

● MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
HIGHWAYS FORUM FOR HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER
AT THE HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH COUNCIL OFFICES ON THURSDAY 26TH JANUARY
2017 AT 4.30PM

PRESENT

County Councillors	Borough Councillors
Cllr R Camamile (Chairman)	Cllr M B Cartwright
Cllr D C Bill	Cllr W J Crooks
Cllr K W Lynch	Cllr M Cook
Cllr M T Mullaney	Cllr J Kirby
Cllr I D Ould	Cllr B E Sutton
Cllr O O'Shea	Cllr P Wallace
Cllr D A Sprason	Cllr B Witherford
Cllr S L Bray	

The following also attended the meeting:

County officers present: I Vears, F Blockley, M Palfreyman, A Adams and S Merrigan

Borough officer present: P Reid

001. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Members and officers to the meeting and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

002. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor J Richards and Borough Councillors R B Roberts and P S Bessant.

003. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman agreed that Cllr Sprason could bring up his item on Neovia Planning under item 15 of the agenda.

004. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

005. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 27th September 2016 were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a true record of the meeting.

006. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

A) GRASS CUTTING

The Forum considered an update by the Director of Environment and Transport regarding grass cutting. This update was introduced by Mr Vears with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mr Vears took Members through the update and highlighted the key areas of the report. He informed Members that there have been various changes to the programme following feedback from Members and the Public and that this report is to inform Member on how the season went. He advised that the number of customer contacts with regard to grass cutting had reduced in 2016 following a number of changes including a renewed proactive approach to customer care.

Mr Vears went on to say that this was all good news but if Members are aware of any issues they must contact the Customer Service Centre. This will ensure that all issues are logged and responded to quickly and efficiently, this will also allow us to see the hot spots which in turn will help us to continue to improve our services. He also added that a real-time dashboard technology is used now which ensures quicker responses.

Cllr Sutton informed officers that he has seen gangs out cutting the grass verges in Twycross area in October and November, he advised that this is a waste of Council money and that cutting the verges in January/ February would be the safest and most cost efficient months to cut the verges.

Mr Vears thanks Cllr Sutton for his feedback and will investigate why we were cutting so late in the season. He informed members that there is a hedge cutting programme going on at the minute and if anyone sees and issues to please report them to the CSC so that we are informed and can do something about it.

Cllr Bill asked if there had been any further developments for residents to cut their own grass verges. He is aware of numerous people who are willing to cut their own verges but haven't gotten anywhere.

Mr Vears was disappointed that people have been declined when they are volunteering to help us out we are usually very happy to let residents cut their own grass although this doesn't usually make it anymore cost efficient as the gang still have to go out to do the rest of the verge. This is something that is going to be discussed as part of the Highway Maintenance review that everyone can feed into.

Cllr Cook informed us that there are several road signs covered by hedges from Newbold to Hinckley on the 447 and B582. Also on the 447 it looks like a mower has hit the signs after the summer.

Mr Vears asked that specific sites be sent to the CSC for us to investigate further. He also asked all Members that if they spot any temporary traffic signs that have been there then please report them to us.

Cllr Witherford asked about what we can do to stop people parking on grass verges.

Mr Vears knows that this is an issue in many parts of the County and encouraged Members to report the areas where this is an issue and we will look at these on a case by case basis.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report of the Director of Environment and Transport be noted.

B) HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE STRATEGY AND POLICY REVIEW

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Environment and Transport with regard to the Highway Maintenance Strategy and Policy Review. The report was introduced by Mr Vears with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mr Vears took Members through the report and advised that this followed on from the report to the meeting on the 28th June 2016 on the A-Roads to Zebras – A Comprehensive Maintenance Review. This detailed the reasons for the review and the current extreme financial challenges, the alterations in the way that funding is being processed, together with the changes that will need to occur to comply with these alterations.

Mr Vears went on to say that the responses to the consultation were mixed but gave a good steer as to what services the public think are important. A detailed analysis of the responses was presented to the Cabinet on 13th December 2016. Following Cabinet approval, a draft Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy have been produced and are attached to the report for information.

Mr Vears encouraged Members to feed into this current consultation process and their thoughts and feedback would be welcome. The results will help formulate the final policy and strategy documents which will influence the 2018/19 programme.

Cllr Kirby asked what we can do with the general state of road signs; lots are covered in dirt and are unreadable.

Mr Vears informed Cllr Kirby that we are looking at different solutions, reducing assets, concentrating on the most important signs and looking at volunteer groups being set up to help clean the signs. No decision has been made yet and different options are being explored. As well as looking at the health and safety issues that comes with people cleaning road signs.

Cllr Kirby complained that when you report an overgrown hedge it takes ages for the Council to investigate whose property it is and for something to be done.

Mr Vears replied that if we know that these are our own hedges and they are causing an issue then we will get out there investigate and cut these quickly. However if the hedges are not our then we do have to investigate who owns the land, we then write to them and serve notice which can take some time. This is something we will be discussing Parish Councils as part of the highway maintenance review.

Cllr Bill asked about areas that are not in a parish. 1/3 of Hinckley & Bosworth is an urban area and this isn't talked about in reports. Where do we stand on this matter?

Mr Vears thanked Cllr Bill for the feedback and assured him that we are happy to talk to everyone not just Parishes.

Cllr Sprason asked what he can say to residents when they ask him if they can clean dirty road signs.

Mr Vears informed Members that part of the work is writing guidance for matters such as this and it is something that we are currently exploring. If certain groups or residents wish to help us and would like to trial different ideas with us we are very happy to talk to all groups/ parishes.

Cllr O'Shea asked that when we give out licenses to cultivate do we give guidance?

Mr Vears confirmed that we do give guidance and direction when a license is issued. Putting rocks on grass verges are something we need to look and is on the long list of things we are reviewing.

Cllr Kirby asked if we are looking at setting up a proper organised group of volunteers to help trial certain things.

Mr Vears confirmed that we are happy to speak to everyone and we will not be limiting anyone from taking part.

Cllr Camomile said it was surprising how many people do cut the grass outside their houses without knowing you need a license for it, they just do it so it looks nice. She informed us that she used to cut the grass outside her parents' house without knowing you had to have a license. Some look lovely and professional so it can be done.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report of the Director of Environment and Transport be noted.

007. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 36

A petition with 500 signatures from Ms Helen Cobley will be presented. The petition requests that Leicestershire County Council reinstate some of the central reservations in the Hollow, Earl Shilton.

"We the undersigned request action be taken by Leicestershire County Council for reasons of safety to reinstate some of the central reservations in the Hollow before someone is seriously injured or even killed. Many residents especially the elderly and disabled are now too frightened to cross the road in these areas."

The Chairman accepted the petition and stated that Cllr Richards was unable to attend the meeting but had written a letter that she wanted reading out a copy of the letter is attached to the minutes.

The Chairman advised that this issue has been investigated and a response can be found at item 8 of the agenda.

008. RESPONSE TO PETITION- REQUEST FOR THE REINTRODUCTION OF TRAFFIC ISLANDS AT THE JUNCTION OF THE HOLLOW, EARL SHILTON

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Environment and Transport in response to a petition requesting the reintroduction of traffic islands at the junction of the Hollow, Earl Shilton.

The Chairman asked Mrs Blockley to present the report.

Mrs Blockley took Members through the report and the investigations that were carried out prior to this report being submitted.

Mrs Blockley explained that after meeting with Mrs Janice Richards CC and listening to community concerns the outcome would be that two of the central reservations will be reinstated within the next month. One will be on the Nationwide Building Society side of the junction and one on Station Road.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Blockley for the report and was pleased that the petition was successful.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report of the Director of Environment and Transport be noted.

009. RESPONSE TO PETITION- REQUEST FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW BUS SHELTER

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Environment and Transport in response to a petition requesting the construction of a new bus shelter

The Chairman asked Mrs Blockley to present the report.

Mrs Blockley took Members through the report and the investigation which included site visits that were carried out prior to this report being submitted.

The outcome of the report is that the bus shelter will not be reinstated at its previous location as the County Council do not fund bus shelters, however should third party funding become available the County Council are happy to work to find a suitable location on Coventry Road for the shelter.

Cllr Bill agreed that after looking at the pictures in the report it would be very difficult to reinstate the shelter at its previous location, however there is a suitable location further down the road. He asked if the matter could be referred to the Borough Council who removed the shelter as he was unsure as to why it was removed as it was well used and on a major bus route.

The Chairman advised Cllr Bill to refer this matter to the Borough Council himself in co-ordination with the lead petitioner.

Mr Vears said that if third party funding was to be made available they would be happy to look at the money available and see what could be done.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report of the Director of Environment and Transport be noted.

010. HINCKLEY AREA PROJECT UPDATE

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Environment and Transport which updated Members on the Hinckley Area Project. The report was introduced by Mr Palfreyman with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mr Palfreyman took Members through the report and gave an overview of the funding of the 4 zones of this project. He confirmed that zones 1 and 2 were now completed, zone 3 is still ongoing and zone 4 is under proposals.

Cllr Bray asked if there was a plan B should funding be turned down.

Mr Palfreyman said that they are working on 2 scenarios that are listed in the report. The worst case scenario would be if no funding was available, work would have to be done with the Borough Council to complete proposals.

Cllr Bill asked if there was any news on the funding submitted in March 2016 as he hasn't heard anything which is very concerning. He asked if we were to be awarded a reduced amount of funding, can we prioritise the schemes, such as the Hinckley roundabout and the Lancaster Road pedestrian crossing.

Mr Vears shared Cllr Bill's disappointment regarding the news on funding. He said they will look at alternatives, to see what can be done with the money they have available, they will prioritise the schemes and advise Members.

Cllr Witherford asked why the Rugby Road to Granville Road left turn was blocked off around Christmas time, what was the result and is this going to happen again. This left 11 houses struggling to park their vehicles.

Mrs Blockley said that this was a request from Hinckley and Bosworth Council to help with traffic flow around Sainsbury's at Christmas time. Sainsbury's put the suggestions forward to help with peak congestion issues.

Mr Reid added that it was a right turn ban and the feedback they received from Sainsbury's was very positive, however it was only a temporary measure to ease congestion onto Rugby Road around Christmas time.

Mr Vears offered to send the full details as to why the road closure happened directly to Cllr Witherford.

Mr Palfreyman said that part of the aspirations for zone 4 was to learn lessons from temporary road closures such as this one, and this is something that will be looked at as part of zone 4.

Cllr Kirby asked if the yellow lines on Leicester Road are scheduled to be done.

Mrs Blockley said that they had received an objection to this, so the matter will be referred to Director of E & T to consider under delegated authority in consultation with the Lead Member where the matter will hopefully be resolved.

Cllr Kirby also mentioned the yellow lines on Butt Lane, these are still being parked on and she has received a lot of complaints from residents, as there is no enforcement in place.

Mrs Blockley confirmed that wardens do patrol that area however, as yellow lines do not have a loading ban on them, parents are allowed to load and unload children under 11 years old.

Mrs Blockley informed that there has been an objection with the yellow lines on Bark Lane, this will be taken to Director of E & T to consider under delegated authority in consultation with the Lead Member.

Cllr Kirby expressed her thanks for the footpath going from JCC. She asked if there was going to be any street lighting along the footpath.

Mr Vears said that, we do not have the budget to install street lamps along the footpath.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) That the report of the Director of Environment and Transport be noted; and
- ii) That officers send Cllr Witherford details of the Rugby Road closure.

011. 2016/17 MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAMMES – INFORMATION ITEM

Members noted the report.

012. PROGRAMME OF TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT WORK – CURRENT POSITION – INFORMATION ITEM

Members noted the report.

013. ON-GOING ACTION STATEMENT

There are no on-going actions.

014. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

The Chairman asked Members to let officers have in writing any items for consideration for future agendas within 10 days of the date of the meeting. These items can be sent to Sue Dann, email sue.dann@leics.gov.uk or to the Chair.

015. ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIRMAN HAS DECIDED ARE URGENT

The Chairman asked Cllr Sprason to speak regarding his item on the planning permission given to Neovia by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council for their extension to the warehouse and as part of the application the 106 contribution condition included funding for highway improvements. It has come to light over the last few days that this includes junction improvements, LCC Highways are saying their preference is the Desford crossroads, however the parishes of Peckleton & Desford would prefer to see improvements to the Danns Lane junction and to Peckleton Lane.

Cllr Sprason asked LCC Highways to change their approach with what they are advising Hinckley and Bosworth and reconsider using the 106 contributions for Danns Lane junction.

Cllr Cartwright agreed with Cllr Sprason and said he couldn't believe the money was going toward funding for the Desford Crossroads rather than Danns Lane.

Cllr Bill informed Members that he has written to Phil Crossland after the planning meeting who said this will be looked at and considered.

Mr Vears fully understand Members concerns. He explained that the transport implications which will arise from the proposed expansion to Neovia Logistics are detailed and analysed in the supporting Transport Assessment. As part of the scoping discussions the Highways Authority requested the applicant to undertake detailed Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) within an agreed and relevant study area. An important component of this work (TIA) was junction modelling and capacity assessment at the following key junctions (amongst others not detailed below):

- A47 / Dan's Lane priority junction;
- A47 / B582 - Desford Crossroads signalised junction; and
- A47 / Leicester Road roundabout (the start of the Earl Shilton Bypass).

With the exception of the A47 / B582 - Desford Crossroads signalised junction all local junctions tested are anticipated to continue to operate within capacity following the introduction of development traffic.

Relevant to this, growth and network improvement initiatives have been tested with rigour as part of the wider strategic growth strategy in collaboration with Hinckley & Bosworth. Although the purpose of this testing did not specifically include the details of this current application, although the Neovia site is included within the strategic model, the findings of the traffic modelling showed significant pressure on parts of the network in the vicinity the A47 and the potential transport and environmental impacts this has across the wider network.

Improvements to the A47 were identified at two key junctions to improve journey times and local network reliability. The junctions are Desford Crossroads and the Dodwells/Longshoot junctions at the A5. Whilst additional minor improvements to other parts of the network could be required in the future, the Highways Authority will continue to pursue the evidenced and policy led basis to the furtherance to highway intervention at the Desford Crossroads (tested, costed and adopted).

Moving back to the details of this application, certainly from capacity perspective improvements to the Dann's Lane junction with the A47 are not considered necessary as part of this planning application. As identified in the TA, junction modelling analysis has identified a material impact at the Desford Crossroads following the introduction of development traffic. The junction currently operates over capacity with frequent queuing and delays. The junction analysis results have demonstrated that the addition of development traffic would exacerbate an already overloaded situation.

The Highways Authority are however continuing to take practical steps, in collaboration with Desford Parish Council, to provide overall measures in the area to help facilitate the efficient and safe transition of goods vehicles. The Highways Authority have recently held some

positive meetings with representatives of Desford Parish Council both in December (2016) and January (2017) to address on-going concerns over HGV traffic disobeying the current environmental 7.5t weight restrictions in Desford.

As a result of the meetings which have provided all parties with a better understanding of how HGV traffic is operating through villages, the Highways Authority are now in a position to develop a signage strategy that takes into account the concerns raised.

Highways are scheduled to report back to 'key stakeholders' at a meeting to be held at Neovia in March (2017) to discuss the signage strategy proposed and with Neovia Logistics very supportive of a signage scheme to assist local residents concerns, Highways are optimistic that a scheme can progress for the benefit of the community.

Mr Vears said that Desford Crossroads was already highlighted as a junction that needed work and will be affected further by future developments.

Cllr Bill complained that this would only push more traffic through Desford.

Mr Vears replied that this will not be the case because there is a weight limit so none of the big lorries will be routed via Desford village.

Cllr Crooks noticed that lorries have been getting stuck on High Street after trying to get through Desford Village.

Mr Vears replied that he had been working on this issue for 28 years and lorries will always occasionally choose inappropriate routes. Unfortunately we can only deal with what's in place when looking at a planning application.

Cllr Sutton suggested that we should remove the sign that says no access to Peckleton for HGV's over 7.5 tonnes.

Mr Vears informed Members that we are working with the Parish Council for new signage system. Thanks for raising this we will make a note of it.

016. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is **Tuesday 27th June 2017 4.30pm** in the Council Chamber at Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council offices.

017. CHAIRMANS CLOSING REMARKS

The Chairman thanked Members and officers for their attendance at the meeting.