditions and biodiversity that were seasonal. It was forecast to allow 2 years for the work to take place, however, there was a desire to complete it as soon as possible.
- Emphasised that safety was of paramount importance and commented that disaggregating the BP roundabout was a sensible approach. However, while active travel was an important consideration it was essential that all road users were catered for safely and expressed concern that dualling may be disregarded as an option. Officers informed the Committee that the business case would quantify the benefits to all road users of each option and the associated costs also.
- Noted the comments of the local Member regarding the BP roundabout that road traffic flowed through it with ease, however, to cross it as a pedestrian was extremely difficult.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note and comment on the conclusions of the March Area Transport Study Outline Business Case;
- b) Note progress on delivery of the March Minor Schemes approved at the September 2020 Highways and Transport Committee; and

- c) Approve the programme and costs for Full Business Case and detailed design of the March package of schemes, providing funding is made available by CPCA Board and a suitable funding agreement with CPCA is agreed.

56. Review of the Draft Revenue and Capital Business Planning Proposals for 2022-27

The Committee received the draft Business Planning proposals for both capital and revenue expenditure for 2022-27. The report set out the current business and budgetary planning position and estimates for 2022-27, the principal risks, contingencies, and implications of the proposals together with the process that governed the budget setting for the coming years.

In discussing the proposals Members:

- Noted the opportunity for improved scheduling and resource planning that would provide savings.
- Confirmed that the proposed movement of funding from the revenue to capital budget would not impact on delivery.
- Welcomed the investment in resources to provide technical knowledge and skills into Nationally Significant Infrastructure (NSI) schemes. There were several such projects affecting the county presently and it was essential that the Council achieved the best value from such schemes.
- Noted and welcomed the increase in budget for footpaths and pavements as it provided assurance to residents that the Council was seeking to address the long-standing issue.
- Noted the devolution of powers regarding certain moving traffic offences such as enforcing weight limits and were tied to civil parking enforcement.
- Clarified that the previous administration's commitment of £29.7m over 5 years (2021/22 – 2025/6) for improvements in footpaths and gulley clearing was being maintained. Officers confirmed that the proposals in the business plan had not changed other than being moved from revenue to capital expenditure.
- Noted the assumptions made regarding the level of grant funding for pothole repair and the discussions that would need to take place once the announcement had been made.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) The Committee is asked to review, note, and comment upon the report.

57. Finance Monitoring Report

The Committee received the Finance Monitoring Report for the period up to October 2021. The presenting officer drew the Committee's attention to the issues contained within section 2 of the report.

In discussing the report Members raised the following points:

- Sought further information regarding the delay improvements to the A1303. It was a particularly dangerous junction where a serious accident had recently occurred, and residents were seeking a quick resolution. Officers explained that there had been a delay regarding the land acquisition, and it was anticipated that the process would be completed within the next couple of months.
- Requested a confidential briefing be arranged regarding the ongoing legal dispute with BAM Nutall regarding the guided busway. **ACTION**
- Requested that Local Highway Improvement (LHI) alignments within Cambridge City be reviewed as there appeared to be some anomalies. **ACTION**
- Suggested that the timelines for the LHI process were creating difficulties for the various schemes' delivery, especially when definitive dates for delivery were provided to residents as there was likely to be slippage.
- Noted that a report regarding LHI process would be presented at the April meeting of the Committee. There had been resourcing issues within the team, however, Milestone (contractor) had provided assistance.
- Highlighted the vacancy rate and questioned how it impacted on delivery. Officers explained that it was important to view the vacancy rate within the context of the ongoing restructure of the service. New senior managers were in post and the number of interims was gradually reducing. The job market was challenging and competitive. It was important that new innovative approaches to recruitment were developed as it was a person driven service.
- Sought greater clarity regarding the use of interim staff and how the Council performed against other comparable local authorities. Anecdotally, pay had been an issue in Cambridgeshire and it was questioned whether packages offered were competitive. Officers commented that other local authorities were experiencing similar recruitment issues. Strong messages were being developed about the attractiveness of Cambridgeshire as a place to live and work.
- Expressed concern regarding the level of delay of LHI schemes in the March area.
- Expressed concern that Parish Councils had not been invoiced for LHI schemes that had been delivered.
- Requested that the reference to Sutton Road be amended within the report for future iterations. **ACTION**

It was resolved to:

Review, note and comment on the report.

58. Future Transport Priorities

Members received a report relating to the Future Transport Priorities that sought to update the Committee on the proposed review of sifting criteria for the Transport Investment Plan (TIP) to inform and prioritise a transport scheme development programme and provide a proposed process and set of priorities for the review of existing, and preparation of new transport strategies

The Committee received comments from CamCycle on the report. CamCycle welcomed the focus on modal shift. However, concern was expressed that the focus would be lost during implementation and cited the Windsor Road scheme as an example. CamCycle agreed that regarding the Transport Investment Plan, the sifting criteria should be updated to reflect priorities around active travel and guidance such as LTN/120. CamCycle were supportive of more high-quality LTN/120 compliant cycle infrastructure and were also supportive of support smaller but still significant interventions like adding cyclist-detection circuits at signalised crossings and adjusting traffic light timing to provide more time and priority for people walking and cycling. CamCycle requested that consideration be given to creating a pipeline of schemes for active travel that were ready to commence. CamCycle was also supportive of the review of the road hierarchy but expressed concern that public consultation was not mentioned within the report.

In presenting the report officers commented that it was anticipated that public consultation would take place, however the timing would be determined by the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP).

During discussion Members:

- Highlighted the varying speeds of users from pedestrians to cyclists and posed a risk of accidents.
- Noted the complex prioritisation and funding together with the multiple layers of local government and its interdependencies set out in figure 1 at paragraph 2.1 of the report and commented that it was very difficult for the public to understand and suggested a guide be produced on how the plans interlinked.
- Drew attention to electric vehicles and the barrier of charging points and commented that it would be welcome for it to be recognised as a barrier and how it could be overcome.
- Noted the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) was developing an alternative fuels strategy and commented that expansion of the National Grid was necessary to support the move to electric vehicles.
- Highlighted the Newmarket and Guyhurn study and noted the importance of increasing understanding. However, concern was expressed that the outcomes of

the first study had not yet been put into effect and it was important focus on delivery as well as study.

- Emphasised the importance of a joined-up approach, citing the A142 as an example where the road entered an adjoining county as there were issues with congestion relating to rush hour traffic.

It was unanimously resolved to:

- a) Note progress towards the Joint Administration's year 1 actions relating to transport policy and strategy development;
- b) Approve the proposed programme for reviewing existing transport strategies and preparing new transport strategies;
- c) Note the programme of transport study work;
- d) Approve, subject to the agreement of scope and funding with the CPCA, the Council undertaking work on a Newmarket to Guyhirn study (A141 / A142); and
- e) Approve the process outlined in the report, including Member engagement, to update the transport scheme development sifting criteria, including for the prioritisation of LTP Integrated Transport Block funding.

Councillor Fuller left the meeting at this point.

58. Active Travel Strategy for Cambridgeshire

The Committee received a report that provided an overview of the emerging Active Travel Strategy for Cambridgeshire and informed Members of the scope of the strategy and the key considerations.

The Committee received comments from CamCycle whom expressed support for the development of the strategy. CamCycle noted the diverse geography of the county but stressed that both urban and rural areas could benefit from active travel. Attention was drawn to paragraph 2.1 where it mentioned that there were some cases where compliance with LTN/120 was not possible. Although CamCycle understood the intention of the paragraph they emphasised that LTN/120 was written with that in mind by setting a measurable quality threshold.

CamCycle challenged the interpretation of LTN/120 contained at paragraph 2.22 of the report as it reflected quality of infrastructure not quantity. In certain cases, providing quality could be expensive, however, in other cases, quality could be a matter of making better design decisions and could realise savings.

Commenting on the report, Members:

- Alluded to the challenges of implementing the strategy. Cambridge was viewed as a cycling city that was taken for granted and had resulted in poor infrastructure and catered to proficient cyclists. Greater consideration needed to be given to non-

proficient cyclists. There were often pieces of cycling infrastructure that were not connected. Driving had an inherent advantage to other modes of transport and therefore it was imperative to ensure high quality infrastructure in order to tempt people from their cars.

- Drew attention to active travel in rural areas where the active travel strategy would be much more difficult to implement. However, it was also the area where it was needed most, for young people in particular. Electric bicycles would also greatly increase the length of feasible journeys that could be taken.
- Emphasised the importance of the condition of road surfaces in encouraging active travel, together with the fragmentation of the network that was often off putting.
- Noted the recognition of the differing needs between rural and urban areas. However, it was vital that when infrastructure was installed it would be used.
- Suggested accelerating the development of a guide for the provision of dual use paths for developers as it was difficult to retrofit facilities and increase focus on rural areas to identify the barriers to active travel and how they were to be overcome.

It was resolved to:

- a) Note and comment on the update on the emerging Active Travel Strategy for Cambridgeshire; and
- b) Note and comment on the 'key considerations' section 2.21 – 2.26 to deliver the Active Travel Strategy

59. Cambridgeshire County Council's response to Network Rail's consultation on the Ely Area Capacity Enhancement Scheme (Wider Ely Area Round 2 Consultation Part 2)

The Committee received a report detailing the Cambridgeshire County Council's response to Network Rail's consultation on the Ely Area Capacity Enhancement Scheme (Wider Ely Area Round 2 Consultation Part 2) seeking the Committee's approval for the response and any additions to the response.

The Chair invited Councillor John Gowing local Member to address the Committee. Councillor Gowing informed the Committee of the issues surrounding the B1098 and specifically the Stonea underpass that experienced frequent collisions due to the height of the bridge and drivers not realising the height of their vehicles or not willing wait at the gated crossing. The underpass was closed for 16 months following a collision and then was struck again the day it was reopened. Councillor Gowing highlighted the considerable cost of repair to bridge with each collision.

The Committee received comments from Councillor Anna Bradnam, local Member that are attached at Appendix B to these minutes.

In discussing the report Members:

- Welcomed the focus within the proposed consultation response on the residents of Queen Adelaide as it was of huge significance for them.
- Emphasised the importance of the scheme for the whole county as it would reduce the level of HGV movements on the A14.
- Requested that references to ensuring the future robustness of the scheme be strengthened within the response.
- Requested that local Members have sight of the final draft of the consultation response.
- Noted the direct benefits of the improvements to the town of March and drew attention to the comments of Councillor John Gowing and the cost of bridge collisions to the attending emergency services.

It was resolved to:

- a) Note and comment on Network Rail's Consultation on the Ely Area Capacity Enhancement Scheme Consultation; and
- b) Delegate the agreement of the final consultation response to the Executive Director, Place and Economy in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee.

60. Public Rights of Way & Non-Motorised User Routes Design Guide

The Committee considered a report that followed a request at the November meeting of the Committee. Across Cambridgeshire existing Public Rights of Way and other routes were often upgraded and provided to support growth and sustainable development. The Committee was asked to consider the creation of a Public Rights of Way & Non-Motorised User Route Design Guide that would address and balance the needs of all users when improving existing and providing new routes for promoting sustainable forms of transport and promoting active travel.

The Chair invited a representative of CamCycle to address the Committee who welcomed the report and supported the development of a design guide for public rights of way, and especially cycle routes. Public rights-of-way were used by many different non-motorised or active travel modes and while individual sites had different requirements and constraints, CamCycle were optimistic that a design guide can be written in a way that helped bring people together to find the best resolution in each case. CamCycle strongly believed that wayfinding should also be included in such work to help promote cycle tourism, children's independence, and health, and to allow people to explore further.

During discussion Members:

- Highlighted the need to review existing routes and improve them for all users.

- Noted that officers would prepare the draft design guide to be consulted on widely. Once the consultation was completed and the comments assessed and incorporated where appropriate the draft guide would be presented to the Committee for approval.
- Noted that the Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) work would be incorporated within the design guide work.
- Expressed thanks to officers for producing a report so quickly as speed was essential given the number of developments being built within the county.
- Commented that it would be preferable within the design guide that the default position was to preserve bridleways and not hard-surface them.
- Requested that rights of way be maintained as they were in a poor state in many areas, overgrown with brambles and bushes.

It was resolved to:

- a) Note the report;
- b) Agree to the creation of a draft Design Guide;
- c) Delegate to the Executive Director of Place and Economy and the Chair and Vice Chair the approval of a consultation document and approval of the draft Design Guide to allow the consultation process to be undertaken;
- d) Following consultation and refinement of the draft Design Guide to bring a report back to Committee providing a summary of the consultation response and the Design Guide for approval;

61. Greater Cambridge Partnership's Programme for the Review of Mill Road, Cambridge

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the process of the proposed Greater Cambridge Partnership's Programme for the Review of Mill Road, Cambridge

The Committee received comments from CamCycle whom expressed thanks to the Committee for their decision to expedite the consultation on Mill Road and the proposed approach to using focus groups. CamCycle suggested that a useful addition to the process would be to also provide the various stakeholder groups an opportunity to directly present their vision and ideas for Mill Road to the consultants. CamCycle highlighted the case they had made for 'quick-wins' that could be beneficial for Mill Road however they were concerned that the proposal was unclear about what could be considered a quick-win and what kind of impact the changes may have.

Local Member Councillor Richard Howitt addressed the Committee. Councillor Howitt welcomed the decision to ask the GCP to take Mill Road forward as part of the wider access scheme. Any proposals needed to be about Mill Road as a whole and would be more warmly received by residents if they feel they are part of a wider vision for the city. Councillor Howitt highlighted the role of focus groups and emphasised the need to ensure the widest exposure for any proposals. He had met with interest groups and had encouraged them to meet and work together to ensure that all points of view were reflected. There needed to be thorough monitoring of traffic emissions and any adverse impacts on nearby areas. The Council had a responsibility to ensure that that consultation took place in a safe environment of respect. Councillor Howitt looked forward to being fully included by the GCP in the future stages of any proposals.

During discussion Members:

- Commented that it was not for the Committee to micro-manage any proposed schemes as the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) were running it.
- Noted the impacts on other areas and the importance of looking at schemes holistically.
- Noted the continued meeting with residents and business along Mill Road and the search of a consensus regarding any proposals.

It was resolved to:

Note the emerging programme developed by the Greater Cambridge Partnership to review Mill Road, Cambridge.

62. Highways and Transport Committee Agenda Plan and Training Plan and Appointments to Outside Bodies and Internal Advisory Groups and Panels

The Committee noted its Agenda Plan, Training Plan and appointments to Outside Bodies and Internal Advisory Groups.

Commenting on the plan a Member raised 2 reports that had been requested regarding cutting back of undergrowth and limiting the impact of HGVs during major road closures. Members noted that reports would be programmed into the agenda plan at an appropriate point of the Committee cycle.

Chair
25 January 2022