

Minutes



To: All Members of the Highways Cabinet Panel, Chief Executive, Chief Officers, All officers named for 'actions'

From: Legal, Democratic & Statutory Services
Ask for: Theresa Baker
Ext: 26545

HIGHWAYS CABINET PANEL 7 March 2018

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS OF THE PANEL

P Bibby (Vice-Chairman), S B A F H Giles-Medhurst, S K Jarvis, J R Jones, J G L King, M B J Mills-Bishop, M D M Muir, R G Parker, R Sangster (Chairman), R H Smith, J A West, F Button (substituted for C B Woodward)

OTHER MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

D Andrews

Upon consideration of the agenda for the Highways Cabinet Panel meeting on 7 March 2018 as circulated, copy annexed, conclusions were reached and are recorded below:

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- i. The chairman clarified that the issue of whether the Highways Integrated Works (IWP) programme should be reinstated as a cabinet panel report would be discussed at a future meeting of the Group Leaders.
- ii. Due to the necessity for a broader approach, the progress report on test prosecution cases for illegal dropped kerb installation would be rescheduled to the 9 May 2018 meeting of the cabinet panel.

PART I ('OPEN') BUSINESS

- | 1. MINUTES | ACTIONS |
|--|----------------|
| 1.1 The Minutes of the Cabinet Panel meeting held on 31 January 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to correction of the spelling of the curb to kerb. | T Baker |
| 2. PUBLIC PETITIONS | |
| 2.1 There were no public petitions | |

3. A507 WEIGHT RESTRICTION PROJECT

[Officer Contact: Trevor Brennan, Manager (ITP)
(Tel: 01992 658406)]

- 3.1 Following on from the recommendations of the June 2017 Highways Cabinet Panel, the panel received a report which set out the key elements of a Project Plan to devise and evaluate an optimum scheme of enforceable Weight Limits to channel Heavy Goods Vehicles onto the most appropriate routes, avoiding A507 between Baldock and Buntingford. As a reminder of the issues the A 507 Campaign Team were permitted to table a document showing [ongoing HGV blockage of A507 through Cottered](#). The East Herts District Plan had now been published and provided information on development and growth.
- 3.2 During discussion of time frame to implementation in 2019/20, officers clarified that no funding had initially been available for the plan but had subsequently been sought and agreed via the Integrated Plan Process and the Highways Service did not have the budget to implement the chosen scheme in the 2018/19 financial year. Sufficient time was also required to allow for correct process and avoid the scheme coming to judicial review. Officers agreed to circulate the budget for the project to members and clarified that the bulk of spending would be on signage.
- 3.3 The panel heard that Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) would negate the need to use police officers to fully implement enforcement of the weight restriction; this would be a matter for the police to consider. The suggestion to use the Member Locality Budget to pay the police to enforce the weight limit restriction was discounted, as it would burden members of affected divisions in perpetuity, and enforcement was a police not Council issue.
- 3.4 Members heard that the intention was to introduce the weight restriction, however analysis of all potential consequences was necessary to identify, without prejudgement, what was achievable. All members whose divisions had been identified by modelling as potentially affected, positively or negatively, by the channelling of Heavy Goods Vehicles on to the most appropriate routes, had been invited to panel to understand the implications and would continue to be briefed as the plan progressed.
- 3.5 To comments on the tight time frame and potential slippage at Plan Phases 2, 3 and 4, the chairman observed that a 100% guarantee could not be given but the intention was to adhere to it.

Trevor
Brennan

**CHAIRMAN'S
INITIALS**

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- 3.6 Members variously commented that:
- The A507 was not a suitable diversionary route;
 - Given the lack of resources officer work should not be directed to communities only neutrally or marginally affected;
 - It would be more appropriate to consider communities rather than divisions affected by benefit /disbenefit;
- Members acknowledged the A 507 campaign team’s tenacity in pursuit of a resolution to the issues on this road.

Conclusions:

- 3.7 The Panel noted the project plan

**4. HIGHWAY SERVICE CONTRACT EXTENSIONS UPDATE:
(i) Extension to the Highways Service Term (Ringway) contract, and
(ii) Extension to the Client Support Term (Opus-Arup) contract**

[Officer Contact: Steve Johnson, Head of Highways Contracts and Network Management (Tel: 01992 658126)]

- 4.1 Following Cabinet agreement on 18 December 2017 to extend both the Highways Service Term (HST) and Client Support Term (CST) contracts, and as agreed at the Highways cabinet panel of 16 November 2017, members received a report summarizing the changes secured as part of the extension of both contracts.
- 4.2 Members were directed to Appendix A for the changes secured in the extended CST contract and Appendix B for the changes in the extended HST contract. It was emphasised that the financial investments identified in the offers were indicative of the likely level of investment needed to achieve the negotiated outcomes. The amounts indicated could be a mixture of cash investment by the contractor or contractor officer time equivalent. Each proposal would be monitored to ensure the outcomes requested were achieved. Legislative and minor specification changes had also been incorporated.
- 4.3 During discussion officers clarified that:
- the contract extensions also included activities unspecified in the original contracts, which were either common practice, had been introduced subsequently as an initiative or had been requested.
 - Although a 5 day response time to member enquiries received via the Highways Member Enquiries email account had been secured, those which were safety issues would be escalated to a senior manager;

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- Any problems with contractor repairs would be corrected at the contractors expense (HST contract);
- Should the idea of restricting access to County Hall car parks be instigated at some point during the extension term, 'Allowance for potential changes to the car parking at County Hall' had been included in the extension clauses to remove the potential for either Opus Arup or Ringway to claim additional cost of having to park elsewhere;
- 'Improving the use of social media to make customers aware of highway works and impacts' stemmed from increasing customer use of this form of communication and Highways' ambition to be more proactive in supplying information in real time e.g. on gritting.
- 'Providing timely and accurate information on cost forecasts, works delivery and design programmes' (including grass cutting plans, gully cleaning plans.) supporting HCC's financial management and end of year accruals process;
- 'Further enhancements to the highways web pages' involved analysis of why people contacted the Highways Service, ascertaining whether the information requested was available and providing it in a more customer friendly way, hopefully with a concomitant reduction in emails to the Highways Service / Customer Service Centre.

4.4 The panel emphasised the lack of detail in the report and requested a more detailed report or information note to include the following issues:

S Johnson

CST Contract:

The meaning of and data on 'Reduction in remote working costs'.

HST Contract:

- Time frames for provision of information and updates, details for 'Specification for verge reinstatement updated';
- Details of the audit regime and what happens if failures exceed a set level;;
- Clarification of what 'Formalise Ringway's enforcement role (initial letter)' relates to.

4.5 Officers highlighted that the agreement to incentivise Ringway to repair the 2% of customer reported street light defects that went beyond the 20 working day repair target did not include those attributable to UKPN outages. In line with this, Members welcomed 'Placing signs on columns to indicate where a street lighting outage is the cause of third party (i.e. UKPN issue) as it publicly identified problems outside County Council control.

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- 4.6 Members heard that the HST contract extension included a requirement to reinstate yellow/white lines following carriageway patching or surfacing (in line with that of utility companies). Where works were planned (scheme works or CAT 2 works) the existing signing and lining affected would be checked to ensure it complied with current requirements before being reinstated. This was not always possible with CAT 1 works which by their nature were either urgent or emergency works. Members commented that liaison with district and borough councils could identify new developments which in some instances negated the need for reinstatement of lining.
- 4.7 Definition of 'Provision of robust, reliable and timely information' was affected by unforeseen situations (e.g. contractor work gangs being diverted from planned pothole repair jobs to emergency ones). Linked to this the panel commented on the complexity which underlay the goal of 'Provision of real time information on when Ringway's planned works actually start and finish on site - via roadworks.org'.
- 4.8 The Liberal Democrat Lead Member agreed to provide officers with a list of the issues on which he had requested further information; the rest of the panel were asked to do likewise.

Members
S Johnson

Conclusions:

- 4.9 Subject to receiving the additional information requested the Highways Cabinet Panel noted the contents of the report.

5. HIGHWAYS PERFORMANCE MONITOR

[Officer Contact: Steve Johnson, Head of Highways Contracts and Network Management (Tel: 01992 658126)]

- 5.1 The Cabinet Panel received the Highways Service Q3 report for September-December 2017. Members noted that there were 60 individual measures grouped under 10 themes demonstrating overall performance, each theme having an overall score for health, with performance being evaluated as Red (failing), Amber (review) or Green (performing) (RAG).
- 5.2 The overall performance had dropped marginally from 2.14 in Q2 to 2.05 in Q3; members noted the reasons and that mitigating action would be taken to ensure improvement in Q4.
- 5.3 As Locality theme data was gathered only every 6 months, the data on 'Member attendance at Highways Liaison Meetings' remained the same as in Q2 and would be updated in Q4.

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- 5.4 The 'Routes Salted to Time' measure was based on primary routes only, as secondary routes were only gritted after long periods of serious icy weather or snow once the primary routes were clear and provided sufficient resources were available. Officers agreed to clarify this on the measure and to make the detail of secondary route gritting more visible on the website. S Johnson
- 5.5 Officers agreed to look at the potential to provide separate performance data for the different illuminated assets (e.g. illuminated bollards) if significant difference was found. S Johnson
- 5.6 To member observations on associated safety issues, officers agreed to consider an asset condition measure for restoration time of damaged/knocked down reflective non-illuminated bollards. S Johnson
- 5.7 Officers exemplified how 'Stage 1 complaints upheld' was scenario dependent e.g. officer failure to comply with reply timeframes would result in a stage 1 complaint being upheld, however a request for improved record keeping would not; a CAT 1 issue subsequently found to have been incorrectly classified could result in a Stage 1 complaint being upheld but this would depend on the individual circumstances (it could have deteriorated between the first report and time of review). As the new style performance report was still evolving, in some cases only an indicative target had at this stage been established. These targets would be reviewed as more data was gathered e.g. 'Complaints escalated beyond stage'; the associated targets were not yet fully defined.
- 5.8 The panel requested that the graph for 'Vehicle Cross Over (VXO) construction in 8 Weeks' clarify that this measured the time from receipt of customer cheque to VXO completion on site. S Johnson
- 5.9 Members heard that there was no contractual requirement for Ringway to share their data on completed staff appraisals but might be prepared to. Officers agreed to check if the Council's 'Completed annual performance appraisals' of 90.67% was based on the number of staff employed at a particular point in time or only those whose length of service triggered an appraisal. S Johnson
- 5.10 Members heard that the apparent erratic performance on some graphs was normal and in some cases resulted from small sample size or the scale of the graph used, e.g. 'Emergence response quality audit' was expected to vary between 90-100% the ideal being 98%.

5.11 Officers agreed to ensure that the scales on graphs were consistent when showing data separately for different organisations e.g. 'Sickness Days'.

S Johnson

Conclusions:

5.12 The Cabinet Panel noted the report and commented on the performance monitor for the Highways service for Q3 2017-18.

6. LANE RENTAL CONSULTATION

[Officer Contact: Steve Johnson, Head of Highways Contracts and Network Management (01992 658115)]

6.1 The panel received a report bringing to their attention the Department of Transport (DfT) lane rental scheme and developments.

6.2 Following a trial the DfT had consulted on the future of lane rental schemes and would be publishing guidance allowing other Highway Authorities of apply to operate a lane rental scheme to support management of the highway network. On the basis of the guidance a future report on this option for Hertfordshire would be brought for panel consideration.

6.3 Members heard that the object of the scheme was to discourage work on main roads during peak hours i.e. 7.30-10.00am. Promoters who wanted to work on the highway during these times would be charged a 'rental' which could be around £2.5k for peak hour working. These charges would apply to HCC works as well as those of third parties such as utility companies. If implemented a lane rental scheme would only operate on main roads (yet to be determined). The current permit scheme covered only the cost to the council of processing a permit and would continue to apply to all HCC roads. Those wishing to work at peak hours could either pay the charge or consider other methods of working e.g. pipe jack, reduced lane width which would not stop traffic movement on the highway.

6.4 The County Council would give works promoters only the time required for their work and would not incorporate flexibility; overrun into peak hours would result in application of the fine.

Conclusions:

6.5 The Highways Cabinet Panel noted the contents of the report.

7. OTHER PART I BUSINESS

**CHAIRMAN'S
INITIALS**

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7.1 There was no other business.

**KATHRYN PETTITT
CHIEF LEGAL OFFICER**

CHAIRMAN _____

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INITIALS**

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