

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS FORUM FOR OADBY AND WIGSTON HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AT THE OADBY AND WIGSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL OFFICES, STATION ROAD, WIGSTON ON TUESDAY 7TH FEBRUARY AT 2.00PM

PRESENT

County Councillors	Borough Councillors
Cllr G A Hart (Chairman)	Cllr D M Carter
Cllr G A Boulter	Cllr R Fahey
Cllr M H Charlesworth	Cllr L Darr
Cllr J Kaufman	Cllr K Loydall
Cllr D A Gamble	

The following also attended the meeting:

County officers present: T Kirk, S Dann and L Angrave

Borough officer present: None

001. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Members and officers to the meeting. He also welcomed Jonathon Wroe from Severn Trent Water who was here for item 8. The Chairman advised Members that he was going to take item 8 after item 4 to allow Mr Wroe to leave after his item.

The Chairman also stated that he would be adding a supplementary paper on Hidcote Road and Sibton Lane Bollards which had been omitted from the agenda pack. This supplementary paper was emailed to all Members and a hard copy made available at the meeting. The Chairman stated that this would be discussed after the other Chair updates at Item 6.

002. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr H Loydall CC.

003. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

004. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

005. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 4th October 2016 were confirmed and signed as a true record of the meeting.

Cllr L Darr BC raised the issue of the state of the central reservation on the A6 London Road/Glen Road from Glen Gorse Roundabout to Florence Wragg roundabout city bound. He stated that he had requested this to be added to the agenda previously. There was a discussion about what improvements are needed and how this fits in with the improved image of the Borough.

Cllr Gamble stated that the dual carriageway was reduced to one lane following a major accident a few years ago. Mr Kirk clarified that this was outside the golf course. Cllr Gamble agreed it was.

The Chair agreed that a site meeting be arranged with officers and local Members to sort out the issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) That the report of the Director of Environment and Transport be noted; and
- ii) that a site meeting is arranged with Cllr Darr and other local Members to discuss improvements required on A6 London Road/Glen Road from Glen Gorse Roundabout to Florence Wragg roundabout city bound.

006. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE –

007. A) GRASS CUTTING

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

Mr Kirk took Members through the update and highlighted the key areas of the report. He advised that the number of customer contacts with regard to grass cutting had reduced in 2016 which followed a number of changes to the service which moved in-house at the end of 2014. The frequency of the cutting reduced from 6 cuts to 5 following a public consultation on the MTFs budget where the public fed back that they felt this was not a high priority and could be reduced, although there were a high level of customer contacts regarding the grass cutting that same year. A review was held as a result of this and a decision made to increase urban cuts to 6 a year for the 2016 season. The service also included a more responsive approach to customer care more reactive to the growth of the grass and there may be more frequent cuts earlier in the season.

Mr Kirk explained that the performance monitoring information in 2016 showed the lowest number of customer contacts since 2013 when 7 cuts were done that year, substantially lower than 2014 and 2015. Mr Kirk went on to say that a number of improvements were being made i.e. trackers on mowers which will give a more responsive and better level of service than before. He stated that there will also be more information available on the website.

Cllr Charlesworth asked about visibility splays and the reporting of issues with these. Mr Kirk answered that Highways Delivery have appointed an external contractor to undertake these cuts who will be able to respond more reactively. Mr Kirk emphasised the need to contact the Customer Service Centre on 0116 3050001 or email customerservices@leics.gov.uk for any of these issues. The Chair stated that when you ring you are asked to press 1 for Customer or 2 for Councillor. Mr Kirk urged Members to raise problems again if it they haven't been resolved by 5 working days especially with safety issues. He stated that when you contact the CSC you will be given a reference number which can be used if you need to call them back.

Mr Kirk mentioned the importance of the Member's feedback on the recent A Roads to Zebras consultation and he urged Members to feedback on the next item on the agenda which looks at the Highways Maintenance Strategy and Policy Review.

Cllr Darr raised an issue with visibility on hedges and not grass. Mr Kirk advised that the County Council will sort out the hedges that are on the County's land. If the hedge is on private land but is a safety issue, the Council will sort it and bill the landowner. If this is over a footway, we inform the owner of the land and if the owner does not comply the Council will serve notice for the landowner to comply or if they don't comply the Council will do the work and invoice the landowner.

Cllr Charlesworth advised that he thought the grass cutting was an improvement on previous years. Mr Kirk informed Members that the cutting starts in April and goes through the cycle but if there is a growth spurt the cuts can be brought forward as required.

Cllr Charlesworth asked about hedge cuts and whether these were done annually. Mr Kirk answered that there are 12 Highways Inspectors employed to assess what needs doing and how often and this would ensure any safety issues are dealt with as a priority.

RECOMMENDATION

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

008. B) CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE – HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE STRATEGY AND POLICY REVIEW

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

Mr Kirk encouraged Members to feed in their comments with regard to the policy review.

There were no questions on this update.

RECOMMENDATION

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

009. C) CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE – TRAFFIC ON THE PARADE

The Forum considered an update by the Director of Environment and Transport with regard to traffic on the Parade. The report was introduced by Mr Kirk with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mr Kirk informed Members that this update was provided following concerns raised at the last Highway Forum.

Mr Kirk highlighted the key areas of the report that explained that traffic surveys had now been carried out that consisted of a 7 day classified traffic count and a midweek single day parking bay occupancy survey. These surveys showed the provision of parking seemed to be working, with the majority of vehicles driving appropriately with a good turnover in the bays.

Cllr Darr asked if the surveys were taken at peak or off-peak times and he stated that speeding was not the issue. The issues were mainly in the evening with the many takeaway shops and the pub with motorists choosing to park anywhere. Mr Kirk said that he had noted these comments.

Cllr Gamble advised that there had been an accident on the parade that had demolished a seat and asked if this could be replaced. Cllr Boulter informed Members that the insurance company had been informed and a replacement would be installed shortly.

RECOMMENDATION

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

010. D) CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE – SCHOOL BOLLARDS LAUNDE SCHOOL

The Forum considered an update by the Director of Environment and Transport with regard to the school bollards at Launde School. The report was introduced by Mr Kirk with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mr Kirk informed Members that this update was a follow on from the petition response at the last forum about the parking issues at Launde School. The petition response stated that a School Travel Plan (STP) was required which would have to be approved by officers at Oadby and Wigston Borough Council. He went on to say that bollards are expensive and have to be funded from the Local Authority budget and that all schools suffer similar issues with inconsiderate parent parking to drop off and collect their children. There is currently enforcement with zig zag markings but parents still park, drop off their children and drive off.

Cllr Charlesworth stated that he was frustrated that the education of parents does not seem to work and felt that enforcement was the only way forward. He went on to say that at Holy Cross Primary School on Stonesby Avenue, they have the Billy and Belinda bollards and although they are 10m apart and in theory a car could park between them they don't and he felt that was because they feel ashamed or embarrassed. He felt that this was a very negative report and that the County Council should be trying to find a solution to this issue. Mr Kirk clarified that parents are allowed to drop off and pick up on double yellow lines.

Cllr Fahey agreed with Cllr Charlesworth and stated that it would not cost £24,000 to put in red routes. He also mentioned that the main entrance to Launde school is on New Street and not Uplands Road and motorists are trying to get through New Street every day with difficulty. He went onto say that work that was agreed in the petition response to amend the lining to straighten the road out to give it some flexibility in September 2015 had not yet been carried out. He raised his concern that there were going to be 100 extra students at Launde School in September 2017. Cllr Fahey asked officers where the details of the strategic route improvements were mentioned in the report. Mr Kirk directed him to paragraph 3 of the report.

Cllr Darr asked why County always raise no objections when schools are applying for expansion and asked can the school be asked to contribute when it is for the safety of the school? Mr Kirk stated that officers are in conversation with the school about a School Travel Plan. Cllr Darr asked if when a planning application is received are the County asked for comments. Mr Kirk stated that this would have no impact on the Highway. Cllr Darr asked that in future could this be considered as it is a safety issue. Mr Kirk stated that the issue would be more for the department of Children and Family Services with regard to extra school places and travel.

Cllr Kaufman informed Members that the City have a car with CCTV installed for enforcement purposes and asked if the County liaise with the City on this. Mr Kirk stated that he was aware of it and went on to clarify that it is allowed for parents to drop their children off on double yellow lines but not wait and this is stated in the Highway Code. Vehicles are not allowed to stop on Zig Zags.

Cllr Fahey asked if the School Travel Plan is issued every year. Tony confirmed that the School Travel Plan is for Oadby and Wigston Borough Council officers to approve.

Cllr Gamble stated that the planning application is approved but not the School Travel Plan, this is arranged under delegated powers and is for Oadby & Wigston Borough Council to resolve.

RECOMMENDATION

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

011. E) CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE – BELL STREET - TIMESCALES

The Forum considered an update by the Director of Environment and Transport with regard to the timescales for the work on Bell Street. The update was introduced by Mr Kirk with a copy filed with the minutes.

Members noted the report and that it was working well.

RECOMMENDATION

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

012. F) CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE – BLOCKED GULLIES ON STATION ROAD

The Forum considered an update by the Director of Environment and Transport with regard to the blocked gullies on Station Road, Wigston. The update was introduced by Mr Kirk with a copy filed with the minutes.

Cllr Charlesworth explained that he had received an email from officers stating that the gullies on Station Road Wigston (from Manor Road junction down to the railway line by the 1852 pub) couldn't be cleared and would have to be dug out. He went on to say that this went back to October 2016 and the drains had not been jetted. Mr Kirk responded that there was a works order for them to be looked at in January and he had assurances that this would be done by 10th February 2017. Mr Kirk asked Cllr Charlesworth to let him know if the work wasn't carried out and he would chase this up. He also asked Cllr Boulter to send through his emails for Mr Kirk to investigate. Mr Kirk highlighted that the process for gully clearing was going to be on more of a risk based approach in future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) That the report of the Director of Environment and Transport be noted; and
- ii) that officers look into the blocked gullies on Station Road, Wigston (from Manor Road junction down to the railway line by the 1852 pub) and contact Cllr Charlesworth.

013. G) CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE – RED ROUTES

The Forum considered an update by the Director of Environment and Transport with regard to red routes. The update was introduced by Mr Kirk with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mr Kirk explained that an update on red routes was requested at the last Highway Forum by Cllr Fahey due to the parking issues at Launde Primary School. Mr Kirk took Members through the report which detailed what a red route is used for. Mr Kirk concluded that the advice given for red routes state that they are only to be used for a strategic route and were not for use just near schools.

Cllr Fahey said that he would argue with this as if we cannot put bollards in then something has to be done on New Street, even if the change is temporary to ensure that parents follow the Highway Code.

Mr Kirk agreed to take this back to officers to look at but suggested that a School Travel Plan would address some of these issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) That the report of the Director of Environment and Transport be noted; and
- ii) that officers look into the parking issues on New Street and report back to Cllr Fahey.

014. H) CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE – HIDCOTE ROAD & SIBTON LANE BOLLARDS

The Forum considered the supplementary paper by the Director of Environment and Transport with regard to the bollards on Hidcote Road and Sibton Lane. The update was introduced by Mr Kirk with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mr Kirk took Members through the report and highlighted the costs involved for relocating the bollards on Hidcote Road and Sibton Lane and concluded that as there is no justification for moving the bollards and, unless third party funding was made available, there would be no further action. He added that you would need 10 bollards installing to prevent motorists driving over footways etc.

Cllr Kaufman stated that he wasn't surprised as the cost of consultation makes a big difference and asked if the County Council could work together with the Town Forum on the installation. Mr Kirk confirmed that consultation is important as everyone needs to be able to submit their views and that they may find that residents on alternative routes identified and consulted on would most likely be against a change in the current arrangements.

Cllr DM Carter BC stated that the existing bollard wasn't removed but an additional bollard was installed so that would reduce the cost. He also asked if there were any other solutions for this i.e. reducing the speed limit to 20mph. Mr Kirk stated that other options could be considered but the funding issues still exist due to the priority in terms of speeding measurements and that there was no accident history.

Cllr Darr suggested that the Local Members take this away and talk to the residents and if a solution is identified in the future, it can be brought back to the Forum for discussion. The Chair agreed to add an item to a future agenda when appropriate.

Cllr Charlesworth asked why the County Council cannot justify spending money on this scheme but would be happy to consider it if third party funding were available, he said this felt like double standards. Mr Kirk stated that the County Council can only justify spending the budget if it meets the set criteria, although if the local community feel strongly about something, they can have the option of finding the budget for it.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) That the report of the Director of Environment and Transport be noted; and
- ii) that an item be added to a future agenda following discussions with local Members and the suggestion of further solution to the traffic problems in the Hidcote Road and Sibton Lane area.

015. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 36

There are currently no petitions to present.

016. SEVERN TRENT WATER UPDATE (VERBAL)

Mr Jonathon Wroe from Severn Trent Water introduced himself and informed Members that he had been invited to the Highway Forum to talk about current and future plans for works in the Oadby and Wigston area. Mr Wroe stated that he had brought a number of plans which had the recent water main bursts plotted. He advised Members that he would send a copy of these maps electronically to Sue Dann to send out with the minutes. He stated that the Asset Investment team are currently working on a mains renewal plan using the information on the identified hot spots.

Mr Wroe advised Members that he was happy to answer any questions and if he was unable to answer them, he would take these back to respond after the meeting.

Cllr D A Gamble CC asked about the recent 10m burst main that burst again directly after it was fixed. Mr Wroe responded that this is partly due to the aging asset and also a finite budget for investment. He advised that all bursts are plotted and then put through a matrix which is used for prioritising the work. He added that it is useful for customers to inform him of issues which can sometimes affect the priority that work is carried out.

Cllr Gamble stated that there had been many recent water main bursts in Oadby that have caused chaos due to road closures. Mr Wroe responded that Severn Trent Water tries to ensure that customers get their water supply returned as quickly as possible. Unfortunately the situation can be unpredictable with the need to liaise with other utilities, the asset may also be buried in concrete and the disruption to the network does sometimes create one or two other bursts due to the shock to the system.

Mr Wroe stated that he understood Member's concerns especially the bursts on the Parade and will look into the investment plans for this area. He also stated that to repair these bursts, road closures and equipment have to be used.

Cllr M H Charlesworth CC asked if Severn Trent Water (STW) have a proactive approach. Mr Wroe answered that Severn Trent use software that can produce a model using asset age, frequency and number of bursts. He explained that due to funding they cannot replace everything but they can try and respond as quickly as possible to bursts. Mr Wroe referenced the maps that he had brought to the meeting which will be attached to the minutes for information.

Cllr Charlesworth asked if the low pressure that customers experience in this area is due to STW not wanting to stress the system. Mr Wroe answered that the supply is shared and this is done by having one pipe from the supply which then has branches to a number of properties. He added that if there are concerns regarding low pressure, these can be raised with STW who can try and resolve the issue. Mr Wroe stated that for new residential developments, household demand would be considered and taken into account for mains water and sewerage. If they are not viewed to be sufficient the Developer will be asked to contribute to any necessary improvements.

Cllr Charlesworth asked about the lifespan of the network. Mr Wroe said that the metal pipework installed in 1930 is lasting longer than the PVC pipework installed in the 1970/80s which is coming to its end of life. This is being replaced with MDPE and HDPE which lasts longer than the PVC plastic mains.

Cllr Charlesworth asked about the huge tanker that has been sited at the Railway Midland Mainline site for 3 days with about 30 men working in that area. Mr Wroe stated that he was unaware of this but would take this back and investigate and report back to Cllr Charlesworth.

Cllr G A Boulter CC stated that residents get annoyed with Utilities digging up the road and then leaving the barriers there for days with no activity, and asked why this happens? He also asked about the low water pressure and has complained to STW but has not heard anything but had heard that a resident had been advised to renew his own pipework at their own expense which had been done but the low pressure problem remained. He advised that this was on Manor Street, Coronation Avenue and Holmden Avenue. He stated that residents on Cherry Street did have this problem but now have a new main. He felt that the pressure was turned down due to the leak problem. Mr Wroe said he would take this issue back to investigate and report back to Cllr Boulter.

The Chair asked if a resident requested a separate feed due to low pressure, would they automatically be put onto a water meter. Mr Wroe stated that water meters are currently not compulsory.

Cllr R Fahey BC said that he had been advised that STW is having to employ staff from Europe to work on putting drainage into new developments. Mr Wroe explained that STW

are a separate company to those that install drainage into new housing developments. STW operate and maintain the mains sewers in new developments, and they are responsible for inputting into new sewer developments with regard to flood risk and can ask Developers to upgrade if necessary. STW don't lay sewers in new housing developments although they provide the standard and specification to work from. Mr Wroe confirmed that once the development is completed, the responsibility is handed over to STW and they would then maintain the asset. Mr Wroe confirmed that the contractors on this scheme are not employed by Severn Trent or its sub-contractors. He also confirmed that all of STW's employees are screened to ensure they hold the correct documents to work in the UK.

Cllr Charlesworth stated that he thought that water meters were the way forward as he felt that the pricing was wrong as it still uses rateable value rather than the consumption of water. Mr Wroe stated that STW are proud that they do have the lowest bills of all the Water Utilities. He went on to say that they will soon be moving to a competitive market and consumers will be able to choose their suppliers in future, this will start later this year for non-household customers.

Cllr Boulter stated that he was aware of a leak on the junction of Cross Street and Moat Street that was reported before Christmas and is continuing to leak and he was concerned that this may cause a problem especially in the freezing weather. Mr Wroe stated that he would take this back and investigate and report back to Cllr Boulter. Mr Wroe stated that sometimes the leak can be on the private (customer) side but shows on the footpath.

Cllr K Loydall BC had 3 issues to raise, as follows:

- 1) With regard to the finite budget, in the private sector an aim would be to invest money replacing pipes year on year, are they complying with this?
- 2) Are they in the position to maintain our source of water?
- 3) Are they still complying with the NRSWA?

Mr Wroe answered as follows:

- 1) STW is heavily regulated and the Regulator ensures they make the right level of investment and are held to account to a standard set of measures.
- 2) The vast majority of our water comes from the Derwent Valley. STW are investing in infrastructure projects in Derby, Ambergate and Ab Kettleby. They are also looking at ways of conserving water, using grey water for flushing, gardening etc. and looking at ways of collecting and storing water.
- 3) Permits are still required for opening the road and STW ensure they programme their work and have a tie in unless the work is an emergency.

The Chairman thanked Mr Wroe for answering Members' questions and it was agreed that it would be useful for Mr Wroe to attend a future meeting.

017. 2016/17 MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAMMES – INFORMATION ITEM

Members noted the report.

018. PROGRAMME OF TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS AND SIGNING AND LINING SCHEMES – CURRENT POSITION – INFORMATION ITEM

Members noted the report.

019. ON-GOING ACTION STATEMENT

The on-going action statement was noted.

020. ITEMS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

The Chairman asked Members to submit any items that they want considered at a future meeting in writing to Sue Dann within 10 days of the date of the meeting. Items for the agenda can be e-mailed to sue.dann@leics.gov.uk

021. ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIRMAN HAS DECIDED IS URGENT

There were no urgent items.

022. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on **6th July 2017 – 2.00pm** in the Council Chamber at Oadby & Wigston Borough Council offices

023. CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS

The Chairman thanked Members and officers for their attendance at the meeting and explained that as he was not standing in the next election there would be a new Chairman at the next meeting.

7th February 2017

Chairman

2.00pm – 3.40pm

Date

