

**ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY – 7 APRIL 2016****INTERIM COMMISSIONING STRATEGY****DRAFT MINUTE EXTRACT**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Environment and Transport outlining the Environment and Transport Interim Commissioning Strategy. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 8', is filed with these minutes.

In addition to the information contained in the report, the Committee was provided with a more detailed Capital Programme which would be considered by the Cabinet. A copy of the detailed Capital Programme is filed with these minutes.

In introducing the report the Director advised that the Interim Commissioning Strategy (herein referred to as 'the Strategy') formed part of a Council-wide approach to evidence-based commissioning, and as a result all departments were required to produce a Commissioning Strategy.

The Strategy consolidated the key priorities of the previous Leicestershire Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) and the Environment Strategy. A final Commissioning Strategy would be produced by 2018 which would be developed following consultation with partners.

The Committee was advised that Appendix A to the Strategy contained a mistake on page 7. There would be work to develop an infrastructure package to support the Loughborough Science and Enterprise Park and housing growth west of Loughborough and in Shepshed, and not at Junction 23a as referred to in the action plan. The final version of the Strategy would be amended to reflect this.

Arising from discussion the Committee raised the following points:-

- (i). The current cooperation with the City and district council's would continue irrespective of whether the proposed Combined Authority for Leicestershire was approved. The Strategy assumed that the Combined Authority would be approved by the Government and this would enable cooperation in a greater number of areas to the benefit of the sub-region;
- (ii). Midlands Connect and the Midlands Engine provided additional opportunities to cooperate with other local authorities across the region on transport matters, not just within Leicestershire;
- (iii). Concern was expressed over the removal of dry recycling waste credits for district councils. The Director advised that the district council's had been consulted on the future provision of dry recycling waste credits, and any proposals to change these would not be implemented until 2018. The Lead

Member for Waste Management advised the Committee of the huge financial challenges faced by the Department which made it necessary to explore income generation schemes such as this;

- (iv). Concern was expressed about the potential introduction of charges for on-street parking. The Director, whilst noting the concerns, advised the Committee that it was important to have the full range of measures available to address the issue of on-street parking;
- (v). The Strategy reflected current Government policy of reducing the revenue grant for the County Council but providing significant amounts of capital funding for local authorities for large projects. As such the Strategy contained a number of aspirational schemes which were subject to successful bids for funding, such as the Hinckley Zone Phase 4 project. Officers were praised for producing an ambitious list of aspirational projects;
- (vi). It was suggested that the aspirations and commitments within the Strategy concerning sustainable travel across the County needed strengthening particularly in light of the recent publication of the Government's Walking and Cycling Investment Strategy. The Committee was advised that as the Strategy had been produced before the Walking and Cycling Strategy had been published this had not been reflected in the Interim Commissioning Strategy. The Committee was also advised that all major schemes would now usually include provision for sustainable travel by introducing cycling or bus lanes;
- (vii). Concern was expressed over the increasing development taking place across Leicestershire and the pressure this was already placing on infrastructure, particularly highways. The Director advised that it was inevitable that economic growth in the County would lead to more congestion on the roads. It was suggested that as congestion increased it could become a driver for residents and businesses to use more sustainable modes of transport. The Committee was further advised that as a statutory consultee, the Highways Authority would only be able to justify objecting to planning applications where it was expected that congestion could increase to "severe", which was an extremely high threshold. Any objection which was not evidence based would be the subject of a successful challenge with the likelihood that costs would be awarded against the Council.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) That the contents of the Environment and Transport Interim Commissioning Strategy be noted;
- b) That the comments of the Committee be forwarded to the Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 19 April 2016.