

**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE - 26 JANUARY 2023**

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023/24 – 2026/27

MINUTE EXTRACT

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 – 2026/27

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director of Environment and Transport and the Director of Corporate Resources which provided information on the proposed 2023/24 to 2026/27 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) as it related to the Highways and Transport side of the Environment and Transport department. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item '8' is filed with these minutes.

The Chairman welcomed Mr. O. O'Shea CC, Cabinet Lead Member for Highways and Transport, to the meeting for this item.

Arising from discussion, the following points were noted:

Growth

i) G9 – SEN Transport

The growth in demand for SEN transport had risen by some 12% in the last financial year and the projections were that there would be continued growth in the coming years. The investment by the County Council in new SEN places would assist in reducing costs. The Department was also looking at how costs could be better managed, and this would be reflected in the savings requirement 'Lean Review of SEN Transport (ET3)'.

The key drivers for the increased costs were attributable to:

- The increasing number of children with Education Care and Health Plans who were eligible for SEN transport. This was a national trend.
- There was an increasing number of pupils with severe and complex needs.
- The cost pressures facing transport providers arising from increased fuel and staffing costs.
- The recent trend of taxi contracts being handed back and these having to be recommissioned at a higher cost.

Savings

ii) ET 7 – Park and Ride

This service was run jointly with Leicester City Council. Work was underway to look at various options to deliver this saving and detailed reports would be submitted to members prior to implementation. There will be ongoing collaboration with the City Council throughout this process.

iii) ET 9 – Community Speed Cameras

The existing 7 cameras have been in operation for some years now and it would be difficult and costly to re-use these at other sites. Members were reminded that the Council had lobbied but failed to convince the Government to allow it to retain a proportion of the fines which would have reduced the cost of the schemes to the Council. The Director also undertook to provide members with the location of the 7 existing cameras sites.

Capital Programme

- iv) A511 – Members were advised that to an accounting technicality this scheme was not deemed to have “secured” funding and therefore was not included in the report, but that work was on-going on the scheme.
- v) DfT funding for major projects. The concerns expressed by members about the sufficiency of funding that had been allocated to schemes such as the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road some years ago was acknowledged. Members were advised that despite representations to the Department for Transport (DfT) no additional resources were offered. The bidding process limited how much the Council could include in the Outline Business Case to reflected potential increase in cost over the lifetime of the project.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report and information now provided be noted;
- (b) That the comments now made be forwarded to the Scrutiny Commission for consideration at its meeting on 30 January 2023.