



**ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE - 6 APRIL 2018**

**ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT 2018/19 HIGHWAYS CAPITAL
PROGRAMME AND HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION WORK PROGRAMME**

MINUTE EXTRACT

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport concerning the Environment and Transport 2018/19 Highways Capital Programme and Highways and Transportation Work Programme. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 8" is filed with these minutes.

In presenting the report, the Director of Environment and Transport circulated a revised Appendix A – Capital Programme 2018/19 – 2021/22, and explained that, as more data became available regarding the assets of the County Council this gave increased knowledge of how best to manage those assets. Additionally, the severe winter had caused more defects on the road network. Both aspects had resulted in a need to re-allocate some of the predicted spend, although the overall spending totals remained the same. A copy of the revised Appendix A is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i) The Environment and Transport Capital Programme and the Highways and Transportation Work Programme had been developed within what remained to be challenging circumstances, as the Department was required to make savings of £7.1m over the next 4 years. Funding for the Capital Programme came from a variety of sources, including the Department for Transport Capital Maintenance Grant, the Local Growth Fund, other Government competitive funding schemes and the County Council's Capital funding;
- ii) Members were informed that there was a need for flexibility within the programme due to the nature of the business; as more detailed information became available regarding the road network there was a need to re-allocate funding between schemes. Funding would be re-allocated on a risk based approach with the issue of safety being the main consideration;
- iii) Regarding the engagement and involvement of local Members in each proposed highways scheme, the Committee was informed that the local member would be consulted on each of the schemes as more detailed information became available. Each programme for highway maintenance activities would also be made available online;
- iv) The new Risk Based Approach to Highways Maintenance, which would be introduced from October 2018, would be discussed at a future meeting of the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Members of

the public would also be informed in order to explain the new process and to manage expectations of service delivery;

- v) Within the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), £600,000 had been allocated under the Revenue Budget to assist with the maintenance of signs, lines and gullies. However, improvements and repairs to the road infrastructure, which included gullies, would be included in the Capital Programme;
- vi) Members were reminded that as the Lead Local Flood Authority, the County Council had a statutory duty as a consultee on all planning applications. Additionally, the Council had a duty to investigate any flooding caused to properties and to identify partners who were responsible for addressing this - this duty did not include the need for the County Council to solve the flooding;
- vii) It was explained to Members that “microsimulation” was a process of transport modelling, which looked forensically over a small area at specific junctions. It was used to help determine the appropriate action needed for the site concerned and illustrated the impact of the proposed road schemes on traffic. However, it did not address air quality, which was the responsibility of the relevant district council. Additionally, the data collated through microsimulation would be used as supporting evidence for future funding bids;
- viii) The current Rail Strategy, approved by the Cabinet last year, was operated jointly between the County Council, Leicester City Council and the Local Enterprise Partnership. The funding allocated within the 2018/19 programme allowed some investigatory works for rail improvement schemes that might be needed. The study regarding the Leicester to Burton line concluded that an investment in the region of £175m was required to bring the line up to the standard required for passenger transport services as well as an annual revenue investment of £2-3m as a subsidy as it was expected that there would be insufficient passenger demand to cover the operational costs of the railway. As a result, the Cabinet had decided not to pursue the scheme;

Members also expressed a number of concerns about potential road schemes in their ward areas, and these were addressed by officers. Specifically, Mr Boulter CC asked that his concerns regarding the condition of the Blue Bridge in Wigston and the fact that it had not been included in the Capital Programme be recorded in the minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the comments of the Committee be forwarded to the Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 10 April 2018, and that the Cabinet be advised that the Committee supported the Environment and Transport 2018/19 Highways Capital Programme and Highways and Transportation Work Programme.