

Minutes of a meeting of the Highways and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
held at County Hall, Glenfield on Thursday, 6 March 2025.

PRESENT

Mr. T. Gillard CC (in the Chair)

Mr. R. G. Allen CC
Mr. D. C. Bill MBE CC

Mr. J. Miah CC

In attendance

Mr. O. O'Shea CC – Cabinet Lead Member for Highways and Transport
Mrs. M. Wright CC – Cabinet Support Member
Mr Graham Compton, Road Safety Officer, Leicestershire Police (item 54 refers)

47. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2025 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

48. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no new questions had been received under Standing Order 35, however a request had been received from the Stoney Stanton Flood Action Group (SSFAG) for supplementary questions to be asked in relation to the answers to questions they had asked at the Committee meeting on 7 November 2024. The Chairman agreed that the supplementary questions could be asked on an exceptional basis but emphasised that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was not the best channel for flood groups to seek information/communication on actions being taken for their specific locations of concern.

When the Committee came to the Question Time agenda item nobody from the SSFAG was present in the room. However, the Chairman permitted the supplementary questions to be asked later in the meeting once the members of the SSFAG arrived. Those questions were:

1. Supplementary question asked by Ms Ann Jackson

If the landowner refuses to do it, will Highways take responsibility for the Stressline pipe, and repair it at the cost of £14,500 which is significantly less than £994,000? The repairs that Stressline claimed to have carried out were not to the pipe itself, they were after the pipe. Stressline have not carried out any repairs to the actual pipe. Are the LLFA going to use enforcement powers to require Stressline to pay for the repairs to the pipe?

2. Supplementary question asked by Ms Ann Jackson

Are the LLFA saying they are happy to spend £994,000 to divert water away from the rear of the cottages as a coverup for the pipe being capped?

3. Supplementary question asked by Ms Ann Jackson

Are we correct in thinking that the project being worked on to reduce the volume of water entering the ditch line from Boundary Farm is once again part of the £994,000 project and is merely a smokescreen to cover up the capping of the pipe or is it to facilitate the building of 4,800 new properties, which will be of significant financial benefit to LCC?

4. Supplementary question asked by Ms Ann Jackson

The County Council said that site investigations were completed on 12th February and there were no issues found with the highway drainage system. However, we had our own independent survey on 19th February 2025 that had to be abandoned due to the blockages. How do you explain these discrepancies? Isn't Leicestershire County Council responsible for the condition of the assets? When will these ineffective drains and assets be rectified?

Reply by the Chairman:

The Chairman informed that written answers to the supplementary questions would be provided by the Director of Environment and Transport after the meeting.

49. Questions asked by members.

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

50. Urgent items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

51. 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.

52. Declarations of the Party Whip.

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

53. Presentation of Petitions.

The Chief Executive reported that no petitions had been received under Standing Order 36.

54. Road Casualty Reduction in Leicestershire.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport which provided an update on the confirmed reported road casualty statistics up to the end of

2023; the Council's approach to casualty reduction; and the Leicestershire Police's approach to road safety. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 8', is filed with these minutes.

It was noted that a letter had been received by the Committee from Mr. Max Hunt CC dated 6 March 2025 which raised queries regarding vulnerable road users and 20 mph zones. A copy of the letter is filed with these minutes. It was agreed that the Director of Environment and Transport would provide a written response to Mr. Hunt CC after the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Graham Compton, Road Safety Officer at Leicestershire Police, to the meeting. Mr Compton presented the Police Road Safety update (attached as appendix A to the report).

Arising from discussion the following points were made:

- (i) A member welcomed the relatively low road casualties in Leicestershire overall, but raised concerns about hotspots such as school gates where the amount of accidents was higher and queried what could be done in those areas. In response it was explained that the approach would be data led and communities could help with collecting this data. Reassurance was given that work was taking place with partners such as schools regarding what initiatives would help improve the safety of those hotspots or the public's perception of safety in those areas. An education programme was available which used learning from the Police and Fire Service. The Road Safety Partnership carried out a lot of work regarding driver behaviour. Consideration was also being given to whether more use could be made of average speed cameras.
- (ii) The Department for Transport suggested the mean speed for a village road that was being considered for a 20mph speed limit/zone should be at or below 24mph. A member queried whether the County Council had the resources to change all those roads to a 20mph speed limit. In response it was explained that Leicestershire did not have a blanket approach and the focus in Leicestershire was on roads with a 30 or 40 mph speed limit. This approach was working in Leicestershire.
- (iii) There had been very few reported collisions involving e-scooters in Leicestershire, with just seven in 2023, though anecdotally members felt that the numbers were higher. Members raised particular concerns about e-scooters being used at night due to a lack of visibility. The use of e-scooters on public roads in Leicestershire was not legal but it was difficult to enforce. Leicestershire Police had carried out operations confiscating e-scooters. Further legislation and guidance was required to help tackle the problem.
- (iv) In response to concerns raised about cyclists not using lights at night, and young people crossing the road without looking, it was explained that education programmes took place in schools regarding staying visible on the roads.
- (v) In response to a question from the Chairman about a Community Speed Watch scheme that had taken place in the Whitwick area and whether another Speed Watch scheme could take place in the same electoral division, it was confirmed that there was no limit on how many Speed Watch schemes could take place as long as they met the criteria. One of the main difficulties was finding enough volunteers to

operate the scheme. It was agreed that further information regarding Community Speed Watch schemes would be emailed to the Chairman after the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the update in relation to road safety and road casualties be noted.

55. Environment and Transport 2025/26 Highway and Transport Capital Programme and Works Programme.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport regarding the development of the Environment and Transport Department 2025/26 Highways and Transportation Capital Programme and Works Programme. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 9', is filed with these minutes.

A member raised concerns that the Programmes were not supported by sufficient funding from central government and as a result the quality of Leicestershire's Highways would decrease. In response the Director acknowledged this concern and explained that she regularly raised the point with the Department for Transport (DFT) when she attended meetings with them. The DFT in turn recognised the severity of the situation and submitted evidence to the Treasury to help make the case for more funding for highways and transport. The Director also attended meetings with the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government regarding local government funding more generally.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the development of the Environment and Transport Department 2025/26 Highways and Transportation Capital Programme and Works Programme be noted.
- (b) That the comments now made be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 18 March 2025.

56. Highways and Transport Performance Report to December 2024.

The Committee considered a joint report of the Chief Executive and the Director of Environment and Transport which provided the latest performance update on the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) the County Council was responsible for within its Strategic Plan covering Highways and Transport Services to December 2024 (Quarter Three). A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 10', is filed with these minutes.

A member queried whether the performance data for the public satisfaction metrics was completely accurate. In response the Director of Environment explained that it was not always clear what factors influenced a person's sense of satisfaction, and public satisfaction was just one of several different ways the department used for measuring performance. The department was interested in the public's view.

RESOLVED:

That the performance update be noted.

57. Date of next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the next meeting of the Committee be held on 5th June 2025 at 2.00 pm.

2.00 - 3.30 pm
06 March 2025

CHAIRMAN