

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

THURSDAY 25 OCTOBER 2018
GIPPING ROOM - GRAFTON HOUSE
6.00 PM

Present: Councillors C Allen, G Chisholm, S Gage, S Handley, A Leeder, J Parry, C Shaw, C Smart, E Harsant (Chair), S Ion, R Pope, O Holmes and S Connelly (Substitute)

28. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M Goonan.

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29. Unconfirmed Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 September 2018

29.1 Minute No 25.2 – Task & Finish Group – Taxi Services – Notes be amended to read ‘Councillor Pope explained that ‘*an updated*’ Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Policy...’

29.2 Minute No 26.8 – Annual Portfolio Holder Update – be amended to read ‘at the Tourist Information Centre in ‘*St Stephens Church*’ ...’

Resolved:

that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2018, with the amendments detailed above, be signed as a true record.

30. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

31. To Confirm or Vary the Order of Business

Resolved:

that the Order of Business be as printed on the Agenda.

32. Highways England - Orwell Bridge Update

32.1 The Emergency Planning Manager of Highways England was unable to attend the meeting however, he had sent responses to the questions asked by the Committee and offered to attend the next meeting. The Integrated Transport Officer, Mr Newsham read out the following:-

1. The length of time the diversion routes needed to be in place during recent maintenance works?

When scheduling our maintenance and planned works, we try to keep any closures to an absolute minimum. Our teams are aware of the severe congestion in Ipswich when traffic is diverted through the Town and we try to ensure that diversion routes are in place for the shortest time possible. Where practical, we try to perform maintenance during the least disruptive times i.e. night time and weekends, however this is not always possible due to the nature of the works we undertake.

2. Timescales for the principle of segregation of traffic? This was in relation to segregation of high sided vehicles from other traffic when wind speeds were high on the Orwell Bridge.

We are awaiting the results of the Aerodynamics Study before implementing any traffic segregation measures. We have already investigated methods of traffic segregation and we believe it can be achieved by investing in more Variable Messaging Signage and by placing Traffic Officers at Junctions 55 and 56 to send high-sided vehicles back along the A14 to the approved diversion route and allowing cars to re-enter the slip roads to cross the bridge. The Aerodynamics Study is a very comprehensive piece of work and we need to be absolutely certain that our assumptions are correct before implementing traffic segregation. The study will take around 9 months to complete due to the complex nature of the work and the customised modelling of the bridge that needs to be undertaken.

3. The life expectancy of the bridge?

All our structures are made to last for 120 years. This means that the bridges life expectancy should take us past the year 2100. Our Structures Team are currently developing a programme of bearing replacement and maintenance on the bridge. We anticipate that within 10 years, the bearings on the bridge are likely to need to be replaced. The bearings transfer the weight loading on the bridge and allow the bridge to move (the bridge moves, grows and shrinks due to weather conditions etc.). We will ensure that any works on the bearings have a minimal impact on Ipswich by keeping lanes open, working at nights and weekends, where possible.

32.2 Councillor Gage expressed disappointment that it had been a year since the segregation of traffic had been suggested although the start of the Aerodynamics Study was welcomed. It was agreed that the issue of long distance traffic being re-routed prior to entering the town would be discussed when the Highways England representative were to attend as this affected both the air quality and economy.

33. OS/18/13 Task & Finish Group - Road Repairs

33.1 Councillor C Smart, the Chair of the Task & Finish Group thanked everyone who had contributed to the three meetings for their information given and made reference to the actions which the Group had proposed. These requested reassurance that the programme of planned maintenance would be completed by the end of the financial year and that community engagement take place at Area Committees, in the same way as Town and Parish Councils were consulted. Also other interested parties such as cyclists, disabled groups and bus and taxi companies be consulted particularly with regard to changes at road junctions. A review of the road classifications had also been suggested as these had not been reclassified since 2004 (*corrected from the date in the notes*), when traffic volume and population figures had been lower. The proposals also called for a long term programme to repair concrete roads which had outlived their life expectancy and it was suggested that £1m be used to upgrade the joints.

33.2 In respect of a review of the road classifications, Councillor Pope expressed concern that should an independent review take place, then less money would be available for repairs and he requested that the word 'independently' be removed from the first action. He also said that the Cabinet Member for Highways had acknowledged the consultation with stakeholders and as Ipswich made up 6% of the total of the roads in Suffolk, receiving 31% of carriageway redressing this year had been a good result.

33.3 Councillor Gage said that she was surprised that Suffolk County Council had not looked at the maintenance classifications since 2004 as significant changes had not been reflected. The classifications used speed of vehicles as the criteria to determine the frequency of inspection and repair, not volume of traffic. Almost all roads in Ipswich had a low classification and therefore were inspected only twice a year at the moment. Continual new employment and housing since 2004 meant there could be rapid increases in the amount of deterioration on many of the roads without the appropriate maintenance.

33.4 Councillor Parry expressed concern about why U3b classified roads in urban areas were treated as a lower priority than those in rural areas and Councillor Ion raised the question whether it would be fair for Ipswich's roads to be reviewed when other areas in Suffolk were not. He asked why all of the 26,000 sections of roadway in Suffolk were not being requested for reclassification as there were many new residential and commercial developments all over Suffolk and although traffic had increased in Ipswich it had increased in other parts of Suffolk too. He also stated that any time or money being spent on a review

would be better spent on improving the work being done at the moment. Money might be spent reviewing the classifications and the result be that only marginal changes occurred or nothing changed at all.

- 33.5 Councillor Chisholm stated that Suffolk County Council also had the responsibility for the condition of pathways and asked if any wheelchair users had been consulted. Councillor C Smart said that a representative from the Disabled Bureau had attended the Task & Finish Group and they had expressed their concerns with pathways from a wheelchair users' point of view.
- 33.6 Councillor P Smart, as Portfolio Holder for Environment & Transport said that Ipswich would continue to be, a travel to destination; to be educated, to shop, for health and also the entertainment area for half of Suffolk's population, so people from outside Ipswich would also benefit from better maintained roads in Ipswich. A case for increased Central Government funding for road repairs could be put, based on more up-to-date road classifications than 2004 and it was in Suffolk County Council's interest to bid for additional resources. The Chair thanked the Councillors, the SCC Cabinet Member and the Officers and representatives who had taken part in the Task & Finish Group and the Portfolio Holder for Environment & Transport for his input.

Resolved:

that the Chief Executive be tasked to write to Suffolk County Council Highways Department to express the following concerns of the Committee:

- 1. That the road classification be reviewed as vehicle movements in the growing economic area of Ipswich had increased significantly.**
- 2. That the local knowledge of the members of each Area Committee be considered, in line with that of the Town and Parish Councils.**
- 3. A presentation be given at each Area Committee about the planned year's maintenance for 2019/20 in line with the planned programme of works.**
- 4. That a plan be considered to review and prioritise the repair of concrete roads in relation to resident's concerns about noise and deterioration.**
- 5. That increased consultation with cyclists, the disabled and bus and taxi groups take place with regard to changes at road junctions.**
- 6. That there be reassurance that the publicised programme of maintenance for the roads listed in Ipswich would be completed by the end of the financial year.**

34. OS/18/14 Annual Portfolio Holder Update - Environment & Transport

- 34.1 Councillor P Smart, the Portfolio Holder for Environment & Transport presented an annual update and Ian Kerrison, Operations Manager, Waste and Fleet was also in attendance. Councillor P Smart stated that more up-to-date information was available and he stressed that some indicators did not lend themselves to

direct comparison, being either by %, by weight or subject to seasonal differences, so yearly comparisons gave a more exact comparison.

- 34.2 Councillor Pope expressed concern that the actual figures for LI 276 - *% of household waste sent for composting (brown bin)* and NI 191 – *Residual household waste per household (kg)* were both below target. Councillor P Smart said that these were subject to a national trend and were certainly typical Suffolk wide.
- 34.3 In respect of LI 276, lower levels of recycling could be due to the change in how residents' accessed newspapers and contamination also played a part, as if glass was put in a recycling bin, the bin became contaminated and would be rejected. The 'Love Your Street' campaign had been launched by IBC in the summer in response to growing concern about the amount of litter around the town. Volunteers had taken part in litter picks, encouraged residents to use the litter bins and to take pride in their local area. As members of the Suffolk Waste Partnership, work continued to set the targets. Guidance leaflets were available about which plastics to put in which bin and re-education was key.
- 34.4 Councillor P Smart referred to LI 178 – Waste collection: Number of Missed Bins per 100,000 collections, this target had improved further and was now 28%. Councillor Parry asked whether a separate glass collection was possible but it would add £1.1m on the waste budget and although this would offset the tonnage taken to the waste plant any saving would not be recorded independently of the other districts using the waste recycling plant. A Government paper was being produced about separating food waste collection to elevate targets but this would require expensive specialist machinery, be expensive to achieve and therefore, not cost effective.
- 34.5 In response to a question about the contamination of blue bins Mr Kerrison said that when a blue bin was taken to the recycling plant part of the waste truck load would be sampled for contamination which could result in the lorry load being rejected. It was reported that the contents of the brown bin (waste sent for composting) remained above target against others in Suffolk despite there being a slow wet start to the year and a slow start to the growing season. Brown bin performance remained high against the other authorities in Suffolk who all provided a brown bin, but at a charge to residents.
- 34.6 Councillor Parry asked whether there was a role for IBC in education that could be readily dealt with and Mr Kerrison said that refuse crews, handling waste bins on a daily basis, did give advice. Councillor Harsant made reference to the difficulty of contamination in communal bin areas and Mr Kerrison said that pictorial leaflets detailing recycling advice were available to promote a positive message and residents could be contacted through landlords. Concerns about plastics in water courses had been reported to the Portfolio Holder since television documentaries had documented the problems but it had been highlighted that if disposed of carefully, there would be no damage to the marine environment.

- 34.7 In respect of LI 089 - *% of available allotment plots*, there were waiting lists in some areas and none in others and an updated figure had currently been confirmed at 90% occupancy and the income derived from the current occupancy appeared to be consistent. The invoicing process had not yet been completed for this year and the Portfolio Holder agreed to circulate more detailed information on the different locations.
- 34.8 Councillor Leeder asked where indicators were 'red' that trend data for performance against targets would be helpful to identify reds that were one-offs or recurrent issues which required further investigation. The Chair thanked the Portfolio Holder and the Officer for their attendance.

35. OS/18/15 Annual Report of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2017/18

Resolved:

- 1. that the Strategic Overview & Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2017/18, attached at Appendix 1 to report Ref No: OS/18/15, be approved for submission to Council.**
- 2. that the Work Programme of the Strategic Overview & Scrutiny Committee, attached at Appendix 2 to report Ref No: OS/18/15, be approved.**

36. OS/18/16 Work Programme 2018/19

- 36.1 Proposal Form Ref No: 27, submitted by Councillor S Handley asked how the proposed transformation of primary care / medical practice across Ipswich would continue to meet the needs of residents as the town's population increased? At the recent Suffolk County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee it had been reported that there were proposals for five primary health care hubs across Ipswich when at the moment the health care provision across Ipswich was quite varied. Councillors S Handley, C Shaw, S Gage, R Pope, L Harsant and C Allen agreed to be part of a Task & Finish Group.
- 36.2 It was agreed that Highways England would be invited to the meeting on 22 November 2018 to further discuss the Orwell Bridge closures.

Resolved:

- 1. that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme, attached at Appendix 1 to report Ref No: OS/18/16 with the amendment above, be agreed.**
- 2. that a Task & Finish Group be set up to discuss Proposal Form Ref No: 27 about the future of primary care / medical care in Ipswich and Councillors S Handley, C Shaw, S Gage, R Pope, L Harsant and C Allen to take part.**

The meeting closed at 7.20 pm

Chair