

Pendle Three Tier Forum

Note of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 16th September, 2014 at 6.30 pm in Colne Town Hall, Albert Road, Colne

Present:

Chair

County Councillor David Whipp

Forum Members

County Councillor Dorothy Lord
County Councillor Christian Wakeford
County Councillor Paul White
Councillor Tommy Cooney
Councillor Ken Hartley
Councillor Graham Roach
Councillor Richard Smith

The following officers were also in attendance:

H Ballantyne, Localities Officer, Lancashire County Council
C Mather, Democratic Services, Lancashire County Council
P Mousdale, Pendle Borough Council

1. Appointment of Chair

County Councillor David Whipp was appointed chair of the Forum for the ensuing year.

2. Appointment of Deputy Chair

Councillor Tommy Cooney was appointed deputy chair of the Forum for the ensuing year.

3. Questions from members of the public (limited to 15 minutes)

None.

4. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T Beckett and A Mahmood.

5. Membership and Terms of Reference

The Forum's membership and terms of reference were noted.

6. Note of the meeting held on 7 April 2014

The note of the meeting held on 1 April 2014 was presented and agreed.

7. Action sheet update from last meeting

Members received and noted an update on the action taken in response to issues raised at the previous meeting.

The followings were raised at the meeting:

It was noted that officers were still investigating members' concerns about the delay in responding to complaints about potholes and other issues relating to repair works. It was hoped that a further report would be presented to the next meeting of the Forum.

Concerns were expressed about the census which had been carried out on the A56 and on adjacent backgrounds around Earby this morning. Members and local employers had not received any notification about the census and it was felt that the census had resulted in many people arriving late for work. It was agreed that the County Council should be asked to give advance publicity of any plans to undertake a census so people could allow for possible delays in their journey time.

It was noted that the proposed works on Birtwistle Avenue was about to commence.

It was reported that Pendle Borough Council had considered the campaign for the introduction of a minimum unit price for alcohol for Lancashire. The Council felt that this should be pursued via national legislation rather than a local by-law.

8. 2014/15 Quarter 1 Environment Directorate Performance Dashboard

The Environment Directorate's 'dashboard' performance for the first quarter of 2014/15 was presented:

The following comments were made:

- 8 out of 9 capital schemes had been completed.
- The road and street maintenance section now included highway defects identified by highways safety inspections and those reported by the public. (8% of the defects reported between April and May had been repaired within 20 working days.
- It was reported that work on a number of bridges on or over the M65 was on schedule to be completed in 3 weeks. Some work on over bridges would still need to be undertaken but this would not affect traffic on the motorway.
- Concerns were again expressed about councillors not being kept informed of delays to highway works. It was agreed that the County Council should be asked to take steps to improve communications with councillors.
- Officers agreed to circulate a briefing note about the recent flooding incident in Barnoldswick including the County Council's role and response in dealing with such incidents.

9. Developing the Three Tier Forums - feedback on the review

It was reported that a review of the Three Tier Forums had been completed and that the County Council's Cabinet in May 2014 had agreed to develop two different test models in

Lancaster and Chorley. The Lancaster model involved some devolved decision making powers and the Chorley model involved the participation of all 22 of its parish councils. It was also reported that 9 of the 12 Forums were now open to the public.

10. Events on the Highway, Policy and Procedures for Highway Management

The Forum considered a draft protocol and outline for the management of road closures for events, parades and other activities that affect the highway.

Members were informed that the protocol had been produced in response to Lancashire Constabulary's adoption of national guidance issued by the Association of Chief Police Officers. The Constabulary's decision meant that the police would not undertake any traffic management for an event on the highway other than those events that were deemed to be of national importance e.g. a Remembrance Day parade.

The Forum agreed that there needed to be a clear separation and understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the county and borough councils.

The Forum's attention was drawn to the proposed accredited training programme for marshalls that would allow county and district employees to be empowered to control traffic when required to do so.

It was noted that the County Council could supply road closure signs and barriers to assist events on the highway.

A member believed that the police would continue to have a presence at events on the highway until March 2015. Whilst the protocol appeared to be a way forward, it was agreed that the Constabulary should be urged to reconsider its decision and to provide support beyond March 2015.

11. Tour de France Review

The Forum was informed that the Tour de France had gone well and the effect on the highway had been minimal.

Officers were asked to explore the possibility of Lancashire hosting part of next year's tour of Britain race.

12. Lancashire Growth Deal

A report was presented on the Lancashire Growth deal. Members felt that the Growth Deal would not result in any great benefit to Pendle and that was extremely disappointing.

13. Arrangements for the delivery of the countryside access service in Pendle

A member of the public, as well as several members of the Forum expressed concern that the County Council proposed to end its public rights of way agency agreement with the Borough Council on 31 March 2015.

Whilst it was recognised that the County Council had to make significant budget reductions, members felt that the withdrawal of the agency agreement would have a significant and detrimental effect on the high standard of public rights of way in Pendle. It was also felt that any deterioration in the quality of the public rights of way network would have an adverse effect on tourism across the borough.

The Forum agreed that that the County Council should be strongly urged to review its decision to withdraw the public rights of way service level agreement and to take whatever steps it can to ensure that the current high standards across the network are maintained.

14. Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP)

The Forum considered the County Council's approved Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) and investment strategy which identified key strategic priorities for the highway authority during the period 2015-2030.

The TAMP represented a fundamental change in approach with the authority moving away from tackling what was perceived as the worst areas first towards one aligned to the Department for Transport's philosophy that, 'prevention is better than cure' with resources being used to reduce key maintenance backlogs through preventative methods.

It was reported that analysis indicated the County Council required approximately £35m per annum to maintain all of its transport assets at their 2013 levels. However, the direct allocation likely to be received from central government, via the Department for Transport would only be £25m per annum and so the resulting shortfall provided a real challenge to do more, or even the same, with less.

Preventative intervention works, involving treatments that were generally carried out at an earlier critical stage in an asset's life-cycle and are usually less expensive and less intrusive, were proposed to reduce maintenance backlogs. Key maintenance backlogs would be reduced over a ten to fifteen year period which would mean that the level of available funding broadly matched the amount needed to maintain all assets.

It was noted that a phased approach, based on the county council's priorities and affordability, would be adopted in relation to works and that investment in A, B and C roads and the footway network would be prioritised. The Forum was informed that the county's bridge structures were in excellent condition and it was noted investment in the bridge stock would happen in phase 3 (2026-2030). This would allow money that would normally have been spent on bridge works to be diverted to proposed highways works planned in phases 1 and 2.

Members were assured that notwithstanding the new approach any roads that became unsafe would continue to be repaired immediately.

Members welcomed the TAMP including the brief summary of the condition of each asset group covered by the TAMP. Reference was made to the summary of A, B and C Roads (TAMP, page 26) and officers were asked to provide comparative information from 2009.

It was noted that any suggestions for the replacement of crossings should be made to the Public Realm Manager for assessment and prioritisation.

Members discussed the need for proper 'long lasting' pot hole repairs to be undertaken. It was felt that many repairs were often a quick fix which deteriorated very soon afterwards.

It was noted that the Pendle patching programme would commence in January 2015. Members expressed concerns that the works had been scheduled for the winter months when adverse weather conditions were likely. It was felt that the timetable of works should have had a greater regard to climatic conditions around the county and members agreed that the County Council should be requested to defer the proposed works until later in the year.

15. Proposed new recycling facility for Colne and Nelson

It was reported that the County Council was looking at various options and potential sites for the provision of a new recycling for Colne and Nelson. It was noted that the former site had been ruled out.

It was suggested that the County Council might wish to consider the feasibility of using the United Utilities, Colne site that was about to close.

16. Themes for Future Meetings

Members of the Forum were asked to submit items for the next Pendle 3 Tier forum to the Chair and Harry Ballantyne, Localities Officer, Environment Directorate, Strategy and Policy, Lancashire County Council, Mobile 07717 423903
harry.ballantyne@lancashire.gov.uk

17. Urgent Business

None.

18. Future meetings

It was noted the next scheduled meeting would be held on Monday 8 December 2014 at 6.30pm at Nelson Town Hall.

I Young
County Secretary and Solicitor

County Hall
Preston