

Minutes of a meeting of the Highways and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee.  
held at County Hall, Glenfield on Thursday, 1 September 2022.

PRESENT

Mr. T. Gillard CC (in the Chair)

Mr. R. G. Allen CC  
Mr. D. C. Bill MBE CC  
Mrs. A. J. Hack CC

Mr. B. Lovegrove CC  
Mr. L. Phillimore CC  
Mr. C. A. Smith CC

13. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2022 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

14. Question Time.

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

15. Questions asked by members.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

16. Urgent items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

17. 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.

18. Declarations of the Party Whip.

There were no declarations of the party whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.

19. Presentation of Petitions.

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

20. Street Lighting Service - Review 2021/22.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport which provided information regarding the 2021/22 review of the County Council's street lighting service. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 8', is filed with these minutes.

In an update to the figures presented in the report regarding rising energy costs, it was explained that for the year 2021/22 the cost had been 17 pence per kilowatt hour but in October 2022 the cost was expected to increase to 35 pence per kilowatt hour which would result in a bill of £3.12 million for the 2022/23 year.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

- (i) The street lighting columns were made out of steel. In response to a question from a member as to what other materials were available for manufacturing street lighting it was agreed that further information would be provided to members after the meeting.
- (ii) In response to a question from a member about whether solar technology could be used for street lighting it was explained that the technology was not yet advanced enough and even if the technology was available it would require further capital investment from the County Council. It was agreed that further information regarding this would be provided to members after the meeting.
- (iii) The County Council carried out work in-house producing lighting designs for housing developers and received income from the developers for doing this. It was agreed that after the meeting members would be sent information regarding the net return the County Council gained from carrying out this work.
- (iv) The County Council adopted street lights from housing developers and although the County Council street lights had been converted to LED, 1,400 of the adopted assets had sodium lanterns which meant that the County Council had to convert them to LED. In response to a suggestion from a member that the County Council require all adopted street lights to already be converted to LED, it was explained that this would not be feasible as many of the adoption agreements had been signed several years previously when sodium lanterns were the Council standard. However, over time this issue would reduce reflecting the point at which the Council standard changed to LED.
- (v) A member pointed out that people's habits and behaviour had changed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and therefore questioned whether the timings and brightness of street lighting should change in line with that. The Director of Environment and Transport confirmed that consideration was given to issues such as this.
- (vi) It was not necessarily the case that the older a lighting column the higher the risk of it requiring replacing because there were other factors which added to the risk. If a column required replacing but the funding was not available for the replacement then it could be removed without being replaced, however so far the County Council had not had to do this. In response to a suggestion from a member that Councils should lobby government for more funding for street lighting due to safety concerns, it was pointed out that Councils were already lobbying government regarding much wider funder issues than just street lighting.

- (vii) The recent National Highways & Transport Network (NHT) survey result showed only 54.9% satisfaction with street lighting. It was agreed that after the meeting members would be sent further data to show how this figure compared with other authorities.

RESOLVED:

That the update regarding the 2021/22 review of the County Council's street lighting service be noted.

21. Highways and Transport Performance Report to June 2022.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport which provided the latest performance update on the key performance indicators that the Council was solely or partly responsible for within its Strategic Plan covering Highways and Transport Services. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 9', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

- (i) The 'Total casualties involving road users, walking, cycling & motorcyclists (excluding cars)' performance indicator saw a 7% decline in performance from 256 casualties in November 2021 to 275 casualties by March 2022. In response to a request from a member for a detailed breakdown of the numbers of pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists it was agreed that this data would be provided to members after the meeting.
- (ii) It was clarified that the road safety statistics covered the whole of the highway including both the road and the footpaths.
- (iii) Members raised concerns about E-scooters being illegally used on the roads in Leicestershire and the number of accidents involving E-scooters. It was explained that this was for the Police to enforce and some reassurance was given that legislation was expected to be passed to tackle the problem.
- (iv) Patronage on bus services was significantly below pre-covid levels and unless usage increased there was a risk of bus routes being withdrawn. It was questioned whether Demand Responsive Travel (DRT) passenger numbers were included in the bus passenger journeys performance indicator and agreed that this would be checked and clarified to members after the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the latest performance update be noted.

22. Dates of future meetings.

RESOLVED:

That future meetings of the Committee take place on the following dates:

Thursday 3 November 2022 at 2.00pm;

Thursday 26 January 2023 at 2.00pm;  
Thursday 9 March 2023 at 2.00pm;  
Thursday 8 June 2023 at 2.00pm;  
Thursday 7 September 2023 at 2.00pm;  
Thursday 9 November 2023 at 2.00pm.

2.00 - 3.08 pm  
01 September 2022

CHAIRMAN