

Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Minutes of the Meeting Held on Wednesday 15 September 2021
10.00am, held at County Hall, Norwich

Present:

Cllr Barry Stone – Chair
Cllr James Bensly (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Chris Dawson
Cllr Philip Duigan
Cllr Ed Maxfield
Cllr William Richmond

Cllr Emma Corlett
Cllr Colleen Walker
Cllr Brian Watkins
Cllr Tony White

Cabinet Members Present:

Cllr Martin Wilby
Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport

Also Present:

Grahame Bygrave	Director of Highways and Waste, CES
Alex Cliff	Highway Network and Digital Innovation Manager, CES
Richard Dolman	Principal Infrastructure Growth Planner, CES
Nicola Ledain	Committee Officer, Democratic Services
Karl Rands	Highway Services Manager, CES
Sarah Rhoden	Assistant Director, Performance and Governance, CES
Tom McCabe	Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services
Matt Tracey	Growth and Infrastructure Group Manager, CES
Kevin Townly	Asset and Capital Programme Manager, CES

1. Apologies and substitutions

- 1.1 Apologies were received from David Bills, Steffan Aquerone and Jim Moriarty (substituted by Philip Duigan, Brian Watkins and Ed Maxfield respectively). Apologies were also received from Robert Savage and Vic Thomson.

2. Minutes

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2021 were agreed as a correct record subject to highlighting Cllr White's vote against the recommendations at item 8.

3. Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 There were no interests declared.

4. Items of Urgent Business

- 4.1 There were no items of urgent business.

5. Public Question Time

5.1 There was one public question received and the response is given at Appendix A.

6. Local Member Issues / Questions

6.1 The list of Local Member questions/issues is attached at Appendix A.

7. Electric Vehicle Strategy

7.1 The Committee received the annexed report (7) which invited the committee to make comments on several proposals that were being developed as part of a new Electric Vehicle Strategy in support of the Council's strategic vision to improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions, as set out in its Environmental Policy and latest draft Local Transport Plan.

7.2 During discussion, the following points were noted:

7.2.1 The Committee asked for regular updates to see the progress towards the targets set out in the report.

7.2.2 The Director of Highways and Waste confirmed that they had been receiving several requests for the charging cables to go over public footpaths as not all residents had access to a driveway. There was currently a trial with UK power networks to look at the difficult areas such as terraced streets to enable charging facilities to be installed. A longer view would be that there were more charge points at different destinations such as workplaces.

7.2.3 Members welcomed the report and acknowledged that it was much needed, although they did acknowledge that it could be a considerable challenge to get the required infrastructure in place to meet the demand. There was concern that there were people delaying changing to electric vehicles as there were not the charging points to make it worthwhile, but it was hoped that the of 27% of vehicles were electric by 2030 was realised. Officers reported that, in a recent survey of Norwich residents, 80% expected that the main place of charging would be at home. Officers also explained that the cost of the licence brought it into line with other highway licences as well as cover costs for the physical site safety assessment of the charging point and the administration costs.

7.2.4 The time lapse of two years before the licence needed refreshing would allow any problems to be highlighted such as vandalism or access to the charging points. The Local Member fund contribution would allow a small percentage of funding to be received from Government.

7.2.5 There was concern about the affordability of those on low income of being able to afford an electric car but also the current cost of public transport. Current planning applications that were being approved by District Councils had no capacity for the electric charging points. The planning regulations come from Central Government, but it should start to include automatically putting in charging points, solar panels etc. as retrospective fitting was less economically efficient.

7.2.6 Officers confirmed that any routes; cycling, walking or highways would be maintained as part of the routine maintenance programme.

- 7.2.7 Parking charges implemented by private sector companies such as hospitals, are the responsibility of those that own the car park. It was the job of the Council to encourage them to install charging facilities only.
- 7.2.8 It was the understanding of Officers that only specific makes of scooters should be used on the highway as they were part of the pilot scheme. Any others were doing so illegally.
- 7.3 The Committee **RESOLVED** to;
1. Review and comment on the proposed adoption of the EV strategy provided in Appendix A.
 2. Review and comment on the proposal to introduce a process for residents to apply for a licence to enable them to place cables across public footways in order to charge EVs on street.
 3. Comment on proposals to secure funding to enable public EV charge points to be installed on residential streets in Norwich.
 4. Comment on proposals to alter the process to install EV charge points in community hubs funded via the local highway member fund to help maximise the number of schemes that could be brought forward.

8. Transport for Norwich Strategy Consultation

- 8.1 The Committee received the annexed report (8) which set out policies and proposed actions to take forward work on a range of key issues including decarbonisation and air quality as well as supporting Norwich's economy by ensuring that people can make the connections they need. The strategy was currently out for consultation to help shape the final strategy for adoption by the end of this year. The consultation runs for six weeks ending on 5 October and views of Select Committee were invited to be considered as part of the consultation process.
- 8.2 During discussion, the following points were noted:
- 8.2.1 It was crucial to balance between sustainable growth and tackling the pressures such as climate change in a responsible way. It was key to invest in the greater Norwich area, and would want to see Norwich increase as a place to do business and keep the high street thriving. Issues such as single car occupancy needed reviewing as well as high levels of Co2 emissions and clean air zones could help this. It would also be important to ensure that the best was being made of the park and ride buses and sites by reviewing opening hours, frequency and if they could overlap on other routes. The pandemic encouraged healthier lifestyles but for them to continue safer speed zones across the city and working with police and stakeholders. The Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services explained that it was an ambition to have electric buses in the not too distance future. The city also had a successful fleet of car club vehicles which meant that it wasn't necessary to own a car personally.
- 8.2.2 Through looking at the sustainability of transport, it was vital to consider that there were some residents that did not own a car.
- 8.2.3 In looking at transport solutions, it would be necessary to look across the county. Officers explained that this strategy was aiming to achieve transport outcomes in the high-level strategy but there were a subset of plans such as the local transport plan

which gave a wider county look. This strategy was reviewing the longer trips into Norwich and what initiated them.

- 8.2.4 Although mobility was not mentioned in detail in the report, because it was a high-level strategy, it did set out the plans for social inclusivity. There was concern for the increased need for an app on a mobile phone and for those who either did not have the phone or the data.
- 8.3 The Committee **RESOLVED** to make any comments on the Transport for Norwich Strategy to be considered as part of the public consultation process, the outcomes of which will be used to finalise the strategy.

9. Performance of Key Highway Contracts

- 9.1 The Select Committee received the annexed report (9) which summarised the active contracts the Council's Highways Service has procured in terms of services provided, performance and value for money.
- 9.2 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:
- 9.2.1 The performance of Amey "Norfolk Streetlighting Private Finance Initiative (PFI)" was managed at the monthly meetings with them, and payments were made according to the performance.
- 9.2.2 It was always surprising when there had been work carried out on street lighting, yet the public satisfaction was low. Officers explained that another round of LED upgrading was due to be embarked on. The data could represent those residents who were unhappy with part night lighting.
- 9.2.3 Members expressed concern at the distribution of signage reporting road closures, roadworks etc. It was hoped there could be more co-ordination between the signage and the associated works.
- 9.3 The Select Committee **RESOLVED** to comment on key highways contract performance and arrangements.

10 Highway and Transport Network Programme

- 10.1 The Select Committee received the annexed report (10) which set out an annual summary of the highway assets and network were being managed.
- 10.2 The Committee acknowledged the hard work that had been carried out by the highways teams throughout the pandemic and noted that maintenance had still been done.
- 10.3 The Committee **RESOLVED** to
1. **NOTE** the progress against the Asset Management Strategy Performance framework and the continuation of the current strategy and targets (Appendix A, B and C);
 2. **NOTE** the latest network management performance data and progress in the development of congestion and reliability indicators.

11. Forward Work Programme

- 11.1 The Select Committee received the annexed report (11) by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services setting out the Forward Work Programme to enable the Committee to review and agree it.
- 11.2 Cllr Walker would be the representative for Labour.
- 11.3 It was hoped that the economic development of the county could be included on the forward plan, particularly as furlough was ending as well as the £20 per week Universal Credit top-up which could impact low-income families.
- 11.4 The Chair explained that there was a time factor associated with the task and finish group with the recommendations being reviewed by the Committee in November.
- 11.5 The Select Committee reviewed the report and **RESOLVED** to
1. review and agree the Forward Work Programme for the Select Committee set out in Appendix A.
 2. agree the Terms of Reference for the Member Task and Finish Group as set out in Appendix B.

The meeting closed at 11.35pm

Chair



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**MEMBER/PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO SELECT: INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE: 15 September 2021**

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

5.1	Question from Lynda Groves
	Is anything being done to address flooding in high-risk areas of Norwich?
	Response by Chairman of I&D Committee (Assigned to Grahame Bygrave)
	<p>There is a considerable amount of work being done to proactively reduce the risk of surface water flooding in Norwich.</p> <p>A key part of this is the Council's proactive highway's gully cleaning programme, which runs throughout the year. Gullies are routinely cleaned in a cyclic manner, but those in higher-risk areas are cleaned more often in order to prevent surface water flooding. These routine works are complemented by small drainage improvement schemes.</p> <p>The Council have also been working with partners on the CATCH EU Interreg project in the high flood risk areas of Norwich since November 2018. This project has installed over 1,703 specially designed water butts and raised planters in properties that capture rainwater from roofs during a storm and release it back into the sewer network after the storm has passed. The installed units can hold up to a total of 320,000 litres of water, helping reduce the pressure on existing sewers and reduce the impact and frequency of surface water flooding. It is hoped that the findings from this pilot project will be incorporated in future surface water mitigation projects as they progress.</p> <p>Although the Council is responsible for highway drainage, most of our gullies connect into Anglian Water drainage systems which also drain private properties. Anglian Water have resources to improve capacity and their priority tends to be where foul sewage flooding occurs. However, we also look for opportunities to improve drainage where we can and work closely with Anglian Water. An example of this is the recently completed (2018) Norwich Fringe Drainage improvements which brought in some £10.3m of funding to improve drainage assets across Norwich.</p> <p>In addition, the Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance (NSFA) has been set up this year to further co-ordinate the 36 different agencies that have flood and water management responsibilities across Norfolk, in order to provide a better coordinated response. As part of their work, 16 sites across Norfolk that are regularly at risk of flooding have been identified. These sites form the first tranche of locations that the NSFA will inspect with a view to proposing how to minimise or mitigate local flooding risk. Sites in Norwich will be considered during future phases as funding becomes available.</p>

6. LOCAL MEMBER ISSUES/ MEMBER QUESTIONS

6.1	<p>Question from Cllr Councillor Jamie Osborn</p>
	<p>Question: The Government’s recent Decarbonising Transport plan requires councils to set out how local transport plans will deliver quantifiable carbon reductions in transport in line with national carbon budgets and net zero ambitions. The Transport for Norwich Strategy includes a commitment to building the Western Link road. The carbon emissions from that scheme will not be calculated until an environmental impact assessment is carried out by the contractors. Does [addressee] agree that a robust and transparent calculation of the full carbon emissions of the NWL should be available before adoption of the TfN Strategy?</p> <p>Supplementary: The Committee on Climate Change recommends that to achieve required carbon targets, a reduction of overall traffic levels is required. Will [addressee] consider inclusion of targets for reducing overall traffic as part of the LTP4?</p>
	<p>Response by Chairman of I&D Committee (Assigned to Vince Muspratt)</p>
	<p>The new Transport for Norwich Strategy, currently out for consultation, sets a long term and ambitious policy commitment to reduce carbon emissions and promote sustainable transport measures. It commits the Council to reducing carbon emissions from transport in Norwich to make the necessary contribution to the national target of reducing emissions from all sources by 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels and achieving net zero by 2050. The proposed strategy recognises that there are a number of new and improved strategic connections being developed, including the Norwich Western Link. This new Transport for Norwich Strategy also commits the Council to develop a carbon budget for the transport programme to demonstrate how it will ensure emissions are contained within the budget.</p> <p>This strategy puts in place the commitment to develop a carbon budget and to set a baseline and gather evidence for far-reaching interventions including restrictions in travel demand, mode shift through an increased emphasis on active travel and accelerating the switch to electric vehicles. It would be premature to require the detailed carbon budget baseline work to be carried out before deciding to adopt a strategy which commits the Council to develop a carbon budget.</p> <p>Supplementary</p> <p>The draft Fourth Local Transport Plan sets out a policy commitment to meet the County’s Environmental Policy and recognises that there is further work to do through development of an implementation plan and it will be at that stage that a range of targets and interventions will be set out in detail.</p>