

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
HIGHWAYS FORUM FOR HARBOROUGH
HELD AT THE HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES ON
TUESDAY 8 DECEMBER 2009 AT 6.00 PM

PRESENT

County Councillors	District Councillors
Mr W Liquorish (Chairman)	Mrs A Burrell
Dr R K A Feltham	Mr S Charlish
Mr S J Galton	Mr P E K Fuchs
Dr S Hill	Mr C Holyoak
Mrs R Page	Mrs B Johnson
Mr B Pain	Mr G D Spendlove-Mason

The following also attended the meeting:

County Officers present: K Notman, C Howe, D R Bradbury
District Officers present:

039. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Members and officers to the meeting.

040. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apology for absence were received from Mr G A Hart CC.

041. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

042. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

043. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday 16th September 2009 were confirmed and signed as a true record of the meeting, subject to the following amendment.

Minute item 031 change: on train station parking to on railway station parking.

044. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE ON ISSUES CONSIDERED AT THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chairman's update was noted.

045. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 36

There were no current petitions.

046. WINTER MAINTENANCE – REVIEW OF POLICY

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management on the review of the Winter Maintenance policy. The report was introduced by Mrs Notman with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mrs Notman explained that a review of winter maintenance had been carried out following the severe conditions that arose in the previous winter. The ice and snow conditions experienced were the worst since 1991.

Mrs Notman stated that salt supplies totalling 12,000 tonnes are now in the county's salt barns which will be sufficient to undertake more than 60 salt runs. Finally, she confirmed that arrangements are in place to ensure that in the event of another severe winter extra salt supplies would be available.

Mr G D Spendlove-Mason DC asked that officers seriously consider that the road used as a rat run from the Great Glen Bypass to Wigston through Newton Harcourt be categorised as a priority route for winter treatment. Mrs Notman confirmed that this issue had already been raised by Dr R K A Feltham CC and that once this route had been considered, a response would be supplied to Dr Feltham and Mr Spendlove-Mason.

Mr S J Galton CC gave praise to the excellent work undertaken by front line staff in the previous winter.

He had concerns over the snow plough service undertaken by farmers and the timing of the ploughing in rural areas following the snow in February.

Mrs Notman explained that farmers had not been called into action for several years and one or two of them had not been sure of the routes when called on in February. She went on to say that the county has a night controller monitoring the situation and that a more pro-active procedure would be used if necessary this year.

Mr Galton also was concerned that a letter recently sent out to Parish Councils on the salt bin procedure was very complicated. He also commented that there had been a backlog in replying to Parish Councils.

Mrs Notman explained that whilst the policy was being reviewed, officers were unable to investigate requests from the Parish Councils. Officers are now endeavouring to reply to the requests.

In answer to a question from Mr B Pain CC on snow wardens, Mrs Notman confirmed that she recognised that parishes are of different sizes. The county targets the larger Parish Councils that have undertaken the snow warden process in previous years. This entails the Parish Council providing resources to ensure the high priority locations in the parish such as schools, doctors' surgeries are kept clear of snow. This can then free up the County Council's workforce to treat smaller parish areas when there is severe snow.

Dr S Hill CC and Mrs B Johnson DC commented that routes to rural communities are treated better than routes in Harborough and Little Bowden. Priority routes are generally designed around bus routes and that there are very few roads in Harborough that have buses travelling along. Therefore many important routes in Harborough do not get gritted. Mrs Johnson also commented that Harborough was not a parish therefore does not meet the criteria for a snow warden.

Mrs Notman confirmed that in severe conditions the District Council generally provide a snow clearing exercise undertaken by their own staff to supplement County arrangements.

Mr Howe confirmed that he had received a letter from Bitteswell Parish Council in which they had agreed to pay for a salt bin.

Mrs Notman agreed to take on board comments by Mrs R Page CC on residents in smaller communities being unsure of any liability when clearing paths.

Mr S Charlish DC pointed out the problems of small parishes who do not have a precept. He highlighted Kings Norton and asked officers to consider the situation of the smaller parishes who cannot afford to fund salt bins.

Mrs Notman explained the process behind the snow warden scheme. She also explained that there was not an 'out-of-hours' telephone number to report weather conditions. A night controller is employed to monitor the weather situation and make decisions on weather reports received.

RECOMMENDATIONS

i) That the report of the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management be noted; and

ii) that officers contact Dr Feltham and Mr Spendlove-Mason once consideration has been given to including the road through Newton Harcourt as a priority route for winter maintenance.

047. SCHOOL TRAVEL PLANS - UPDATE

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management on the progress being made within the county on developing School Travel Plans and the implementation of associated highway schemes. The report was introduced by Mrs Notman with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mrs Notman explained that the report updated Members on the work undertaken on STPs. The Local Transport Plan sets out a target for 90% of schools in Leicestershire to have completed a travel plan by 2010/11. By the end of 2008/9 72% of all schools had developed a plan with a further 11% in the process of developing one in 2009/10.

Mrs Notman directed Members to:

Appendix A – schools which have developed a STP

Appendix B – schools working towards a STP

Appendix C – schools still to develop a STP

Appendix D – schemes delivered and programmed for STP schools

Dr Hill commented that the STP process should be regularly reviewed. She asked if officers could pressurise the schools in Appendix C to develop a STP.

Mrs Notman confirmed that officers work to encourage schools to develop a STP, however, schools cannot be forced to complete a STP.

Dr Feltham, as a governor of Robert Smyth School, agreed to raise this issue.

Officers confirmed that independent schools did not receive the grant available to state schools.

Mr Spendlove-Mason was disappointed to see that Leicester Grammar had not completed a STP, which had been a condition of the planning application to build the new school. He asked that both himself and Dr Feltham be updated on the present position of Leicester Grammar and the completion of a STP.

Mr Pain asked if officers could explain to him what the term sustainable travel in connection with the spending of the grant was. He also asked if officers could consider different ways in which to direct expenditure arising from STPs.

Mrs Page stated that there has always been a problem in trying to persuade parents not to drive children to school. The solution is for the police to increase enforcement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) That the report of the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management be noted;
- ii) that officers update Dr Feltham and Mr Spendlove-Mason on the current position of Leicester Grammar and the completion of a STP; and
- iii) that officers speak to Mr Pain on various issues on STPs.

048. UPDATE ON 2009/10 MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAMMES

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management on the 2009/10 maintenance and improvements programmes. The report was introduced by Mr Howe with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mr Howe confirmed that this was a standard report and with the approval of the Chairman asked for questions.

Mr Howe agreed to ask officers to speak to Mrs Page on Main Street Bitteswell outside Manor House and Mill Street Ullesthorpe.

Mr P E K Fuchs DC thanked officers for the excellent work on footpaths Dunton Bassett. Mr Howe confirmed that drainage work in Dunton Bassett was planned for the 4th quarter of this financial year. Mrs Notman agreed to contact Mr Pain with the amount spent by the County Council in agreeing insurance claims arising from potholes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) That the report of the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management be noted;
- ii) that officers speak to Mrs Page on Main Street Bitteswell and Mill Street Ullesthorpe; and
- iii) that officers confirm the annual amount spent on pothole insurance claims to Mr Pain.

049. PROGRAMME OF TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS – CURRENT POSITION

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management on the current position of the traffic regulation orders (TRO) programme. The report was introduced by Mrs Howe with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mr Howe confirmed that this was a standard report and with the approval of the Chairman asked for questions. Mr Howe agreed to speak to Mr Galton on a sign issue in Bushby.

Dr Hill understood the TRO process and time involved but was concerned that the TROs planned for Market Harborough, because of the time taken had now received late objections.

Mr Howe brought Members up to date with the present position of the Market Harborough TROs.

Mr Fuchs was concerned that the 40mph sign outside Leire on the road to Dunton Bassett was not close to the village and encouraged drivers to ignore. Mr Howe agreed to ask officers to speak to Mr Fuchs.

Mrs Page asked that officers review safety issues and the turning circle for HGVs as part of the Church Street Lutterworth TRO. She was also concerned about the time and money spent on introducing TROs, especially double yellow lines when they are not enforced. Mrs Notman agreed to ask officers to discuss with Mrs Page.

Mr Howe agreed to speak to Mr Pain once the objections to the Commons Car Park TRO had been analysed.

Mr Howe agreed to ask officers to speak to Mr C Holyoak DC on the Albert Street Kibworth Harcourt developer funded TRO. He also agreed to ask officers to speak to Mr Holyoak on the traffic lights at Kibworth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) That the report of the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management be noted;
- ii) that officers speak to Mr Galton on a sign issue in Busby;
- iii) that officers speak to Mr Fuchs on signs at Leire;
- iv) that officers discuss enforcement issues with Mrs Page;
- v) that officers speak to Mr Pain on the Commons Car Park TRO;
- vi) that officers speak to Mr Holyoak on the Albert Street Kibworth Harcourt TRO; and
- vii) that officers speak to Mr Holyoak on issues with the traffic lights at Kibworth.

050. ON-GOING ACTION STATEMENT

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management on the on-going action statement. A copy of the report is filed with the minutes.

The Chairman brought Members up to date on the two outstanding on-going actions.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report of the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management be noted.

051. ITEMS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

Members asked that the following items be considered for a future meeting.

- update on sponsored roundabouts in the county, income raised, number sponsored.
- update on the credibility check on the associated transport issues involved in the planning application – anaerobic digestive facility at Sutton Elms.

Mr Howe brought Members up to date with the present position of the two toucan crossings planned for Market Harborough. He confirmed that the County Council had bid for extra funds in order to top up the developer contributions of £50k. The total cost of the two toucans is estimated to be £120k with a planned start in July/August 2010.

Mr Howe confirmed the difference between toucan and pelican crossings.

Toucan: for pedestrians and cyclists

Pelican: for pedestrians only

052. ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIRMAN HAS DECIDED IS URGENT

There were no items.

053. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Chairman confirmed the date of the next meeting as Wednesday 10th March 2010 at 6.00pm.

054. CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS

The Chairman thanked Members and officers for their attendance at the meeting.

8th December 2009

Chairman

6.00 – 7.35p.m.

Date