

## **Environment, Development and Transport Committee**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday, 17 March 2017  
at 10:00am in the Edwards Room, County Hall**

**Present:**

Mr M Wilby – Chair

Mr R Bird	Mr C Foulger
Dr A Boswell	Mr B Iles
Mrs H Cox	Mr T Jermy
Mr B Bremner	Mrs J Leggett
Mr J Childs (Vice-Chairman)	Mr G Plant
Mr S Clancy	Mr M Kiddle-Morris
Mrs M Dewsbury	Mr J Timewell
Mr T East	Mrs C Walker

**Other Members Present:**

Dr M Strong

**1. Apologies and Substitutions**

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Mrs C Bowes (Mrs H Cox substituted) and Mr A White (Mr M Kiddle-Morris substituted);

**2. Minutes**

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2017 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

**3. Members to Declare any Interests**

- 3.1 No interests were declared.

**4. Urgent Business**

- 4.1 The Chairman advised that Highways England had launched a consultation on A47 major improvement schemes on Monday 13 March 2017. As the County Council wished to respond to the consultation and there were no more EDT Committee meetings until after the consultation closing date of 21 April 2017, the

Chairman asked the Committee to urgently agree that a response would be coordinated, agreed in correspondence with Members of the Committee, and the Chairman would respond on behalf of the Committee. The Committee **agreed** the proposal.

In response to a question about whether the Highways Agency would consult individual Parish Councils about the proposals, the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services said there would be a series of public events held, although it was unlikely individual Parish Councils would be consulted. He added that comprehensive information was available on the Highways England website and urged Parish Councils to submit their own responses to the consultation.

## **5. Public Questions**

- 5.1 One public question was received. The question and response is attached at Appendix A to these minutes.

## **6. Member Questions**

- 6.1 Mrs M Dewsbury referred to the list of the issues reported to the highways team by residents, such as locations of potholes, etc. which the Committee had requested some time ago. The Assistant Director Highways and Transport advised that an interactive report was now available, although the current ipads did not support the report format. ICT had carried out some work and the report would be accessible on the new ipads which would be issued to Members after the Election in May 2017.
- 6.2 Mrs C Walker referred to speeding traffic outside Wroughton School, Beccles Road, Gorleston and asked if consideration could be given to erecting a 20mph speed limit sign outside the school to slow traffic down, particularly when the school crossing patrol was not present. In response the Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services would ask the Area Engineer to contact Mrs Walker to try to resolve the issue.
- 6.3 Mr R Bird wished to make the Committee aware of a Community Interest Company (CIC) which was looking for contributions to fund the re-charging and recycling of beaches (shale and sand would be imported from other areas to compensate for the material which had been lost). He said, to his knowledge, 4 parishes and 1 town council had been asked to contribute to the project, all of which had rejected the idea. He had brought the matter to the attention of the Committee as there may be a need for the County Council to become involved as the lead local flood authority. The Chairman thanked Mr Bird for raising the matter said the department would keep an eye on the situation.
- 6.4 Mr J Timewell raised the issue of HGV traffic using Aylsham Road, North Walsham to avoid the low bridge on the A149 which was destroying the road, knocking over signs and asked for help to resolve the situation. The Executive Director Community and Environmental Services would ask the local Highways Engineer to contact Mr Timewell and investigate the problem.

**7. Verbal update/feedback from Members of the Committee regarding Member Working Groups or bodies that they sit on.**

- 7.1 Mr T East provided the Committee with an update on the Western Link (Appendix 2) and he thanked the Chairman of Environment Development and Transport Committee for agreeing to his suggestion to chair the Stakeholder Group.
- 7.2 Mr Wilby said that the first meeting of the Stakeholder Group had been held on 21 February and he had been pleased that a large number of people had attended and shared their local knowledge. The next meeting was scheduled to take place in June 2017.

**8. Update from Economic Development Sub-Committee**

- 8.1 The Committee received and **noted** the report from the Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services summarising the issues and actions from the Economic Development Sub-Committee meeting held on 19 January 2017.

**9. Highway Parish Partnership Schemes 2017-18**

- 9.1 The Committee received the report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services setting out the proposed parish partnership programme for 2017-18 following analysis and review of the applications submitted.
- 9.2 In response to a question from the Committee, it was confirmed that it could be possible for any underspend in the Parish Partnership budget to be carried over to the next financial year if not needed for 2017-18 and the situation would be kept under review.
- 9.3 The Committee **APPROVED** all bids listed in Appendix B of the report for inclusion in the Parish Partnership Programme for 2017-18.

**10. Local Member Highways Budget Proposal**

- 10.1 The Committee received the report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services outlining the proposal to provide each local Member with an annual budget of £6,000 to be used on highway work within each financial year, offering flexibility to progress small highway projects at their discretion based upon local need.
- 10.2 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:
  - 10.2.1 The Committee **agreed** that Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) should be added to the list of work that could be covered by this budget.
  - 10.2.2 The funding for 2017-18 was a one-off budget. If the Local Member Highways Budget and the Parish Partnership schemes were to continue in the future, then the schemes would need to be funded from the £6000 allocated to Local Members. As a result of the clarification, the Committee **agreed** that recommendation 2 (In future years, should the initiative be successful, the "Local Member Highways

Budget” would merge with the Parish Partnership scheme to provide a single highways budget of £6000 for each division to minimise administration costs) should be deferred to allow additional work to be carried out and more options to be identified for consideration by the Committee at its June meeting.

- 10.2.3 Members would have an option to pool their budget to fund projects that crossed division boundaries.

- 10.3 The Committee **AGREED** that:

For 2017/18 a Local Member Highways Budget is provided, re-allocating part of the Challenge Fund budget.

**11. Great Yarmouth 3<sup>rd</sup> River Crossing Project – submission of Outline Business Case to DfT.**

- 11.1 The Committee received the report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services setting out proposals for a 3<sup>rd</sup> river crossing project at Great Yarmouth and details of the submission of the Outline Business Case to the Department for Transport (DfT).

- 11.2 The following points were noted in response to questions by the Committee:

- 11.2.1 The bridge crossing the river would be a lifting bridge.

- 11.2.2 A delegation, including Norfolk MPs, would be meeting with the Department for Transport to reiterate the importance of the scheme and make it aware of the local support for the scheme. Any help individual members were able to give in lobbying the Department for Transport to raise the importance of the scheme would be appreciated.

- 11.2.3 The Committee welcomed the proposal for a third river crossing which would ease traffic congestion and create jobs and thanked all the officers involved for their work in developing the project.

- 11.3 Upon being put to the vote, with 16 votes in favour, 0 votes against and 1 abstention, the Committee :

1. **NOTED** the update on progress since 2009 and approve the submission of an Outline Business case to the Department for Transport (DfT) in March 2017.
2. **NOTED** the requirement to underwrite the local funding contribution of 20% towards the project on the basis of an approximate cost of £120m going forwards from April 2017 (at outturn cost). This funding is likely to come from a range of sources, however these are still to be confirmed. The funding will not be fully required until construction starts in late 2020.
3. **AGREED** to progress development work on the next stage of the project from April 2017, at risk, pending the DfT decision expected during summer 2017. The cost of this is anticipated to be in the region of £200k.

## **12. Proposal for a market town network improvement strategy.**

- 12.1 The Committee received the report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services setting out details of a proposal for an overarching strategy to support the delivery of a suite of market town transport studies.
- 12.2 The following points were noted in response to questions by the Committee:
  - 12.2.1 A list of priorities would be drafted and brought to a future EDT Committee meeting, for Members to agree a programme of priorities.
  - 12.2.2 The Committee agreed that Taverham and Costessey could be added to the list of market towns, although Members would need to be mindful of any overlap with the current NATs programme.
- 12.3 The Committee **AGREED** a programme of broad transport studies (3-4 per year) looking at the transport impacts of growth in market towns and large villages in Norfolk.

## **13. Broadband, Mobile Phone and Digital – update from the Member Working Group.**

- 13.1 The Committee received the report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services providing an update on the information gathered by the Broadband, Mobile Phone and Digital Members Working Group in relation to mobile phone coverage in Norfolk, which was introduced by Cllr Marie Strong, Chairman of the Working Group.
- 13.2 The Committee noted that this would be the final report prior to the County Council elections on 4 May 2017 at which point all Working Groups would cease to exist.
- 13.3 The following points were noted in response to questions by the Committee:
  - 13.3.1 Members thanked Dr Strong and the Members of the working group for the work carried out in raising the need for better broadband, mobile phone and digital networks in Norfolk, and expressed a wish to carry on the work after the election in May 2017.
  - 13.3.2 The Committee thanked Dr Strong and the Members of the Working Group, together with Karen O’Kane, Programme Director for all the work they had carried out on the project.
- 13.3 The Committee **REVIEWED** the information provided and acknowledged that the Working Group had been concluded ahead of the election on 4 May 2017.

## **14. Revised Minerals and Waste Development Scheme**

- 14.1 The Committee received the report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services setting out a formal revision to the Minerals and Waste Development Scheme (MWDS) after it had been identified that the stages from Submission onwards in the Silica Sand Review of the Minerals Site Specific

Allocations DPD will not be in accordance with the adopted timetable.

- 14.2 In presenting the report, the Planning Services Manager advised that, following the examination hearing sessions on 14 and 15 March 2017, the Inspector had verbally advised that Main Modifications to the Silica Sand Review were required and the timetable to identify site specific allocations and/or areas of search for silica sand working up to 2026, had been revised as follows:

Stage	Dates
Preparation of Local Plan consultation (Regulation 18)	Initial Consultation: March to April 2015. Preferred Options: November to December 2015.
Pre-Submission representations period (Regulation 19)	May to June 2016.  Addendum of Modifications: September to October 2016.
Submission (Regulation 22)	December 2016
Hearing (Regulation 24)	March 2017
<b>Inspector's Report</b>	<b>August 2017</b>
<b>Adoption (Regulation 26)</b>	<b>October 2017</b>

- 14.3 The Committee **RESOLVED** that the Minerals and Waste Development Scheme, updated in the timetable above, shall have effect from 24 March 2017.

## 15. Consultation on the De-maining of the River Thet

- 15.1 Following an announcement by the Environment Agency on 15 March 2017 that it was terminating the River Thet De-Maining project and was therefore no longer seeking Norfolk County Council's views on the proposal, this item was withdrawn from the agenda.

## 16. Eastern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) Property Level Protection Grant Scheme

- 16.1 The Committee received the report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services asking it to accept the recommendations of the Inland Flooding group for the distribution of grants and approval of a reserve list, subject to eligibility checks and approval conditions.
- 16.2 The Committee **APPROVED** the allocation of 2017 grants following Inland Flood Group Assessment.

## 17. Norfolk Cycling and Walking Action Plan

- 17.1 The Committee received the report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services asking members to approve the Norfolk Cycling and Walking Action Plan which would further the Council's ambition to promote health and wellbeing through good infrastructure. The report was introduced by Cllr Hilary Cox, Cycling and Walking Champion.

17.2 The following points were noted in response to questions by the Committee:

17.2.1 The Committee was assured that part of the 'Access for All' initiative undertaken with the trails network was to ensure that trails were accessible for everyone including wheelchair users.

17.2.2 Members discussed the issue of cyclists using roads rather than cycle lanes where these had been provided and asked whether Legislation could be introduced for those cyclists who failed to use cycle lanes. In response, the Committee was notified that it would not be possible to introduce Legislation to prevent this from happening.

17.2.3 Mr J Childs drew attention to the Hemsby to Winterton coastal path, which was badly eroded. In response, it was acknowledged that there was a lot of work still to be done along the national coastal paths of Great Britain, and Members were advised to make the Trails Team aware of any issues within their constituencies.

17.2.4 The Committee thanked everyone for the work they had carried out and recognised that a long-term vision was needed in order that benefits would be shown in the future.

17.3 The Committee **APPROVED** the Norfolk Cycling and Walking action Plan as set out in Appendix A of the report.

## **18. Finance Monitoring**

18.1 The Committee received the report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services reflecting the forecast outturn position for the services from the Community and Environmental Services relevant to it, which are – Highways and Transport Services; Environment and Planning; Economic Development and Business Development and support.

18.2 The Committee **noted**:

- a) The forecast out-turn position for the Environment Development and Transport Committee and the current risks to the budget as highlighted in the report.
- b) The planned use of reserves as set out in section 4 of the report and that proposals for any further use of reserves in 2016-17 would be highlighted to the Committee if the resulting forecast level of reserves falls below the 31 March 2017 balances anticipated at the time the budget was set.

## **19. Forward Plan and decisions taken under delegated authority**

19.1 The Committee reviewed the forward plan the report outlining delegated decisions taken by officers.

19.2 The Business Support and Development Manager would circulate a copy of the response to the Broadland District Council Consultation on their draft Local Development Order (LDO) covering the Greater Norwich Food Enterprise Zone to the Committee.

The Committee:

**REVIEWED** the Forward Plan and

**NOTED** the delegated decisions set out in section 2 of the report.

The meeting closed at 11.35am

**Chairman**



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## **MEMBER/PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: 17 MARCH 2017**

### **5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

#### **5.1 Question from Cllr Denise Carlo**

The Bus Services Bill currently going through Parliament proposes to allow local authorities to franchise networks of bus services, enabling better-integrated networks and greater certainty for passengers. However, the government intends this to apply only to mayoral authorities. The House of Lords amended the Bill to extend franchising powers to all local transport authorities, and removed Clause 21, which bans councils from setting up their own bus companies.

Will the Committee ask the government to make bus franchising available to all local transport authorities, and to scrap Clause 21 so councils retain the right to set up and run bus companies where this is the best solution for local residents?

#### **Response by Chairman of EDT Committee**

The bill's original proposals gave mayoral authorities the powers to franchise bus services, but non mayoral authorities had to complete a full public interest test and get approval from the Secretary of State. The Lords altered the bill to allow all local authorities to be able to franchise bus services, but subsequently the House of Commons reversed this proposal by MP vote. The final decision will be debated and decided between the Commons and the Lords at the end of the parliamentary process which we are advised will be after Easter. Currently, the mechanism for Norfolk to franchise part of the bus network by making a case to the secretary of state will still be available to us.

As per previous advice with respect to clause 21 this particular clause does not impact on Norfolk as we already have Norse Transport in place, wholly owned by the council, should the aspiration ever occur to run commercial bus services.

**Norwich Western Link Project – Member Working Group update (17 March 2017)**

Further to previous meetings of the Norwich Western Link (NWL) Project Member Working Group and the report provided at the 8 July 2016 EDT Committee meeting, the Member Group met again on 15 March. The following provides a brief summary of the meeting:

1. Significant discussion was held on the latest proposals that Highways England (HE) have produced in developing the Easton to North Tuddenham A47 dualling project – their formal consultation on route options started on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March. There were a number of concerns raised regarding the information provided and it was agreed by the Group that a formal response to the consultation should be provided, but that this should be via EDT Committee. A note in response to the HE consultation will be provided, to be agreed with the Chair of EDT Committee, to support the formal NCC response to the consultation. Detailed responses to each option will be required regarding, for example, each of the side roads affected by the proposals, but primarily to address the issue of consideration of a possible future NWL.
2. The Group were represented at the HE consultation launch event and specific comments made at the launch event by HE were discussed. It was confirmed by HE that they are aware of the NWL project and that it is a factor they are considering. HE suggested that the junctions would not be grade separated as their analysis suggests the traffic flows do not require this. There was also no clarity provided on how the B1535 HGV route would be dealt with in terms of its connectivity with some of the options. The Group raised their dissatisfaction and disappointment over the lack of clarity, precision and intelligibility contained within the consultation document. There was particular concern regarding how other stakeholders will be able to make precise comments and judgements based on the limited content and data provided.
3. It was agreed that a letter to HE should be provided to follow up on the meeting held with HE on Friday 10 March and in response to the published consultation details. The letter will set out the points above but would also include other key points and will confirm the assumption that the alignments shown are indicative and that any comments provided are on the basis of this. For example, option 1 shows the apparent severance of the northern fringes of Hockering village. It was also noted that none of the options show the NDR which is currently being constructed.
4. An update on the Local Plan Review process was provided by Phil Morris (Principal Planner – NCC). Phil confirmed that strategic options will be developed in June. Steve Scowen from Broadland District Council (BDC) provided an update on the Food Hub proposals and the associated Local Development Order (LDO) that is being progressed by BDC. The LDO consultation has now closed and a number of responses are being reviewed and Steve confirmed he is hoping to take a report to BDC Cabinet in May.
5. The Member Group received a brief update summarising the ongoing project activities planned to be completed ahead of an update report being provided to EDT Committee in September. The Member Group also received an update on the first stakeholder group meeting held on 21 February. This was a positive first meeting with good input from 17 represented parish council's. At the meeting the strategic objectives for the NWL project were discussed and agreed. Each parish will be providing further feedback at future meetings on the specific objectives. The NWL project team has also recently met separately with the Wensum Valley Alliance, who have been invited to attend future stakeholder group meetings.

For more details, please contact David Allfrey (Major Projects Manager).  
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