

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS FORUM FOR BLABY HELD AT THE BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES ON THURSDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2016 AT 4.30PM

**PRESENT**

<b>County Councillors</b>	<b>District Councillors</b>
Cllr D Jennings (Chairman)	Cllr S Coar
Cllr J Dickinson	Cllr A Clifford
Cllr T Richardson	Cllr C Merrill
	Cllr P Moitt
	Cllr L Phillimore
	Cllr A C Tanner
	Cllr A V Greenwood
	Cllr R Denney (substitute)

The following also attended the meeting:

County officers: A Carruthers, S Bullen and S Dann

Blaby officer: J Wells

178. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Members and officers to the meeting.

179. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors White and Welsh and District Councillor Maxwell.

180. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

181. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

182. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2016 were confirmed and signed as a true record of the meeting.

183. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATES

184. a) Position statement on the B4114 Sharnford (following the Sharnford Traffic Accident Group (STAG) presentation

The Forum considered an update by the Director of Environment and Transport giving a position statement on the B4114 Sharnford following the Sharnford Traffic Accident Group (STAG) presentation at the last Highway Forum. The report was introduced by Mr Bullen with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mr Bullen advised Members that officers had been working with members of STAG for a number of years over their issues with HGVs speeding through Shanford. He confirmed

that the location would not be considered a priority due to the accident rate which is lower than the predicted annual accident rate of an average B-road and there would be other priority roads which are higher on the list such as locations like Aston Lane. He went onto say that he appreciated that the village has narrow footways and is a HGV route but the data does not show that this area warrants a fixed or mobile speed camera. Mr Bullen confirmed that there will be continued open dialogue with the members of STAG.

Cllr R Denney DC said that he thought the main issue was that 2 HGVs cannot pass and he felt it was less to do with speed. Mr Bullen answered that he felt that HGVs can pass but they would have to reduce their speed to do so.

Cllr S Coar DC stated that he was horrified when he heard the presentation at the last meeting and took a diversionary route to see it for himself and thought it was an unacceptable situation. He informed Members that whilst there he saw 2 HGVs attempting to pass each other and to do so they had to stop and pull their mirrors in. He also saw a mother with a pushchair walking along the footway and a HGV who was passing had to stop quickly which he felt was a very dangerous situation. Cllr Coar suggested that signage be used to slow traffic down or asked if a system of giving way to traffic in the other direction could be used. He went on to say that he would hate a fatal accident to occur which would then instigate the County to act. The Chairman agreed but stated that it was out of their hands.

Ms Carruthers reiterated that the data used in the report shows that there is no justification for any expenditure in this location, the data shows that this area is not a priority for speeding or accident issues. She advised that historically roads in this kind of area were not built for the type and amount of traffic around today. She stated that funding is now only available for locations where the accident level is above the national average and what would be expected for that location. She stated that similar issues are discussed at every Highways Forum.

Cllr T Richardson CC highlighted an issue with the shop on this road which could affect the viability of the village. He stated that the problems lie with HGVs using this road as a route to the A5 and problems will get worse with the forthcoming road works. Cllr Richardson wondered if the weight of the HGVs should be checked as there is often tell-tale gravel on the road.

Ms Carruthers stated that she didn't disagree that works around Junction 21 affect the situation. She said that officers are pressing Highways England to look at this.

Cllr A V Greenwood DC stated that he support Cllr Richardson's comments but accepts what officers are saying. He asked if there would be support for police checks of HGVs where they would be checked for weight and sheeting. He felt that this would only have to be done several times for improvements to be made. Mr Bullen explained that he had received email correspondence with Graham Compton this morning about this issue and had made arrangements to meet up with the quarry manager. He also mentioned that members of STAG had met with the Police Commissioner who is in conversation with Graham Compton so things are progressing.

The Chairman stated that a bypass would cost millions of pounds and would have to be Government funded.

Cllr L Phillimore DC asked what the trigger point is for any action. Mr Bullen stated that there is a traffic calming scheme being carried out on Aston Lane due to high speeds being recorded. The guidance states that the accident criteria is 5-7 serious accidents. The Police provide data for the County officers to assess. Cllr Phillimore asked, as B4114 is a major arterial route, could we not campaign to Government. The Chairman advised that Cllr E White CC has met with the Director to discuss possible solutions.

Cllr J Dickinson CC said that she thought having staggered traffic lights on a B-road was more successful than traffic calming. There is a similar set up on another B-road with chicanes and traffic lights and HGVs coming out of each end of the road and this has been successful. Mr Bullen was surprised but explained that there are always inconsistencies in what has been applied on B-roads previously.

The Chairman summarised that this was not the end, he mentioned a possible rail marshalling yard at Sapcote and if this goes ahead work can be tacked onto this.

185. b) Street Lighting Transformation Project (verbal update)

A verbal update was given by Ms Carruthers advising Members of the provisional installation timetable for the LED upgrade project on standard streetlights within the Blaby District which has been provided in the programme updates at agenda item 12 (page 71).

Ms Carruthers updated Members that 10-15,000 columns have now been replaced.

Ms Carruthers also mentioned a system programming error that happened the night before whereby 10,000 lights that were due to go on at 8pm all went off, although most of the lights were back on by 10pm. This will be used as a learning experience so that a similar situation does not happen again.

Ms Carruthers stated that if there are any changes to the programme Members will be informed and information will be available on our website. The programme is due to be completed by early 2018 and savings are already being recouped through reduced electricity costs.

Ms Carruthers went onto say that the system is far more adaptable than before and where there is part night lighting, there is flexibility to switch lights back on if necessary.

Cllr Richardson asked whether it can be agreed that hanging baskets can be hung from the replacement columns and that this can be an agreement for 5 years to save time and paperwork. He also asked about electrical pickups from the columns.

Ms Carruthers stated that Members will be aware of the consultation on Highways Maintenance and part of this includes street furniture and this review will cover what can and cannot be attached. She agreed that the 5-year agreement would be beneficial and officers are looking at digital licencing as much as possible for the future. Ms Carruthers went onto say that also as part of the review officers will be looking at what the community can do to help i.e. the cultivation of a piece of land.

Cllr Richardson asked for joint working in each location when the results of the consultation are through.

Cllr Greenwood asked what year the schemes related to. Ms Carruthers confirmed these were all in the current financial year (2016/17).

186. c) Update on the responsibilities undertaken by Leicestershire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority

The Forum considered an update by the Director of Environment and Transport giving an update on the responsibilities by Leicestershire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority. The report was introduced by Ms Carruthers with a copy filed with the minutes.

Ms Carruthers explained this report was as a result of the number of events which happened in March, June and August of this year in different parts of the County. These events consisted of flash flooding, torrential rain and caused real problems for property owners and it was felt that it would be beneficial to update Members to clarify who carries out which role.

Ms Carruthers stated that the County Council now carry out the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for the County and have a duty to investigate any flooding issues. The LLFA does not get involved in the height of a flood issue as that would be the duty of the emergency services but will get involved in the co-ordination role regarding the investigation and would identify who to include whether it be Severn Trent Water, Anglian Water for the foul sewer drains or the Environmental Agency for the rivers or LCC as the Highway Authority. She went onto say that Riparian owners can also be responsible for their ditches and water courses and sometimes don't realise they are responsible for the drainage on their land.

Ms Carruthers informed Members that LCC's role as LLFA is to investigate, identify and go on to recommend solutions. The LLFA has another role which is to act as statutory consultee on planning applications for developments for 10 houses or more ensuring the drainage is adequate.

Cllr Dickinson raised concern about flooding on Leicester Lane (B4114) which was from water flowing out of the drainage holes on the motorway. She asked who was responsible if this was to happen again. Ms Carruthers stated that this was responsibility of Highways England and they have a duty to take care of the direction of water coming from their road network. She went onto say that the latest incidents were more of sheer intensity rather than drain blockages.

Cllr Dickinson also flagged up the new road which comes downhill to Leicester Lane. She said that at Grove Park there are big drainage lakes and at the Park and Ride site there are no drainage lakes at all so the excess water sits on the field next to it and causes problems.

Mr Wells informed Members that the role of Blaby District Council is to provide support to the community when they are in need due to flooding events and are the Category 1 responder providing support 24/7, 365 days a year. Examples of where they have provided support is the flooding at Lubbesthorpe, Sharnford and Cosby where District Council officers provided road closures.

Cllr A C Tanner DC raised concern that the brook in Cosby has not yet been cleared following the recent flooding and he felt this was a health and safety issue. Mr Wells stated that the flooding was caused by a tree branch wedging itself completely which officers from Blaby District Council have now sorted. Cllr Tanner stated that this happens a lot, Mr Wells agreed to speak to County and Environmental Agency colleagues over the maintenance of this.

Cllr Denney advised that he felt that some of this was the responsibility of the householders who need to always use porous surfaces for their driveways.

RECOMMENDATION

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

187. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 36

A petition containing 38 signatures from Mrs M Kirkman was presented. The petition requests an investigation into vehicle usage and parking on Station Street. The Chairman confirmed that there is a response to this petition at item 8 on the agenda.

The Chairman asked Mrs Kirkman if she wanted to speak in support of her petition.

Mrs Kirkman went through the issues leading up to her presenting this petition. The key issues being as follows:

- the cottage industries along Station Street that have grown over the years and the increased number of HGV deliveries starting from 7am.
- a mechanic working from home and repairing cars on Station Street.
- increased number of cars on the car park who have no consideration for the pedestrians in the area.
- backlog of a number of lorries parked along the road when deliveries are happening with a concern that emergency vehicles may not be able to get past.

Mrs Kirkman said that she was disappointed that the report advised that no action was going to take place. She also informed Members that her local MP had been informed and had requested to be kept in the loop.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Kirkman for presenting her petition and advised that the report in response was to be discussed next on the agenda.

188. RESPONSE TO PETITION: REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION INTO TRAFFIC USAGE ON STATION STREET

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Environment and Transport in response to a petition requesting an investigation into traffic usage on Station Street.

The Chairman asked Mr Bullen to present the report.

Mr Bullen took Members through the report and the investigation which was carried out prior to this report being submitted.

Mr Bullen stated that one of his officers had attended the site on 5<sup>th</sup> July but he was happy to come along to the street at 7am on a couple of mornings.

Mr Bullen explained that the investigation leading up to the report showed that there have been no recorded accidents and he appreciated the difficulty and conflict that may occur when a road has a mixed use. Mr Bullen stated that it would be very useful to have photographic evidence if possible and Mrs Kirkman agreed to try and provide this.

Ms Carruthers stated that the situation seems to have evolved with residential and commercial properties increasing along the street and if the commercial properties have planning permission there is little that can be done. She went onto say that if the mechanic is repairing cars on the street he may be contravening planning legislation. Mr Wells advised that he would speak to his planning colleagues and ask them to contact Mr Bullen and Mrs Kirkman to discuss this further.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Kirkman for attending the Forum and presenting the petition.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) That the update of the Director of Environment and Transport be noted,
- ii) that Mr Bullen will visit Station Street at 7am on a couple of mornings; and

- iii) that Mr Wells will ask colleagues in the BDC Planning Department to contact Mr Bullen and Mrs Kirkman.

189. BLABY BYPASS

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Environment and Transport on a report following complaints of speeding and a number of other traffic related issues on Blaby bypass. The report was introduced by Mr Bullen with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mr Bullen took Members through the report and the investigations that have taken place. He stated that motorists do respect the speed limit along the bypass and the Police have also agreed that it doesn't appear to be a problem.

Cllr Greenwood raised that there was still a problem with the surface of the road. Mr Bullen reported that the surface dressing that was recently carried out was done using different chips to reduce the sound level.

Cllrs Phillimore and Greenwood raised concerns about the number of accidents in the area and the issue of road noise and speed and also the environmental concerns and asked for them to be resolved. Mr Bullen stated that it must be that motorists feel safe at a certain speed and it might need to be an enforcement issue.

Cllr Tanner raised concerns about speeding motorists out of Cosby and feared that another accident may happen.

RECOMMENDATION

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

190. MANAGEMENT OF HIGHWAY DRAINAGE

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Environment and Transport with regard to the current approach and the County's responsibility to the management of highway drainage across the County. The report was introduced by Ms Carruthers with a copy filed with the minutes.

Ms Carruthers took Members through the report and highlighted the key areas.

She advised of the new technology involved with the emptying and the maintenance of gully pots, they will also have a camera investigation team to assist and support. Work will be done on the data recording of what comes out of the gulleys which will assess where we can clean more efficiently and work smarter.

Ms Carruthers advised Members that officers are going to split the area to ensure that local area knowledge is used. The programme will be based on getting round the County every 12 months which has been a challenge in the past.

RECOMMENDATION

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

191. NATIONAL HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT (NHT) PUBLIC AND PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE SURVEYS; 2015 RESULTS AND 2016 PARTICIPATION

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Environment and Transport on the results of the 2015 National Highways and Transport (NHT) Public Representatives Satisfaction surveys, and to notify of the 2016 Public and Public Representative satisfaction surveys. The report was introduced by Ms Carruthers with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mr Carruthers advised Members that this was an important exercise which will form an element of receiving funding from the Government. She highlighted that the survey showed that the public were happy to see reductions in public rights of way and subsidies of the buses and community transport services. She also noted that our ranking for satisfaction with the maintenance of the roads was very good considering the 20% reduction, although highlighted that this could come back to bite us over 5-10 years.

Ms Carruthers explained that the full report is appended for Members, together with information on the Website.

Cllr Richardson stated that he didn't see any mention in the report of dirty or covered street signage. Ms Carruthers answered that it was a nationally set survey which officers didn't have any input into.

Cllr Richardson raised concerns about the speed hump signs on Forest Road which are not maintained and could be removed. Ms Carruthers explained that these signs are required by legislation. Cllr Greenwood asked if there was anyway of sharing this type of services with the Parish Council. Ms Carruthers replied that this was part of the new ethos of communities taking part in maintenance issues, with the County's assistance, although no funding is available.

Cllr Denney asked about the Highways Maintenance Consultation review and when the results will be available. Ms Carruthers advised Members that the initial findings will be reported to Environment and Transport's Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November and to Cabinet in December.

#### RECOMMENDATION

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

#### 192. 2016/17 MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAMMES – INFORMATION ITEM

Members noted the report.

#### 193. PROGRAMME OF TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS AND SIGNING AND LINING SCHEMES – INFORMATION ITEM

Members noted the report.

#### 194. ON-GOING ACTION STATEMENT

There were no outstanding on-going actions.

#### 195. ITEMS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

The Chairman asked Members to let officers have in writing any items for consideration for future agendas within 10 days of the date of the meeting. These items can be sent to Sue Dann, email [sue.dann@leics.gov.uk](mailto:sue.dann@leics.gov.uk). The Chairman reiterated the need for advanced warning for officers on items.

Cllr Phillimore expressed concern that he had raised some items he wished to have on the agenda that didn't appear. Ms Carruthers offered her apologies and agreed to speak to him after the meeting.

#### 196. ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIRMAN HAS DECIDED IS URGENT

There were no urgent items.

197. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Chairman confirmed the date of the next meeting as **Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2017** at 4.30pm.

198. CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS

The Chairman thanked Members and officers for their attendance at the meeting.

22<sup>nd</sup> September 2016

Chairman

4.30pm – 6.05pm

Date