

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 AND ENVIRONMENT CABINET PANEL 12 February 2019

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS OF THE PANEL

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

OTHER MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

D Andrews, B A Gibson

Upon consideration of the agenda for the Highways and Environment Cabinet Panel meeting on 12 February 2019 as circulated, copy annexed, conclusions were reached and are recorded below:

Note: No conflicts of interest were declared by any member of the Cabinet Panel in relation to the matters on which conclusions were reached at this meeting.

PART I ('OPEN') BUSINESS

	ACTIONS
1. MINUTES	
1.1 The Minutes of the Cabinet Panel meeting held on 14 September 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.	
2. PUBLIC PETITIONS	
2.1 There were no public petitions	

3. INTEGRATED PLAN 2019/20 - 2022/23 HIGHWAYS AND ENVIRONMENT

[Officer Contact:
Faisal Mir, Assistant Director Finance and Business Support,
Environment and Infrastructure (Tel: 01992 555143)]

- 3.1 The Panel received a report which highlighted the areas of the Integrated Plan (IP) relating to the Highways and Environment (H&E) portfolio to enable Members to consider these and provide comment.
- 3.2 Members' attention was drawn to a typographical error i.e. 'Ref EE37 and Ref EE39' in relation to SaverCard savings in the table of Key Budget Movements 2019/20-2022/23 which should have been in the Growth, Infrastructure, Planning & the Economy portfolio.
- 3.3 Officers highlighted the savings from the ongoing programme of conversion of street lighting illumination to LED. These lights use much less energy and so contributed to significant savings.
- 3.4 In relation to review of the LED street lighting illumination strategy with respect to further potential savings by reduction of lighting levels between 05.00 and 06.00 to enable lighting to remain on until 02.00, Members heard that LED conversion was projected for completion in March 2020, after which it would be possible to consider feedback and review the Part Night Lighting strategy.
- 3.5 Members who had concerns about lights in their division that hadn't been converted in the LED rollout were requested to contact officers.
- 3.6 During discussion of key pressures and challenges, officers clarified that there is an on-going risk to income currently received from driver offender retraining (mainly speed awareness) courses. Members noted that reduction in this income could impact road safety preventative activity.
- 3.7 Members requested that officers bring a report back to panel if external factors impacted this area of service provision.
- 3.8 During discussion of key budget movements ('Ref NE7'-Road Safety) officers clarified that a minor review of the teams had identified efficiencies and enabled staff numbers to be reduced by one without impacting services.

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Conclusions:

- 3.9 1. The Panel commented to Cabinet on the proposals relating to the Integrated Plan in respect of Highways and Environment.
- 2. As outlined above, the Panel identified issues that it felt that Cabinet should consider in finalising the Integrated Plan proposals.

4. HIGHWAYS 2019/20 INTEGRATED WORKS AND PROCUREMENT ROUTES AND THE 2020/21 FORWARD WORKS PROGRAMME

[Officer Contact: Graham Barrow, Highways Senior Management Team (Tel: 01992 658196)]

- 4.1 The Panel received a report to enable them to consider the proposed 2019/20 Integrated Works Programme (IWP) (including Procurement Routes) and to inform Members of progress on the first draft of the proposed 2020/21 Forward Works Programme (FWP).
- 4.2 Members heard that as a consequence of central government's Local Highways Maintenance Fund, some schemes previously shown in Draft 3 of the proposed 2019/20 IWP had been brought forward for delivery in 2018/19 (as identified in Appendix B). Development of the 2020/21 FWP had similarly been impacted.
- 4.3 Noting the government's short notice requirement to spend the Fund by 31 March 2019, Members welcomed the efforts made and considerable challenges in mobilising resources to achieve this and, concomitant with schemes being brought forward, the opportunity for greater priority to be given to footways and cycleways when infilling the 2019/20 IWP.
- 4.4 To the Panel's concerns about agreeing to note the first draft of the 2020/21 draft proposal FWP when a draft was not provided with the report, Members heard that this stemmed from the impact of the funding received through the Local Highways Maintenance Fund (as per 4.2 above) which resulted in a different situation to previous years. This was in addition to awaiting final budget approval by the County Council, confirmation of final delivery of the 2018/19 IWP (where there was a risk that some of the projects might not be delivered for operational reasons (i.e. delivery of Local Highways Maintenance Fund at short notice, as per 4.3 above), and the impact of winter conditions on both programme delivery and highway condition. The knock-on effect was that the 2019/20 IWP and 2020/21 FWP were still being populated.

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- 4.5 To Members concerns about agreeing to approve procurement routes (part of recommendation 1) when the figures provided were not final, officers clarified that this too resulted from the impact of the Local Highways Maintenance Fund and agreed to provide Members with an updated procurement route table once the 2019/20 IWP was confirmed. G Barrow
- 4.6 Officers clarified that completion of the development of the FWP was expected in quarter 1 (Q1) and that it would be released as soon as possible in Q1 of the next financial year (2019/20).
- 4.7 Officers agreed to provide Members with an accurate comparison of actual IWP expenditure in 2018/19 with planned 2019/20 expenditure (by work type and aligned with Table 1 of the Report) once the IWP development was complete. G Barrow
- 4.8 Acknowledging that the current fluidity of the 2019/20 IWP would result in a further iteration, officers emphasised that approval of the schemes already on the programme was necessary in order to place orders with the contractors enabling programme delivery to commence in April. Members were also assured that, as in previous years, schemes were unlikely to be removed other than in exceptional circumstances.
- 4.9 Members heard that they would be able to check which schemes in their Division would be carried out in Q1 2019/20 when the Members Bulletin was published at the end of March 2019. Further dates would be published as programmes were confirmed.
- 4.10 To reflect the potential for further amendments to the 2019/20 IWP the Panel proposed that recommendation 1. be amended from:
'Approve the proposed 2019/20 Integrated Works programme including procurement routes'
 to
'Approve the proposed 2019/20 Integrated Works programme including procurement routes which we note will be subject to amendment'
- The recommendation was unanimously agreed.
- 4.11 Following discussion of recommendation 2 and the semantics of the phrase *'on the first draft'*, S B A F H Giles-Medhurst proposed the following amended:
'Note the progress on the first draft of the proposed 2020/21 Forward Works Programme',

to be amended to
'Note the progress on the proposed 2020/21 Forward Works Programme'.

The amendment was not agreed by the Panel.

Conclusions:

4.12 The Panel recommend to Cabinet that Cabinet:

1. Approve the proposed 2019/20 Integrated Works Programme including procurement routes which we note will be subject to amendment;
2. Note the progress on the first draft of the proposed 2020/21 Forward Works Programme.

The Liberal Democrat Group requested that their dissent from agreement to conclusion 2 be recorded.

5. PEDESTRIAN ACCESSIBILITY AND THE DEVELOPING MAINTENANCE FOR ACTIVE TRAVEL STRATEGY

[Officer Contact: Juliet Cromack, Principal Engineer, Asset Management (Tel: 01992 658249); Chris Allen-Smith, Head of Profession, Asset Management Maintenance (Tel: 01992 658167)]

5.1 The Panel received a report in response to a motion at full Council in regard of pedestrian access issues, particularly for those with limited mobility. Members noted that an outline of the 'Maintenance for Active Travel Strategy' (MATS) currently under development formed part of the report and, although it did not answer all the questions raised by the motion, it provided an opportunity for them to consider the draft version. The Strategy would be used to improve the links between the Highways Maintenance team and those supporting Active travel, to enable a better approach to minor works.

5.2 Cllr B A Gibson was invited to speak to the panel and consequent to her analysis of the report and Member debate the following observations were made:

- the motion focussed on access to community not modal shift;
- despite an Active Travel Strategy since 2013 disability access was still an issue;
- the need for a 'disability champion' as there was no-one with sufficient expertise to consult on these issues;
- the need for a specified footway issues officer to enable a comprehensive response to accessibility for all;
- consideration by the footway hierarchy of barriers to disability

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- access in terms of access to local programmes and services;
- the need for data collection on barriers to disability access to footpaths to enable prioritisation and prompt use of any funding;
- development of an App to enable public identification of barriers to disability access to footpaths anywhere (with potential funding via crowdsourcing);
- the need to include barriers to disability access when responding to planning applications by third parties;
- increasing disability access demand with an aging population;
- potential funding for an individual tenant's disability access issues from district and borough councils' welfare budgets;
- consideration of access barriers of the blind and partially sighted e.g. hazardous street furniture, guide dog issues;
- regular footway reviews should also identify: potential problems and issues e.g. pavement obstruction by parked cars, lack of dropped kerbs at junctions; funding for the reviews could be sought from Local Members;
- consideration of street furniture placement;
- Member access to condition surveys via MIS would be helpful;
- as this was a human rights issue Members could change the report recommendations to reflect those in the motion.

5.3 Cllr Gibson welcomed MATS but noted that as it was still being developed it did not urgently address access issues and had not incorporated the proposals of the motion. Nonetheless the investment in Cat 6 works was welcomed as it enabled a focus on themes which normally rated as lower priority in the 'Cat 2' programmes of works and could be delivered within existing budgets.

5.4 The Panel heard that as MATS was a work in progress, the initial workshop had been held with officers within Highways and Environment to assess internal resources and expertise, and to identify key barriers to access. The next workshop would consult with a wide range of user groups, including disability groups before the final draft of the Strategy was prepared.

5.5 Members heard that the focus of the footway hierarchy applied throughout the county and graded on the level of footfall. Areas with highest footfall were inspected most frequently and received priority maintenance to provide maximum benefit to the most people within available resources; the footway hierarchy ensured that footways outside dwellings of elderly people/concentrations of vulnerable users were mid hierarchy.

5.6 In relation to potential user conflicts of shared space, officers clarified that until the national guidance was available all large projects that had not physically begun were on hold and Members

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should advise similar in their locality. Members heard that MCHLG had advised Development Management that responses to developers should be within the guidelines provided. Noting that government concerns around shared space related more to the public realm than smaller developments, Members expressed concern at the ongoing implementation of shared spaces by developers of large housing developments.

5.7 During discussion of street tree damage to footpaths Members heard that Defra was consulting on giving the Highway Authority the statutory duty to replace those which were removed and Members' direction on the balance between trees and access would be sought.

5.8 *In relation to point 1 of the motion* Members suggested that a 'disability champion' need not necessarily deal with the issues but could point people in the right direction. Officers highlighted the variety of disability access issues across the Council and confirmed that the Head of Profession for Highway Design had the necessary knowledge to act as champion for disability access issues for the Highways service, advising Assistant Highway Managers on issues brought to them by their Local Member. Subsequent to input from Watford Disability a rolling programme of training on disability access issues would also be rolled out across the Highway service.

H Hamer

5.9 *In relation to point 2 of the motion* officers emphasised that the Defect Management Approach and public fault reporting worked within required national guidelines. Members highlighted that it was currently possible to record access issues in the narrative box and priority should be given to disability related ones. In terms of improvements there should be: a question to ascertain if a disability access issue was involved; a category for 'missing facilities' with the option for photographs, e.g. lack of a dropped kerb, and a mechanism to report ponding at road junctions as inspectors often did not see it due to evaporation. Members highlighted that where faults included a photograph or other attachment it was not yet possible for these attachments to be viewed on officers' hand held devices; this was being addressed. Officers confirmed that amendment of the fault reporting system was possible, hopefully by the end of the financial year.

S Johnson

5.10 *In relation to point 3 of the motion* officers clarified that a countywide survey to establish the areas that did not meet current guidance would cost ca. £250,000. Members suggested that a review of footways across the county to identify all barriers to access could be achieved by extension of safety inspections and condition surveys. Officers clarified that if access issues were

included in the rolling programme of condition and safety inspections undertaken by specialists, retraining would be required and the surveys would take longer. In view of the above and the fact that safety inspectors' remit did not include design issues, to enable them to meet statutory requirements it might be more appropriate to employ accessibility specialists; both options would entail additional cost. Members also suggested that where work was subject to a safety audit the disability access audit could be undertaken at the same time.

5.11 *In relation to point 4 of the motion* officers emphasised that until data had been collected on the barriers to disability access, their extent and the cost of remedy would be unknown. Members observed that a single increase in Highways Locality Budgets would not address future problems and queried what constituted a '*minimum safe and accessible standard*'. The chairman emphasised that, as a consequence of the Local Highways Maintenance Fund, a commitment had already been made in the 2019/20 IWP to give priority to footways and cycleways.

5.12 *In relation to point 5 of the motion* Members emphasised that lack of government design guidance should not deter work to meet current disability access standards.

5.13 *In relation to point 6 of the motion* Members expressed concern at the apparent lack of communication between the Development Management Team and Highway officers in ensuring developers met footway accessibility standards.

5.14 The Panel heard that MATS was expected to be functional later in 2019. **All the points raised in the motion and all those identified at 5.2 of the minutes** and Member feedback would be fed into the draft final strategy which would come before Panel. **The associated report would also include the reasons for non-inclusion of any of the points in the strategy.**

J Cromack
C Allen-Smith

Conclusions:

5.15 Consequent to discussion and in acknowledgement of Members' strength of feeling the following were agreed by the Panel:

1. An officer was identified who could advise on disability access standards across the highway service ;
2. A mechanism for reporting problems and raising disability and accessibility issues would be considered;
3. Officers committed to returning to the Panel with another report further developing the MATS which considered the Panel's comments.

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**6. A507 HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES (HGV) STUDY --
ADDENDUM 1 REPORT**

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

- 6.1 Members received a report on the results following the panel's request in September 2018 for consideration of two additional enforceable weight limit options for the A507 in light of concerns regarding the A507 between Station Road and Baldock Services and the existing railway bridge.
- 6.2 Members noted the weight restriction options and assessment i.e.: Option 1A: A10 to A507 / Baldock Services roundabout junction at the A1(m) (9.9 miles), Option 2A: Throcking Road to Warren Lane.(0.5m) and A507 Clothall Road / B656 Station Road junction to Baldock Services at the A1(m) junction (1.6 miles), and Option 3: Do nothing.
- 6.3 Officers emphasised that:
- no extra modelling of the area of restriction had been required as the original exceeded and included those being considered;
 - although the report identified two additional weight restrictions it did not exclude, in the vicinity of the A507, any existing TROs or weight restrictions yet to be consulted on or brought forward;
 - weight restriction applied to any vehicle of or over a certain weight and lacking a valid reason to enter or exit the weight restriction which would be subject to enforcement;
 - there were a number of strategic rerouting options for HGVs;
- 6.4 The Panel heard that a 'broad strokes' approach had been taken to the TRO's for option 2A; although the principle focus was Radwell Services to the Baldock Railway Bridge to reduce the conflict between HGVs and the bridge (the existing TRO for the bridge is enforceable by the Police, falling within their section 38 powers in the road traffic act 1988), the nuances of the scheme at the local level had yet to be finalised.
- 6.5 During discussion Members supported clarification of the boundaries at the end of the restriction to avoid unintended consequences and requested consideration for inclusion in the TRO's of: (i) the Baldock Road to Buntingford High Street to deter HGV's using it as an east-west route, as it's an inappropriate route for agricultural vehicles and provides protection for the children using crossing points to access the three schools within Buntingford itself; (ii) extension of Radwell Services to Baldock Railway Bridge to include Clothall Rd to deter HGV's from

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Royston, Letchworth and Hitchin using the centre of Baldock to access the A507.

- 6.6 As the stretch of Station Road involved in the TRO was only ca. 200m long and went into North Road a Member suggested that Option 2A should be reworded to read: *‘Throcking Road to Warren Lane in Cottered plus Clothall Road / Station Road / North Road to Baldock Services Roundabout weight restrictions’*.
- 6.7 Subsequent to concern at the negative police stakeholder feedback, lack of support for a weight restriction along the A507 and anticipated objection to the proposal, the Panel heard that technological enforcement and legislation to support it were not yet available. However, the police had suggested that, as in Oxfordshire, enforcement might be possible under the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 by the police and Trading Standards.
- 6.8 Members heard that it would be inappropriate for the County Council to become involved in restriction enforcement and that, although residential engagement would be very important, identification of those HGVs legitimately delivering along the A507 had to be taken into account. The Panel suggested that contraventions should be submitted to police local priority setting forums and that the police could provide in car camera evidence. Highlighting the difficulty in predicting adherence to the restrictions, officers confirmed that comparison of before and after data on the number of HGVs legitimately using the A507 would be supplied to the police.
- 6.9 During discussion Members welcomed the suggestion of exemption from the TROs of HGVs needing to access land adjacent to local farms.
- 6.10 Members welcomed and unanimously agreed with Option 2A.

Conclusions:

- 6.11
 - i. The Highways and Environment Cabinet Panel noted the content of the A507 HGV Study -- Addendum 1 Report; and
 - ii. The Highways and Environment Cabinet Panel agreed to proceed with Option 2A: Throcking Road to Warren Lane in Cottered plus Clothall Road/Station Road to Baldock Services Roundabout weight restrictions.

7. AIR QUALITY STRATEGY & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

[Officer Contact: Bethan Clemence, Strategic Lead – Healthy Places (Tel: 01992 556359);

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Rupert Thacker, Head of Highways Strategy and Implementation
(Tel: 01992 658176)]

- 7.1 The Panel received a joint Public Health and Highways and Environment services report on the Air Quality Strategy (appendix A to the report) and a supporting Implementation Plan (appendix B to the report) for the County Council itself.
- 7.2 Members noted: the division for responsibility for air quality between the district and borough councils and county council; the report's aim to foster collaborative working, avoid ambiguity and duplication and identification of action the county council could reasonably take within the statutory frame it operated in the Implementation Plan. If the Strategy and Implementation Plan were adopted the County Council would work with the districts and boroughs to explore and develop a county-wide strategic response.
- 7.3 Members observed that review was required by the district and borough councils of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) as many were out of date with current traffic conditions and their number and geographical spread in relation to the members of the population more affected by air quality, further to this AQMA data was out of date as Defra verification took a year. The Panel suggested that London's approach to traffic-generated air pollution outside schools should be investigated and the consequences to Hertfordshire of both London's low emission zones and the effects of Luton and Stanstead airports. It was emphasised that effective working between the County Council and Districts was required to ensure progress on air quality;
- 7.4 Members with concerns about air quality in particular areas (e.g. around schools) were directed to raise these with the district and borough councils to ensure they were monitored; subsequent review by district and borough authorities would determine whether an AQMA was required and provided further evidence on air quality.
- 7.5 The Panel heard that Members could address certain wider scale issues such as HGV pollution in towns via their HLB.
- 7.6 The Panel supported the suggestion of a 'No Idling' zone' around every school and suggested that this could be achieved by placing signs on school gates, avoiding the need for traffic signs.

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7.7 During the wide ranging discussion Members suggested that the Implementation Plan should articulate and consider the following ambitions as an indicator of forward intent i.e.:

- District and Borough prioritisation of monitoring of particulate matter, in particular outside schools;
- Parking bans outside schools;
- As the education and highways authority, to work with the districts and boroughs to have a 'no idling' zone at every school in the county;
- Development of 'No idling' signs for congestion hotspots;
- District & Borough civil enforcement of 'no idling' signs;
- A review of financial incentives for school development of travel plans;
- Low Emission Zones and HGV bans in congestion hotspots;
- An electric vehicle charging point strategy;
- A tree planting policy;
- Officers' new lease cars to be low emission;
- Fleet replacements to meet the County Council's ambitious standards e.g. for Fire Service vehicles if and when appropriate;
- LTP 4 prioritisation of bus use;
- Prioritisation of air quality by Highway schemes;
- Closer working with the Districts and Boroughs on air quality evidence gathering at the local level;
- A holistic approach to improving air quality.

7.8 In view of national and worldwide air quality issues over which the county had no control, several Members urged realism in relation to expectations of the Strategy and Implementation Plan and supported Hertfordshire's participation in the bigger picture.

The Panel highlighted the difficulty in advocating effectively on air quality when there was no dedicated officer resource.

7.9 Officers clarified that as the Implementation Plan was not yet agreed, all the best practice suggestions from the three panels at which the report was being presented would be incorporated into the strategy and, as there was no officer specifically assigned to air quality, as a form of prioritisation the most common themes would be taken forward for implementation.

B Clemence
R Thacker

7.10 The Panel agreed that to assure members all their comments and best practice suggestions would be incorporated, the report recommendations at 1.ii would be preceded by the phrase: *'on the understanding that the report would be amended to reflect the views of all three Cabinet Panels,'*

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Conclusions:

7.11

Members:

1. i. noted and commented upon the content of the report and the actions contained within the Air Quality Strategy and Implementation Plan;
- ii. on the understanding that the report would be amended to reflect the views of all three Cabinet Panels, recommended to Cabinet that Cabinet agreed the Air Quality Strategy and Implementation Plan.
2. The Panel's recommendations would be reported to Cabinet in conjunction with those for the Public Health and Prevention Cabinet Panel and the Growth, Infrastructure, Planning and the Economy Cabinet Panel.

8. HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENT PERFORMANCE MONITOR Q2

[Officer Contact: Sarah Lockyer, Contracts and Performance Manager (Tel: 01992 658206)]

8.1

Following cancellation of the November 2018 Highways and Environment Cabinet Panel, the Q2 2018--2019 Performance report was made available to the panel electronically and was subsequently updated with current data. In view of this the Panel agreed to consider the Q2 and Q3 Performance items together.

Conclusions:

8.2

As per agenda item 9.

9. HIGHWAYS PERFORMANCE MONITOR

[Officer Contact: Sarah Lockyer, Contracts and Performance Manager (Tel: 01992 658206)]

9.1

The Panel received the Highways and Environment Service, including Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW), overall performance report for Q3 2018-2019 (October -December 2018).

9.2

Members heard that whilst the Financial and Efficiency/Value for Money themes had improved and Customer Journey, Locality and Operational Delivery had reduced compared to Q2, overall performance for Q3 remained stable at 2.07.

9.3

Members heard that the decision had been taken to suspend the gritting 'routes salted to time' measure for the period October-

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December 2018 due to insufficient time to undertake route optimisation between completing the major route review and the start of the 2018/19 season. However, monitoring between the Council and Ringway had ensured that routes had been treated in sufficient time before ice/frost occurred.

9.4 Members heard that a review of Highway Liaison Meetings (HLMs) was under way and a report would come before the Panel. Officers clarified that the data on Member attendance at HLMs covered only those areas where meetings had occurred.

9.5 In regard of Customer Journey 'Stage 1 and 2 complaint investigations completed to agreed timescales', where the response had been to request an extension as an answer could not be provided within the timescale, if the complainant did not agree to the extension the original response would be kept and if not met this would be classed as a fail. Officers also agreed to investigate potential abuse of requests for 'extensions to reply' in order to meet the agreed timescales.

S Johnson
J Knapman
S Lockyer

9.6 Members welcomed the fact that 'Complaints escalated beyond stage 1' and 'Stage 1 complaints upheld/ partially upheld' covered both the County Council, Ringway and all framework contractors, as subsequent change to processes would lead to improvements.

9.7 Officers agreed to investigate inclusion in the performance report of contractor negligence which compromised network safety e.g. unfinished works which were not enclosed by barriers when the contractor left the site.

S Johnson

Conclusions:

9.8 The Cabinet Panel noted and commented on the performance monitor for the Highways service for Q2/Q3 2018-19.

10 OTHER PART I BUSINESS

10.1 There was no other business.

**KATHRYN PETTITT
CHIEF LEGAL OFFICER**

CHAIRMAN _____

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