

Minutes of a meeting of the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Thursday, 4 March 2021.

PRESENT

Mr. A. E. Pearson CC (in the Chair)

Mr. D. C. Bill MBE CC
Mr. G. A. Boulter CC
Mr. Max Hunt CC
Mr. W. Liquorish JP CC

Mr. J. Morgan CC
Mr. L. Phillimore CC
Mr J. Poland CC
Mrs. J. Richards CC

In attendance.

Mr. B. Pain CC, Deputy Leader
Mrs. T. Pendleton CC, Cabinet Lead Member for Highways and Transportation.

39. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2021 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

40. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that the following questions had been received under Standing Order 34.

Questions from Mrs. J. Howard

1. OJEU Notice

- a. **Expressly should the Council now reconsider its recycling statements for the future to make them more ambitious, despite allowing for a 1% increase in houses, in order to take account of the targets for separate collection of waste (and its management) in the Waste Management Plan for England released in January 2021.**

Response by the Chairman:

The Chairman replied as follows:-

Our future approach will be considered as part of the review of the Leicestershire Municipal Waste Management Strategy, work on which is now underway. The review will set future recycling targets for Leicestershire and will ensure they reflect the ambitions and appropriately align with national targets. As this updated strategy is progressed, due consideration will be given to the circular economy elements within the Environment Bill, the aims and ambitions set within the Resources and Waste Strategy and other relevant strategies and plans e.g. 25 Year Environment Plan and Industrial Strategy. In regards to the separate collection of materials this will be

further explored in the national consultations which we expect to be released in March 2021 of which we will engage and respond to.

- b. **Secondly why does the Council need to have further dialogues on increasing that tonnage quoted in the Notice. Or, Conversely, if it has set its minimum tonnage too low, what target was it trying to meet? Will it therefore confirm that if it achieves its target rates of recycling and the minimum tonnage is accurate, that it should include into its procurement contract a clause to reflect these targets for reducing that tonnage to reduce greenhouse emissions in accordance with its Climate Emergency Council Declaration in May 2019 and in compliance with the Waste Management Plan 2021**

The Chairman replied as follows:-

The published OJEU notice for the Contract for the Treatment of Post 2020 Residual Waste is being run via a competitive dialogue procurement process, as such further dialogue is standard practice. When assessing the tonnage, variations in waste arisings caused by housing growth or increases in recycling have been considered while also providing the County Council with flexibility during the contract period. For detail regarding the Climate Emergency Declaration, please see the answer to (h) below.

- c. **Thirdly as there are two OJEU notices for the same the contract, has the council deleted from the April Notice the ability to include waste from other Waste Disposal Authorities. Or is it restated in the July Notice as ‘intends to dialogue on the options available to increase the tonnage’ please explain. The answer is relevant to question 8.**

The Chairman replied as follows:-

Please note the two notices issued for the Contract for the Treatment of Post 2020 Residual Waste procurement serve different purposes and are standard practice for a contract of this nature. A Prior Information Notice (PIN) was issued in April 2019 advising the waste management sector that this procurement would be commencing imminently. The OJEU Contract Notice was issued in July 2019 which advertised and commenced the procurement. The notices allow for other named Waste Disposal Authorities to utilise the resulting contract.

Please see the answer to question (q) regarding other Waste Disposal Authority involvement in the Contract for the Treatment of Post 2020 Residual Waste.

2. Heat Take Off Incinerators, RI and the Procurement Process

- d. **Can the Council therefore reappraise its minimum standard so that it will have as its new minimum in any procurement process/contract, that any waste to energy incinerator, has Heat Take Off. Therefore, in any calculations for R1, Heat Take Off must be included as being operational** to comply with the government’s proposals in the Waste Management Plan 2021 to promote Heat Take Off.**

The Chairman replied as follows:-

For the Treatment of Post 2020 Residual Waste procurement it is set as a minimum requirement that any solution that burns or incinerates the waste (or a significant fraction of the waste) should utilise an R1 compliant facility as defined in the EU Waste Framework Directive 2008/98/EC. Minimum standards for any future procurements will be considered at the appropriate time and will take into account the relevant guidance / legislation which is then in place.

- e. **Additionally, can the council explain its technology neutral position in the light of the targets in the Waste Management Plan for England 2021 to eliminate all D10 incinerators by 2030**

The Chairman replied as follows:-

The reference to eliminating all D10 incinerators by 2030 could not be identified in The Waste Management Plan for England 2021. The document does state that 'the Government does not express a preference for one technology over another, since local circumstances differ'; the Leicestershire Waste Partnership's technology neutral position is, therefore, in line with the Waste Management Plan for England.

3. Waste Management Scheme

- f. **Can the Council explain why it removed the necessity of having a Waste Management Scheme in the 2019/2020 Planning Permission if the standard operated by the Environment Agency is to reduce a significant risk to the environment only. The earlier Planning permission for Newhurst 2014 had this condition included. There are standard planning conditions in this respect set by the Secretary of State. (eg Pre-sorted Residual Waste Acceptance Scheme con 8 of planning permission (APP/PO199/A/10/2140199)for the (SERC) Severnside Energy Recovery Centre.)**

The Chairman replied as follows:-

This question refers to Condition 36 on Planning Permission 2014/1440/02 relating to waste acceptance. This condition was removed from the most recent planning permission as it was determined that this condition duplicates the existing controls on the Environmental Permit.

- g. **Would the council not agree that a Waste Management Plan set out as a planning condition can enhance its controls and procedures to ensure recycling takes place efficiently before delivered to any incinerator.**

The Chairman replied as follows:-

When deciding what conditions to apply, we have to have regard for the legal tests outlined in Paragraph 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework. These tests require conditions cannot be imposed that we believe may not be 'necessary' or 'enforceable. The guidance is clear that local planning authorities should not impose planning conditions that do not meet these legal tests, and this would duplicate existing controls that are already regulated by the Environmental Permit.

4. Monitoring Waste before incineration as producer of the waste/waste disposal authority.

- h. **If the Council intends to meet its targets in Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 for its own operations how can it ensure all plastics and any hazardous materials are removed from residual household waste before it is sent to the incinerator tipping floor. Reliance on these types of checks alone, as stated by Biffa/Covanta above, cannot be the only and or an acceptable practice.**

{We note that removal of plastics is indeed discussed as being a minimal standard set out in the procurement process, In questions to Cabinet November 2020.}

The Chairman replied as follows:-

Emissions from household waste are not included in the greenhouse gas emissions report for the Council's own operations and are not in scope of the Climate Emergency Declaration / Environment Strategy target to achieve net zero for the Council's own emissions by 2030.

Leicestershire County Council are not the producers of household waste and this waste is not counted as part of its operational output

5. Co2 Emissions in the Council's Environmental Performance Report 2019/20 and Carbon Capture

- i. **Can the Council confirm whether it will be including into its Greenhouse Gas Report and Emissions Report (latest 2019/2020) co2 emissions from Newhurst (when commissioned) and any other incinerator it uses the facilities of, in calculating its target of net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030 for the waste the County produces in relation to its own operations and in its contribution to the improvement of the wider environment as set out in its Environment Strategy as amended on July 2020. [Agenda Item 9 page 35.] (Also recognising the legal challenge to the government's decision to exclude waste incinerators from its post Brexit carbon emissions trading scheme which is continuing through the courts.)**

The Chairman replied as follows:-

The question makes the assumption that LCC will be sending residual waste to the Newhurst EfW facility. The outcome of the procurement for the Treatment of Post 2020 Residual Waste is not known at this time. As already stated above, emissions from household waste are not included in the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions report for the Council's own operations and are not in scope of the Environment Strategy target to achieve net zero for the Council's own emissions by 2030.

The Council has followed the Government's Environmental Reporting Guidelines, published by DEFRA (2019).

- j. **Can the Council confirm whether it calculates its own Co2 emissions in the above report for the transportation of waste to sites for incineration or landfill. If the procurement contract includes other Waste disposal Authorities, those Co2 emissions also.**

The Chairman replied as follows:-

In calculating the Council's own operational GHG emissions we include the emissions from County Council vehicles used to transport waste. The emissions of third-party contractors or other authorities are not included in the annual GHG emissions report.

- k. **Can the Council confirm that in order to reduce Co2 emissions it will promote carbon capture as part of its policy on reaching Zero Carbon Emissions by 2030. And therefore promote all incinerators to advance towards this technology in particular any R1 Energy from Waste incinerator. See Climate Change Committee Sixth Carbon Budget Report December 2020 and recognising the recent announcement by Veolia. And if so, how.**

The Chairman replied as follows:-

The Council currently does not have a policy position on carbon capture. This will be considered as part of ongoing work to respond to the climate emergency.

6. PM 2.5 Air Pollution

- l. **Can the Council confirm that it is critical that the Director of Public Health at Leicestershire County Council takes action to co-ordinate an approach across the County to monitor PM2.5 levels, and to acquire Zephyrs** to routinely monitor these particulates for the health and safety of its residents. And recognising hot spots, despite the lack of close residents, where incinerators emit these particulates.**

The Chairman replied as follows:-

The Council, led by the departments of Public Health and Environment & Transport is taking action to co-ordinate an approach to improving air quality involving the County Council, district councils, the NHS and other partners. Responsibility for monitoring air quality rests with districts councils and is not a direct responsibility of the County Council.

However, the Council with partners has developed an action plan to address the impact of air pollution on health. This includes looking to reduce PM2.5 from the source perspective. The plan co-ordinates action across the partnership including; To ensure all appropriate planning and development proposals are rigorously and systematically scrutinised, taking into consideration existing air pollution levels in the area the development is proposed and the current health needs of the population living there to ensure any developments – health impacts are known and mitigated against to not exacerbate poor air quality and consequently poor health.

To work with communities on a series of behaviour change campaigns to promote active and sustainable travel, anti-idling, Clean Air Day and reduced multi fuel stove use - to understand the barriers to improving air quality in their areas.

- m. **Following the recent very sad death of Ella Kissa-Debrah, as stated by the Coroner due to 'having been exposed to levels of nitrogen dioxide and particulates in excess of world Health Organisation guidelines' can the Council confirm that it will lobby Parliament to include into the Environment Bill a safe**

level of PM2.5 particulates and a legal requirement to measure those particulates.

The Chairman replied as follows:-

Please see answer above.

7. Funds for Future Recycling

- n. Can the council confirm how it will finance (or use private finance) to create a hierarchy of improved waste recycling in the Circular Economy as Producer of the waste/Waste disposal Authority. And avoid any liability as a producer of that waste in the Environment Bill.**

The Chairman replied as follows:-

The financial burden of producer responsibility is intended to fall on the manufacturers of products which eventually become waste. The County Council is not a producer of waste in this sense.

LCC as a Waste Disposal Authority works with partners to encourage waste prevention, reuse and recycling and achieves this through targeted campaigns and other appropriate methods to raise awareness and promote 'environmentally aware' behaviours.

LCC continues to promote the waste hierarchy and support and influence future national policies to minimise waste, packaging and promote sustainable supply chains and circular economy thinking.

- o. Would the Council agree that if it set more ambitious recycling targets it should also target reduced charges within the procurement contract over the 25 year term, despite there being a break clause at 2031? A potential financial gain to be included in the Greenhouse Gas Emissions data report. [But conversely, also protect themselves from any higher gate fee charges in the event that there is less waste produced].**

The Chairman replied as follows:-

The Contract for the Treatment of Post 2020 Residual Waste has been procured to provide a destination for black bag type residual waste that remains after waste minimisation, recycling and composting activities have taken place. The procurement process has been developed to deliver a high quality, reliable, cost effective solution for managing residual waste in the medium to long term.

- p. How else does the Council intend to benefit from the resource-value of the waste it supplies as fuel to EfW operators.**

The Chairman replied as follows:-

The Contract for the Treatment of Post 2020 Residual Waste procurement process has been developed to deliver a high quality, reliable, cost effective solution for managing residual waste in the medium to long term. Energy from Waste facilities generally charge a gate fee (cost per tonne of waste) which takes into account any income that the operator may generate from its operations.

8. Monitoring Recycling Standards of other authorities in the OJEU

- q. **As other authorities are stated to be part of the Procurement Contract, (April OJEU Notice – see above query) how will the Council exact the same high standards of recycling from those other authorities.**

The Chairman replied as follows:-

The other Waste Disposal Authorities named in the OJEU notice are required by national legislation and policy to deliver their own recycling performance levels. The County Council has no powers over other Waste Disposal Authorities.

Mrs. J. Howard asked the following supplementary questions to which the Chairman invited the Director of Environment and Transport to respond. At the Chairman's discretion Ms Howard was invited to set out the background to the questions put which looked to explore the Council's recycling targets and policies for the future having recognised that the ways in which individuals and organisations consider waste were rapidly changing. It was noted that the incinerator shortly to be commissioned in Loughborough had focused their mind on the emissions that would occur in and around Loughborough. Mrs Howard further set out her supplementary questions, which would be answered following the meeting.

Given that the amount of residual waste is projected to decrease can you provide timescales on the future work in progress in respect of recycling targets to ensure that the recycling targets do not take a retrograde step within the county whilst furthering incineration?

In the Waste Management Plan England 2021 (P 45) the Government promotes the greater efficiency of energy from waste plants through utilisation of the heat generated in district heating networks or by industry.....particular attention should be given to the location of the plant to maximise opportunities for heat use.

Can the Council confirm that it will, in line with the Government's Waste Management Plan, include in its future plans the desirability of utilising incinerators that have a minimum R1 threshold to include a substantive heat take off. If any incinerator does not achieve this status then it should be removed from any contract?

It states in Figure2 in the Waste Management Plan for England 2021 (page 15) that by 2030 that in the Evolution of Waste Management Practices the shift will be towards R1 status.

As this is a very moveable position, can the Council confirm that it will not adopt a technology neutral position within its work in progress of options available?

The Environment Agency's Permit requirements on an Operator of an incinerator is to receive and handle waste in a way that does not impose a significant risk to the environment. This is not a high standard. As stated in the question Biffa/Covanta's operating checks are to only do spot checks on tipping floors and visual inspection by crane drivers, which does not appear very satisfactory, so it is up to the producer of the waste/disposal authority to ensure that sufficient recycling is undertaken. Therefore this work is not duplicated.

Please can the council therefore reconsider its position and explain how it will be taking plastic and other non replaceable resources from household waste?

We gave an example of a planning condition for a waste management scheme. Please can the council explain why this is not necessary or appropriate if other councils apply them?

Please can the Council answer the question as to how it intends to remove plastic from the waste before it is transported to the incinerator the question stated that even 12% reduction in plastic will remove Co2 emissions considerably and ensure the incinerator is not operating to the same levels as a coal fired power plant. (See details in the question). If it does not do so will it include in its own greenhouse gases these additional emissions despite being outside its own area of operation.

If the Legal challenge as referred to above is successful can the Council confirm that it will add these CO2 emissions to its target. Can the council therefore consider including in its zero emissions targets greenhouse gases beyond its own operations , where it uses those services?

Please can you provide a target date for this work in progress?

Please can the Council respond on the question regarding Zephyrs in particular can it confirm the purchase of Zephyrs across the county and how the data will be monitored from the machines and be made public ie in which council reports.

Please can the Council exactly explain in practice how it will increase recycling. If it is not responsible for ensuring that greater recycling takes place within the household waste it has collected who exactly is and how it is monitored?

Can the Council therefore confirm that it is not tying itself into a procurement contract with massive financial gate charges that it will not be able to extract itself from in the future, when reduced recycling targets are met and or different methods of disposing of waste, ie biostabilisation of waste before any landfill etc in the future years?

41. Questions asked by members.

The Chief Executive reported that the following questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5) from Mr. M. Hunt CC.

- 1. Why does the County Council not allow urban communities to have small wooden posts, or similar arrangements, to protect grass verges and amenity areas on former council estates when the authority tolerates them in rural, parished areas and so-called beauty spots?**

Response by the Chairman:

The statement that there is a different approach depending on the type of area is incorrect.

Barriers of this kind are typically used to protect highway verges that are damaged through either parking or over riding. Leicestershire County Council (LCC) has no statutory duty to improve the existing road network only maintain it. Any alteration to the network to stop vehicles parking on a verge would be classed as an improvement scheme and must therefore meet a strict criterion for it to be funded. The aesthetics of a location are not considered when assessing proposals/requests, as such LCC are normally not able to justify funding to install this kind of barrier.

If individuals, communities or parishes wished to explore this kind of arrangement, the installation and maintenance would have to be fully funded by a third party, including costs associated with licensing and public liability insurance.

The location of the proposal is only assessed to ensure that the “barrier” can be safely installed according to legislative guidelines. Whether a site is in a rural or urban location does not impact on the decision, each site is assessed on individual basis.

- 2. To residents who live in former council estates this seems a use of ‘red tape’ to frustrate their efforts to apply the same protection as they see in more privileged areas. What is the legal situation under equalities legislation?**

Response by the Chairman:

As explained in the above response, the perception that there is a different approach depending on the type of area is incorrect. All locations are assessed individually regardless of their wider environment. The process for applying for any improvement on the highway that is funded by a third party is the same irrespective of locality and applicant. It does not conflict with equalities legislation.

- 3. Why does the County Council tolerate rocks on grass verges when they won’t tolerate wooden posts? Would the authority tolerate a local school to install posts an adjacent amenity area in order to prevent unauthorised parking on grassed areas.**

Response by the Chairman:

The County Council does not authorise the placing of stones on verges. The use of (typically) white painted stones by residents, is contrary to the Highways Act 1980 and may make the resident and or the authority liable for third party damage and injuries. We acknowledge that in some instance’s stones have been used on verges without permission from the authority. Whilst we do not proactively enforce their removal, if a complaint is received regarding their installation, action is taken to address the situation.

As detailed in the response to question 1 a school may apply to the authority for permission to install preventative barriers on the highway, however these would need to be funded by a third party and meet national guidelines.

- 4. On the wider question of inequality, does the law permit the County Council to devote more resources to support Parish and Town Council in contrast to unparished areas.**

Response by the Chairman:

The law applies across all areas and our practice is to respond to requests regardless of the area it is derived from according to the Councils Highway's Asset Management Policy.

Mr Hunt CC submitted the following supplementary questions on the responses provided .

- 1. What precisely is the strict criterion referred to and what are the exceptions (by rule or example) which justify this kind of barrier?**

Response by the Chairman:-

LCC has a statutory duty to maintain highways at public expense, and a statutory power (i.e. a discretion) to improve highways. LCC's general approach is to only consider works that would typically be classified as improvements to the highway, such as the placement of barriers, if there are highway safety issues at the site in question or if the habitual overrunning or parking of vehicles on the verge is causing damage to utilities situated within the highway. LCC's current budgetary constraints do not allow it to implement highway improvements that are desirable purely on aesthetic grounds, such as the fencing of grass verges for aesthetic reasons.

Where measures such as fences and bollards across the highway are requested locally for aesthetic reasons, LCC would defer to other public authorities which have the power to implement such measures (subject to the consent of LCC as Highway Authority). This then enables LCC to focus its limited resources on meeting its statutory duties in relation to the highway. In this regard, if local councils wished to explore this kind of arrangement, they would make an application to LCC as Highway Authority for its consent to the installation and maintenance of the barrier (or other aesthetic measure) but this would have to be fully funded by a third party, including any ongoing costs associated with licensing and public liability insurance.

Each site would be considered on its own merits with the location of the proposal only being assessed to ensure that the "barrier" can be safely installed according to legislative guidelines. This criterion is applied throughout the County regardless of whether a site is in a rural or urban location.

- 2. Is the County Council unable to see a fundamental inequality under law, or in practice, in giving access to highway improvements to one community with their own precept on the same terms as one with no public means at all?**

Response by the Chairman:-

LCC is consistent in its approach to highway improvements across the county. As stated above, due to current budgetary constraints, it has an inability to carry out

highway improvements purely for aesthetic purposes and requires third parties to provide resources for those types of improvements, leaving LCC to maintain the highway and carry out works required for safety reasons.

This offer for communities to facilitate delivery of aesthetic improvements over and above the core highway services the council provides, by securing third party funding, can be achieved through a number of avenues. These include:

- Individuals approaching their parish/town council or parish meeting who may agree to fund
- Individuals being willing to fund themselves or in partnership with a number of other individual parties each contributing to the cost
- Individuals requesting funding via their district authority, particularly relevant where the measures are primarily concerned with aesthetics of an area
- Individuals/community groups or local councils applying to a relevant Community Fund if available at the time.

It is acknowledged that not all of the above options will be available for all areas of the county. It is also acknowledged that some options, even if available, will not be feasible, for example some parish councils are unable to raise their precept to fund measures or some are too small to feel able to fund measures.

It is emphasised that the core statutory highway services are consistently applied across the county. The additional options which require third party funding are offered in an attempt to support communities to have measures which they deem important at a time when due to financial constraints, LCC is only able to fund statutory functions. In making this offer, we endeavour to support as many feasible funding options as possible in recognition of the diversity of characteristics and governance across our communities in Leicestershire

3. Would you agree this give access to individuals with means to achieve what disadvantaged communities cannot, even extending to decorative planning on the grass verge?

Response by the Chairman:

The initial and supplementary question raise slightly different issues, in relation to discrete powers of LCC as highway authority. With regard to the planting of grass verges, LCC regularly receives applications for the cultivation of highways within the county and applies the same highway assessment criteria regardless of community. The application process for a cultivation licence or consent is open to all, including local councils, individuals or community groups. There is some variance in specific assessment criteria dependent upon the basis and statutory provision upon which the application is made.

4. I am not disputing the law, but how can the County Council demonstrate it applies equal resources to support parishes over areas with no parish or town council?

Response by the Chairman:-

LCC's approach to highway improvements is as stated above and is applied fairly and consistently across the administrative area regardless of whether that area has a parish or town council. LCC applies the criteria ensuring that it is able to meet its statutory duties as highway authority for the maintenance of the highway including necessary improvements to secure highway safety and protect public utilities, whilst enabling other authorities, groups and individuals (where statutory provision enables) to secure other improvements to the highway for aesthetic reasons.

42. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

43. Declarations of interest.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations were made.

44. Declarations of the Party Whip.

There were no declarations of the party whip.

45. Presentation of Petitions.

The Chief Executive reported that no petitions had been received under Standing Order 35.

46. Strategic Property Energy Strategy.

The Committee received a report from the Director of Corporate Resources regarding the Strategic Property Energy Strategy. The Report marked 'Agenda Item 8' is filed with these minutes.

The Head of Strategic Property informed the Members that the Strategic Property Energy Strategy was a sub-strategy of the Environment Strategy and addressed County Council Buildings which made up 36% of the County Council's greenhouse gas emissions. The Strategy looked to enable the Authority to achieve its target of zero carbon by 2030.

Arising from discussion the following points were noted:-

- i. The Council's greenhouse gas emissions accounted for 1% of Leicestershire's emissions. The Council's wider unmeasured emissions and the approach to reducing Leicestershire's emissions would be addressed as part of Tranche 2 of the Carbon Reduction Roadmap.

- ii. Where the Authority had reduced its estate, the original baseline figure was amended accordingly to ensure progress reflected the proactive work the County Council had undertaken to reduce its emissions, and not the removal of buildings from the estate.

RESOLVED

That the comments of the Committee be forwarded to the Scrutiny Commission and Cabinet for consideration and that Cabinet be advised that the Committee supports the proposed Strategic Energy Property Strategy.

47. Environment and Transport Performance Report to December 2020.

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director of Environment and Transport and the Chief Executive on Environment and Transport performance to December 2020. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 9' is filed with these minutes.

The Director of Environment and Transport presented the report and stated that out of the 38 performance indicators 31 had been updated of which four remained the same, 18 had improved and nine had deteriorated. Arising from the discussion the following points arose:-

- i. A Member questioned why 'the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI)' had risen by 5% despite the reduction in volume of traffic. Anecdotally it had been noted that there were more individuals walking and cycling, and that the reduction in traffic on the road as a result of Covid-19 had resulted in increased reports of speeding. However, the County Council did not have the data available to draw concrete conclusions on the matter. Members were assured that the Department would continue to work with the Police as set out within the road casualty reduction report.
- ii. Members remained concerned regarding the data quality of reported traffic accidents due to changes in police reporting procedures which may have resulted in the underreporting of accidents. The County Council were aware of the issues and understood a group met regularly to consider the issue and that the Committee would continue to be kept updated on the matter.
- iii. 'Total Business miles claimed' had reduced by 17%. While the figures had been somewhat affected by Covid-19 Council services such as highways maintenance and transportation for vulnerable children had continued in a socially distanced manner.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

48. Road Casualty Reduction in Leicestershire 2019-2020.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport which provided an update on road casualty statistics for 2019/2020 and Leicestershire's approach to casualty reduction. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10' is filed with the minutes.

The Committee welcomed Graham Compton from Leicestershire Police to the meeting who highlighted key points within the appended Police Road Safety Report.

Members were concerned regarding the increased traffic accidents and speeding complaints received during the year that appeared to be as a result of the pandemic. Mr Compton confirmed that the Road Safety Partnership were looking at the 2020 figures but as yet were not able to draw concrete conclusions. The Police and the County Council were aware that similar patterns were being considered nationally by the Department for Transport. The Road Safety Partnership would look to take any appropriate actions in response to incidents of speeding and members were encouraged to share the Neighbourhood Link (<https://www.neighbourhoodlink.co.uk/>) with their constituents to enable them to submit policing, traffic and speed comments or concerns for their local area.

The Lead Member for Highways and Transportation assured the Committee that the County Council continued to work with the Police and local communities through schemes such as Community Speed Watch and Speed Enforcement Initiatives. Due to the Council's limited resource and oversubscription of the schemes it was important it focused its effort on the most 'at risk' areas following detailed data analysis of speed checks within areas. The Council would look to expand such schemes where feasible.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

49. Environment and Transport 2021/22 Highways and Transportation Capital Programme and Works Programme.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport which provided details of the Department's Capital Programme and Works Programme 2021/22. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 11' is filed with these minutes.

The Director informed the Committee that the report set out the current position but there was a need for flexibility within the works programme as more detailed information became available regarding the road network. Members would be kept updated with the latest work programme via the Members Hub.

Mr Hunt raised concerns regarding the focus of the capital programme on major road schemes as opposed to maintaining and improving the existing highway network. He commented that the development of Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUE's) had been promoted highlighting their close proximity to existing town and urban centres which would reduce the need for significant additional road schemes as residents would be using existing transport networks and local facilities. Most SUE's however, such as the one in north Loughborough have required major capital investment in widening the A512 which would have little benefit for existing communities.

The Director assured the Committee that funding was allocated to the Authority on a formula basis from Government to maintain its highway network. Capital schemes such as the A512 were to improve the network and mitigate the impact of growth. The Director acknowledged the concern of residents however highlighted that had the A512 scheme not been undertaken there would be significantly more complaints as the existing highways infrastructure would not be able to fully support the movements generated by such growth.

Mr Pendleton highlighted the risk that the Authority had taken in forward funding infrastructure to enable areas such as Charnwood to reach growth targets as set out within Local Plans.

RESOLVED:

That the comments of the Committee be forwarded to the Cabinet for consideration and that Cabinet be advised that the Committee supports the proposed Highways and Transportation Capital Programme and Works Programme

50. Development of a Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport which provided details on the development of a Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 12' is filed with these minutes.

In presenting the report the Director set out the importance of an interim Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy to guide delivery of early priority measures such as the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road (MMDR) and to provide a framework to develop other measures to be put in place following the completion of the MMDR.

Members noted that a decision by Cabinet in 2015 accepted a 'proportionate and reasonable' deterioration in traffic conditions in Melton as a result of developments being permitted prior to completion of the MMDR. That decision had been made on the condition that the growth pressure felt were to be for a limited period pending the completion of the MMDR. The development of the Melton Transport Strategy alongside other interim measures were aimed at resolving traffic deterioration within Melton.

Members agreed that it was reasonable, in light of Covid-19, to begin with an interim Transport Strategy on the basis that this would further allow for consideration of the ambitions for the town centre, areas of key development in and around the town as well as addressing issues post Covid.

The Committee also supported the aspirations set out within the engagement document to provide a long-term vision for the delivery of future improvements to Melton's transport network while making Melton more attractive for pedestrians, cyclists, local residents and visitors.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee support the creation of an Interim Transport Strategy for Melton Mowbray.

51. Leicestershire Cycling and Walking Strategy.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport consulting on the Leicestershire Cycling and Walking Strategy. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 13' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from the discussion the following points arose: -

- i. Members expressed concern regarding shared walkways which caused cyclists and pedestrians to feel unsafe. It was suggested work be undertaken to separate cyclists and pedestrians, where feasible.

- ii. A Member suggested that some safety concerns could be addressed through behaviour programmes which could strengthen confidence of cyclists and pedestrians, as well as increase the use of active travel modes. It was felt that if there was a critical mass of cyclists it could ensure that road users were more conscious of them as a result.
- iii. In response to concerns regarding the temporary cycle lanes the Lead Member for Highways and Transport stated that the County Council had been invited by Government to act quickly and allocate road space for temporary cycle lanes. It was recognised that locally and nationally these changes had not been taken positively by motorists thus Government had made it clear that going forward there needed to be appropriate consultation and support within communities for local schemes. Members were assured the Cycling and Walking Strategy would provide a basis for the Council to bid for any future funding made available by Government and also a means consultation and engagement with communities.
- iv. The Cycling and Walking Strategy would be brought to the Committee in June 2021 following the completion of the consultation and development of the strategy.

RESOVLED:

That the comments be considered as part of the development of the Cycling and Walking Strategy.

52. Date of next meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 3 June 2021 at 2pm.

2.00 - 4.10 pm
04 March 2021

CHAIRMAN