

HIGHWAYS PORTFOLIO

1. Cabinet decisions since the last Executive Report to the County Council

- 1.1 There will have been 3 Cabinet meetings (21 September 2015, 12 October 2015 and 2 November 2015) since the last Executive Report to County Council. The items of business specifically attributed to this portfolio were:-

12 October 2015

Croxley Rail Link – At its meeting on 12 October 2015, Cabinet agreed to authorise the completion of the various agreements to allow the transition of this scheme to London Underground, subject to the agreed funding package.

2. Consequences of Cabinet decisions before the last meeting of the County Council on 21 July 2015

- 2.1 None.

3. Anticipated/ future decisions to be made by Cabinet

- 3.1 None.

4. Key Partnerships

- 4.1 On 21 September 2015 I attended a meeting in London to represent Hertfordshire County Council on PATROL (Parking and Traffic Regulations outside London) and the Bus Lane Adjudication Committee. This comprises the vast majority of local authority parking authorities and the principal role of PATROL is to provide guidance and advice on national policy. In particular and of interest to most road users, it operates the adjudication service for drivers who wish to contest a PCN or Bus lane Penalty Charge notice. The service has been refined over the years and is held in high regard by both local authorities and drivers alike. The Committee oversees the management of the service.

5. Other comments

5.1 Fontmell Close, St Albans – Sink Hole

On the night of 30 September/1 October 2015, a large sink hole appeared in Fontmell Close, St Albans, and the road and footways collapsed into it. Emergency response procedures were invoked and this, amongst other services and agencies, involved the highway service. The hole was initially protected by barrier and then, on the advice of geotechnical experts, the hole was filled with foamed concrete up to a level of 1 metre below road level. This was aimed at supporting the sides of the hole and preventing further collapse which could have led to damage to houses or further parts of the highway. This was completed on 7 October 2015.

In parallel with this work, a non-intrusive ground survey of the sub-soil under the road has been undertaken, informed by a review of the historical maps and surveys.

All efforts have been made to support the statutory undertakers to reconnect services to the affected houses so that residents can move back into their houses.

Highways officers and myself also attended a meeting of the residents to inform them of the situation and the plans highways and other agencies have to deal with the situation.

5.2 Integrated Traffic Control Centre (ITCC)

There have been several visits to the ITCC over recent months from members and officers of local district and borough councils. These have been very successful in helping other organisations understand the capability of the County Council as Highway Authority in managing the Highway network.

On the afternoon of 8 October 2015, the BBC Three Counties Drive Time Programme was broadcast live from the ITCC. This, again, helped with generating a wide understanding and appreciation of how Hertfordshire County Council manages the highway network.

5.3 Scrutiny of the Ringway contract

Preceded by a half-day seminar for all County Councillors, there was a full day scrutiny of this contract. I await the outcome and recommendations from this process as a helpful contribution to the development of this contract and the services it delivers.

5.4 A414 Napsbury Lane Bridge works

Essential works to repair this bridge are nearing completion. An advanced technique called hydro-demolition has been used to remove failing concrete, which has then been replaced with new concrete to restore the bridge's residual life. This has been disruptive to the travelling public, and I thank them for their patience. I am pleased that the work requiring the 24 hour lane closures has been completed ahead of schedule.

5.6 Public notices

As a trial, which early feedback shows has been welcomed, Ringway have been putting notices in streets where they will shortly be undertaking gully cleaning, encouraging residents not to park over gullies. Similarly, as a means of keeping residents better informed, if a street light fault is due to the power supply, a notice is put on the street light explaining this and where the responsibility lies.

5.7 Street lighting – LED Phase 2

The second phase of the LED conversion project is now underway. This project will convert all remaining lights that are currently in lighting all night, to LED and CMS control. It started in Stevenage, with Watford to follow. The project will complete in spring 2017.

6. Cabinet Panels

- 6.1 Since the last Executive Report to Council, the Highways Cabinet Panel has met on 8 September 2015 and 20 October 2015. The matters discussed can be found at the following locations:

Highways Cabinet Panel

8 September 2015

<https://cmis.hertsdirect.org/hertfordshire/Calendarofcouncilmeetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/435/Committee/49/Default.aspx>

Highways Cabinet Panel

20 October 2015

<https://cmis.hertsdirect.org/hertfordshire/Calendarofcouncilmeetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/436/Committee/49/Default.aspx>

Terry Douris
Executive Member for Highways
November 2015