

North Yorkshire County Council

Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held at County Hall, Northallerton on 27 July 2016 at 10.00 am.

Present:-

County Councillor Andrew Backhouse in the Chair

County Councillors John Blackburn (as substitute for Bob Baker), Michael Heseltine, Robert Heseltine, Bill Houl, Peter Horton, David Jeffels, Penny Marsden, Chris Pearson (as substitute for Margaret Atkinson) and Richard Welch

Other Members present were: County Councillor Cliff Trotter

NYCC Officers attending: Honor Byford, Team Leader – Road Safety & Travel Awareness (BES), Barrie Mason, Assistant Director - Highways & Transportation (BES) and Jonathan Spencer, Corporate Development Officer (Central Services).

Present by invitation: Phil Jepps, Divisional Manager (Ringway), John Nicholson, Regional Director (Ringway), Adeeb.Saeed, Service Delivery Manager (Highways England), Roger Wantling, Area 12 Service Delivery Team Leader, (Highways England).

Apologies were received from County Councillors Margaret Atkinson, Bob Baker and Bob Packham.

No members of the public were in attendance.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

102. Minutes

Resolved -

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 April 2016 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

103. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

104. Public Questions or Statements

There were no general public questions or statements from members of the public concerning issues not on the agenda.

105. Ringway Performance 2015/16

Considered -

The report of the Corporate Director - Business and Environmental Services advising Members of Ringway's performance under the Highways Maintenance Contract (HMC) 2012 during the period 1 April 2015 - 31 March 2016 and the outcome of the Evaluation Panel held on 25 May 2016.

Barrie Mason introduced the report. He reminded the Committee of the contract life and the performance management arrangements including the Evaluation Panel meeting. He noted that there was now a more streamlined set of indicators based upon what was important to the County Council based on the delivery of the contract.

He went on to refer to page 1, paragraph 2.6. 14 out of the 15 Primary Performance Indicators (PPIs) had been met. 9 out of 11 Secondary Performance Indicators (SPIs) had been met. At the Evaluation Panel meeting held on 25 May 2016 the County Council had recognised that Ringway's performance had been against the backdrop of the December 2015 flooding events. The flooding had resulted in highways incidents in 100 locations and significant damage to the network. Ringway's response overall had been excellent including its efforts to get Kex Gill on the A59 opened by the end of February.

John Nicholson said that he was pleased to report the continued improvements that Ringway was making. He noted that only one part of a three part indicator had failed to achieve its target. Ringway had a continued commitment to the contract and was keen to win back the year lost in relation to the lifetime of the contract.

Members made the following comments:

- A Member noted that with regards to Street Work Noticing there had been two fails in the 2015/16 performance of PPI S04. Barrie Mason reminded the Committee about the review of the performance framework. Arising from the review it had been realised that there was a performance monitoring 'blind spot' as there had been no PPI in the contract regarding completion of 7, 30 and 90 day orders. These orders related to minor reactive repairs generally. The intention was to get to the situation where at least 90% of orders were dealt with on time. At the moment performance was slightly better than the figures in the report and the latest figures would be considered through the Strategic Management Group on 28 July 2016. The County Council was keen to see performance improve as soon as possible.
- A Member referred to PP1 SL02 (Street Lighting Cyclical Maintenance) and PPI HS1 (Lost Time Through Injury). He asked for details of the measurement used to record the targets in each. He also referred to Appendix B (Action Report) for Street works Noticing and asked for clarity as to what was meant by retrospective noticing Callouts (Highways). Phil Jepps confirmed that with respect to the target of 8 for streetlighting maintenance, this referred to number of days. The target was to be no more than eight days behind programme. Actual performance was in fact 1.1 days. The target for PPI HS1 related to 2.5 of 100,000 worked hours per number of employees. He said that unfortunately in 2015, performance in the second half of the year for this target had not been as good as the first half due to an increase in incidents identified. With regards to the Action Plan for street works noticing he explained that the target was to respond within one hour to a callout. There was a requirement to put a streetwork notice up and sometimes this was done after. Barrie Mason added

that the reason for streetwork noticing was to forewarn and publicly notify that something had happened. Phil Jepps went on to confirm that all 66 failures were emergency callouts. John Nicholson noted that the failing was around the administration around noticing.

- A Member referred to PPI HS01 (Lost Time Through Injury) and asked how serious the injuries had been. Phil Jepps said that they had not been serious injuries. Examples included dropping a kerb on a foot outside of the protective part of the boot, resulting in a broken bone. Whilst they were minor accidents they were recorded in the statistics. The figures showed an improving picture in 2016/17, with figures decreasing to 3.5 of 100,000 worked hours per number of employees up to the end of June 2016.
- A Member asked what programmes were in place to maintain footpaths. She referred to the deterioration of footpath surfaces in her division and commented upon the risks that this posed to older people in particular. Barrie Mason replied that the Area Highways Office would be able to provide the detail of the programme within her division. In light of budget issues the County Council had to have a prioritisation process in place but all footpaths were surveyed once a year. There had been the same amount of funding for footpaths for a number of years and there was a balance between planned work and reactive work.
- A Member referred to the state of highways within his division with regards to 'potholes' and expressed concern that he had been informed by his Area Highways Office that they had not been of sufficient depth to meet the intervention mark in the programme. Barrie Mason replied that it was not possible to fix every defect in light of the very substantial network. The Highway Inspection Safety Manual was the key document to guide works. The manual had set criteria in relation to depth, location, type of hazard and length of time for Ringway to carry out repairs. It was important to have such criteria in place to help defend claims to justify why some works were carried out and not others. The highway network was inspected every year some areas on a quarterly basis and some monthly.
- A Member asked if in those circumstances where potholes did not reach the intervention mark for repairs to be carried out, parish councils could be given the option of paying for the repair to be carried out. Barrie Mason said that this was something that the County Council could consider but funding from the County Council could not be provided to parish councils in such situations.
- A Member commented on grass that had grown over on to footpaths on school routes and asked what action could be taken. Barrie Mason advised that the Member concerned contacted his Area Highways Office. He noted that there had been a reduction to the grass cutting budget but where paths were in danger of being lost grass-cutting would be carried out.
- Referring to page 24 of the report (SPI S06 Action Plan: Value of Gain Achieved), a Member commented upon the issue relating to quality of design information and the errors made by the County Council in this regard. He asked what actions were being taken to address the County Council's performance in this regard. Barrie Mason replied that this was being dealt with through the performance management process works information was provided much earlier now to Ringway.

Resolved -

That the report and Appendices be noted.

106. Highways England

Considered -

The oral update from Roger Wantling, Service Delivery Team Leader, Highways England

Roger Wantling provided a summary of works undertaken in 2015/16 on the A64 as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report; a summary of the works undertaken or programmed in 2016/17 on the A64 as detailed in Appendix 2.

He went on to provide a progress update on improvements to Barton Hill Crossroads (A64). The design work was almost complete but funding had yet to be found. The design had been more complex than expected due to the narrow amount of land available. Highways England was currently in negotiations with the landowner.

He also provided an update on the Hopgrove Roundabout (A64). The Hopgrove scheme had moved to Highways England's Major Projects Directorate for further development, with an initial internal feasibility work to be completed by the end of 2016. The current timescale for the consultation and design development phases was scheduled for the period up to 2020, with expected construction currently during the second period (2020 -2025).

He referred to the Highways England works being carried out on the A1(M) and the summary of works undertaken or programmed in 2016/17 on the A1(M) as set out in Appendix 3.

He also went on to refer to the Highways England works being carried out on the A66 as detailed in Appendix 4.

Members made the following comments:

- A Member commented upon the design of the Barton Hill Crossroads and asked if a break-out carriageway would be incorporated. Roger Wantling confirmed that this would be the case and Highways England was working to buy land for this purpose. The Member also asked if a flyover was being considered for the Hopgrove roundabout. Roger Wantling said that at this stage he was not able to comment upon whether this was a preferred solution. The scheme had been moved to the major projects team and a feasibility study would be completed by the end of 2016. A formal consultation would take place up to 2020. The plan was to then secure funding in the period 2020 to 2025. The Member commented that the Hopgrove roundabout had been a difficult junction for many decades. The previous scheme which had cost approximately £12 million had only served to make traffic congestion worse. He asked what was the key to securing the financial requirement for the work to be carried out. Roger Wantling acknowledged that the improvements carried out five years ago on the roundabout had not eased traffic congestion. He said that a number of options were being looked into including widening the roundabout, creating more free flow areas or a flyer. He was not able to comment at this stage on how developed these options were.

- A Member said that he wished to receive advance notice of works to be done on Highways England's roads before works started. He explained that the A1 and A66 cut across his division and he was regularly asked by parish councils about what Highways England works were being carried out. He asked who he could contact in Highways England to be provided with advance notice of works in his area. Roger Wantling agreed to forward the contact details of the local Highways England contacts for North Yorkshire. He acknowledged that Highways England should be consulting with County Councillors when work was being carried out. The Member went on to note that the long awaited Transpennine Study had been published and whilst significant improvements had been made to the A66 in recent years there were still outstanding sections where improvements needed to be made.
- A Member said that the current design of Barton Hill crossroads was very dangerous and went on to ask if there was anything that the Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee could do to underline the importance of work done to progress funding. He also asked whether a road audit would be carried out relating to Scampston Bridge on the A64 near Rillington, following the recent crash involving an HGV and two cars. He asked if a vehicle restraint system could be introduced if the subsequent inquest found that the absence of such a system had been a factor. Roger Wantling said that he valued the committee's support for improvements to be made to Barton Hill crossroads and all options for funding were being looked at. He said that he was not able to comment on the road fatalities relating to Scampston Bridge pending the results of the inquest.
- A Member said that the solution for the traffic congestion leading up to the Hopgrove roundabout was to dual the carriageway and expressed regret that Highways England had not incorporated this into the works carried out previously. Roger Wantling said that an option would be to dual the carriageway to allow traffic to merge later.
- A Member said that he had been led to believe from his local MP, Robert Goodwill that there was a considerable amount of funding available for the Hopgrove Roundabout and to dual further sections of the A64. He queried the reference to Hunmanby – Staxton EB & WB – Footways Improvement listed in Appendix 2 (design only schemes developed for construction in future years). He noted that Humanby was some distance from Highways England roads. Roger Wantling confirmed that the works was on the Highways England network but would look again at the place names that were used to describe the location of Highways England works.
- A Member commented that the cycle footway from the Staxton roundabout to Scarborough was in a poor state. He noted that cyclists risked riding on the A64 to reduce the chance of punctures and mechanical failures. He said that it was disappointing that the cycle way was not fit for purpose especially when there had been a significant increase in cycling activity. Roger Wantling said that he would arrange for the cycleway to be inspected.
- A Member suggested that when Members met annually with their Highways Officers that a Highways England officer be invited to the same meeting.

Resolved -

- a) That the update be noted.

- b) That Roger Wantling forwards the contact details of the local Highways England contacts for North Yorkshire.

107. Road casualty figures in 2015, the provisional figures for Q1 2016 and the work of the 95Alive Partnership

Considered -

The report of the Corporate Director - Business and Environmental Services advising of the road casualty statistics and activity for 2015 in North Yorkshire, the statistics are monitored against the previous year. The report also provides a summary of road safety issues and activities and data for 2015 together with a look forward for future road safety delivery.

Honor Byford introduced the report and provided a summary of the personal injury accidents and casualties up to the end of calendar year 2015; personal injury collision and casualties in 2015; road safety engineering during 2015; road safety education and information; speed management initiatives; and future road safety delivery.

Members made the following comments:

- A Member said that he had been involved in speed management initiatives for many years and in the past there had been a mosaic of measures and different practices used in different areas. He welcomed the fact that there was now a co-ordinated multi-agency response. He noted that in terms of reporting of alleged speeding they were now sent to the Police Traffic Bureau in York and he was content with that. However he said that with reference to paragraph 6.3 of the report, he was puzzled that it stated that whilst the central administration of the protocol had been taken on by the Police Traffic Bureau, the assessments and decision-making remained with each road safety group. He said that in his experience the Police Traffic Bureau was making the decision. Barrie Mason confirmed that the intention was that the local group retained the decision-making. Honor Byford said the Police Traffic Bureau had taken on the administration of the scheme a year ago and a review had been instigated to establish how the process had worked to date. She said that she would take the points raised by the Member on board and feed into the review.
- A Member referred to the Temporary Vehicle Activated Speed Signs (VAS). He noted that a number of parish councils made a bid to join the scheme some time ago and at the time they had been quoted £2,500 to £3,000 to participate. He noted that one of his local parish councils had not been successful in the pilot round and had now been quoted £6,000 to participate. In light of the costs the parish council wished instead to fund its own permanent sign to be placed on private land. The sign that the parish council intended to use was significantly cheaper than the costs of participation in the Temporary VAS scheme. Honor Byford said that there were highways planning issues related to the siting of speed signs whether on private land or not as it still affected the traffic. Participation in the Temporary VAS scheme allowed parish councils to have access to a temporary VAS for set periods over the course of three years. Barrie Mason reminded Members that a report had previously been brought to the committee on what the County Council's approach should be on Temporary VAS, with a subsequent report approved by the Executive. Arising from this the County Council had purchased a number of signs to make available to parish councils. The County Council had received a lot of requests so had had to conduct a random draw to select parish councils to participate in the scheme.

The reason why there had been an increase in the costs for parish councils to participate was because they now had to fund the scheme entirely with nil cost to the County Council. The costs related to the actual cost of running the scheme. The administration of the scheme was very intensive for the County Council as it involved the installation and removal of the signs and monitoring their effectiveness at each site. He noted that research showed that if permanent signs were installed they lost their effectiveness over time as did a proliferation of signs. The installation of speed signs on private land was to be discouraged for the same reason and the best approach was for parish councils to engage with the Speed Management Protocol. He noted that in many cases the Community Speed Watch initiative offered a better solution.

- A Member referred to section 7.0 of the report relating to the future of road safety delivery. He asked if there was a definition of what the programme of measures designed to promote road safety should be in meeting the council's statutory duties under the Road Safety Act. Barrie Mason replied that the County Council was having to look carefully at the road safety budget in light of the Medium Term Financial Savings Strategy/2020 savings. This included looking at what it needed to do to continue to fulfil its statutory minimum requirements regarding road safety. With reference to paragraph 7.1 of the report, he noted that the Road Traffic Act's requirements on the local highway authority's statutory duties with regards to promoting road safety could be interpreted in many ways and agreed to provide the Member with further information following the meeting. He went on to state that the County Council's provision was above basic requirements and its level of activity had not reduced. In light of road safety funding cuts from the DfT, the County Council had put in place an alternative funding mechanism to ensure that revenue funding was still at the same equivalent level of spend. The new funding mechanism meant that road safety activity was split between NYCC Highways, Public Health and North Yorkshire Police. The Member commented that the new funding mechanism meant that the County Council had less control over how the funding was used, noting that the Police and Crime Commissioner could always decide to cut the Police funding used for road safety. Barrie Mason said that it was recognised locally that road safety partners were in a more complex funding environment now and a partnership approach was the way forward. He noted that at the Steering Group discussions, Public Health, Highways and the Police and Crime Commissioner reached collective decisions regarding what should be the primary core activity to fund. Ultimately the partners were working to the same aim to reduce casualties on the road.
- A Member said that 13 to 14 motorcyclists were killed each year in North Yorkshire. In Craven district many motorcyclists on the roads lived outside of North Yorkshire. 88% killed were from out of county. He asked for the Craven district KSI statistics for motorcyclists in 2015 to be provided. He went on to report a recent accident in Long Preston where the blood from the casualty had been left on the road. He noted that this had been upsetting to see for the relatives and asked why North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service had not swilled the road. Honor Byford agreed to provide the KSI figures requested and to contact North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service about the accident.

Resolved -

That the report be noted.

108. Airport Consultative Committees

Considered -

The reports of the representatives on the Durham and Tees Valley Airport Consultative Committee - County Councillor David Jeffels, the Leeds and Bradford Consultative Committee - County Councillor Cliff Trotter and the Robin Hood Airport Consultative Committee - County Councillor Chris Pearson.

County Councillor David Jeffels referred to Annex 1 of the report containing his written report. He went on to note that whilst Durham and Tees Valley Airport was still struggling to attract the level of business its location deserved it was working hard to attract more airlines. It was a well- placed airport for people to use in the northern and north eastern part of North Yorkshire.

County Councillor Cliff Trotter provided a verbal report about the work of the Leeds Bradford Airport (LBA) Consultative Committee and recent developments at the airport. Key issues included:

- A substantial part of the Consultative Committee's work related to receiving and discussing noise tracking reports
- The number of flights had increased and LBA was the fastest growing airport in the UK with over three million passengers travelling through the airport in 2015. The hope was to reach seven million by 2025. In August 2015 500,000 passengers had travelled through the airport.
- Improvements to the airport buildings included a VIP lounge and the addition of more shops.
- The drop-off facility remained a contentious issues and was regularly discussed item at the meetings.
- Safety concerns related to drones and the use of laser gun pens and these were being closely monitored.
- The West Yorkshire Combined Authority have secured funding for a number of transport-related projects which will improve the road and rail links in the nearby area
- A number of airlines had launched new routes including Flybe, Thomas Cook and Jet 2.
- A new cargo terminal had opened.
- Jet 2 had announced 27 new replacement planes, which would help to reduce noise levels.

County Councillor Chris Pearson referred to Annex 1 of the report containing his written report. He added that the new road scheme link from the M18 to the Airport had been completed, though this was not yet showing up on some SAT-nav systems. The number of passengers had increased to 33,000 passengers a year. Cargo flights had also increased although the Dublin route had been withdrawn. Various improvements had been made to the terminal buildings. A meet and greet scheme had been introduced for people arriving by car.

Members made the following key comments:

- A Member noted that for people living in the west of the county Manchester Airport represented the local airport. He queried why a County Councillor Member was not on the equivalent Consultative Committee for Manchester Airport.

Resolved -

- a) That the reports be noted.
- b) That an investigation be made regarding the possibility of a North Yorkshire County Council securing a seat on the Manchester Airport Consultative Committee.

109. Work Programme

Considered -

The report of the Corporate Development Officer inviting the Committee to:-

- (a) Note the information in the report.
- (b) Confirm, amend or add to the areas of work shown on the Work Programme schedule (attached as Appendix A to the report).

A Member noted that there was a need, in light of the recent EU referendum result, to show local leadership in shaping agricultural policy especially in relation to upland farming, and to ensure that the government put in place revenue streams to support farming and the wider rural economy. He suggested that the issue be considered in further detail by Group Spokespersons at the September Mid Cycle briefing.

Resolved -

- a) That the report be noted.
- b) That representatives from York & North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership be invited to attend the Committee's Mid Cycle Briefing on 20 September to discuss the issue of agricultural policy post-Brexit.

The meeting concluded at 12.20pm
JS