**Lancashire County Council**

**Environment, Economic Growth and Transport Scrutiny Committee**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday, 25th January, 2024 at 10.30 am in Committee Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston**

**Present:**

County Councillor Rob Bailey (Chair)

**County Councillors**

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| S Rigby | J Oakes |
| A Cheetham | J Purcell |
| G Dowding | A Schofield |
| J Gibson | J R Singleton JP |
| J Mein | K Snape |

County Councillor Jennifer Mein replaced County Councillor Sean Serridge for this meeting only.

## 1. Apologies

Apologies were received from County Councillor Alan Hosker.

## 2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None were disclosed.

## 3. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 5 December 2023

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting held on the 5 December 2023 be approved as an accurate record.

## 4. Lancashire Road Safety

The Chair welcomed to the meeting County Councillor Rupert Swarbrick, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, John Davies, Head of Service Highways Management Service, Tony Crook, Road Safety Manager, Michael White, Highway Regulation Manager and Eddie Mills, Traffic and Safety Manager.

The committee was presented a report which provided key information on the number of killed or seriously injured collisions that have occurred on Lancashire roads. The report also explained some of the road safety teams work within

education and engagement, speed awareness, safety engineering and what these teams delivered for the council to make Lancashire roads safer.

Members were provided an overview of the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership (LRSP) established in 2001. The Partnership was developed to ensure that fixed speed cameras would be installed in areas that would reduce the impact of road casualties across Lancashire.

Over time, the partnership evolved to develop the delivery of road safety across Lancashire, this enabled various organisations to share best practices to address regional and national initiatives and to coordinate efforts and reduce duplication.

Members of the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership included Lancashire County Council, Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool Councils, Lancashire Constabulary, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, National Highways, North-West Ambulance Service, the Police and Crime Commissioner, and more recently representatives from the Driver Vehicle Standards Agency and the Lancashire Association of Local Councils.

It was reported that a review of the partnership's terms of reference had commenced in early 2023 and a revised remit would be presented to the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership Executive Board at its meeting on 30 January 2024.

It was noted that three former fulltime posts within the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership had been disbanded in November 2023, which were a manager, coordinator and analyst post (vacant post for a number of years). These posts were paid for by Lancashire Constabulary from income sourced from speed awareness courses. However, due to a reduction in attendees and increased costs, the posts were subsequently disbanded as they were no longer financially sustainable, as costs for the positions were approaching up to £200,000 a year. It was clarified that this course of action did not mean the disestablishment of the partnership.

It was reported that the statutory duty for road safety was with Lancashire County Council, and that the partnership had no statutory responsibilities or powers. The delivery of initiatives were carried out by officers working in the road safety and road safety engineering teams.

Comments and questions raised by the committee were as follows:

- Within the included Stats19 data on page 8 of the agenda, the number of people Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI's) in Lancashire, people who had suffered a medical episode or had committed suicide were sometimes included and the data was reviewed and amended by the police when this occurred.
- It was reported the focus of the partnership's website would be a speed portal. When a speeding concern was reported using the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership's speed concern portal, there were now three Officers within the constabulary's Safer Road Unit Team who addressed the reports once received. Responses were then produced in liaison with the Speed

Management Team. The backlog of reported incidents had been reduced significantly over the last 12 months due to the increase in staffing provision.

- Lancashire Constabulary were the authority responsible for the enforcement of road speed limits across Lancashire.
- It was noted that drink, drug driving and speeding offences were the offences seeing the biggest increase nationally and on roads within Lancashire.
- Officers were applying for funding from the Safer Roads Foundation to develop a project that would aim to provide evidence to either prove or disprove the effect of behavioural change on speeding offences. This would involve distributing leaflets in communities and asking people a series of questions, the deployment of speed surveys to assess the speed of traffic, the deployment of temporary signage and an additional speed survey to assess the impact of the measures once completed.
- It was suggested that the committee received feedback on the revised terms of reference after it had been reviewed by the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership Executive Board on the 30 January 2024.
- Officers confirmed that the community road watch was supported by Lancashire Constabulary and considered for all roads with defined speed limits. The Central Safer Roads Unit identified areas of concern for Neighbourhood Policing and then organized a community road watch. This would consist of either a police officer with a handheld speed monitoring device, or a speed awareness group from a local Parish Council.
- In 2023, 1699 speeding offences were identified by the community road watch scheme within Lancashire. This had increased from 811 in 2018.
- On the deployment of the future county council owned Speed Indication Devices (SPIDS), it was confirmed that officers would communicate with Parish Councils to effectively deploy SPIDS where needed and to ensure that only one SPID device was deployed to a specific area. SPID devices were prioritised towards roads identified as higher risk in relation to speeding offences being committed.
- It was confirmed that income generated from people opting to complete speed awareness courses was allocated towards the costs of managing Lancashire Constabulary's Police Roads Unit and Safer Roads Unit.
- It was highlighted that data for road traffic collisions recorded by Lancashire County Council also included collisions where a slight injury had taken place. The constabulary recorded those damage only collisions that were reported to them.
- Officers confirmed that a project was taking place in Ormskirk at the Five Ways Junction where speed enforcement cameras had been set up to monitor vehicles running through red lights. Data from this project would be evaluated and work undertaken with the police to determine where Lancashire County Council would prioritise the rollout of further enforcement cameras and necessary funding. The project was estimated to cost around £600,000.
- It was suggested that an inquiry day on the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership be arranged at some point in the future and to involve all partners. The request would go to the next scheduled meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board on 16 April 2024.

- Engagement with local speed awareness groups across Lancashire was prioritised by officers whenever possible. Support was directed towards areas where the data on speeding offences and road collisions was most prevalent.
- On the length of time taken to place a newly designed road schemes in communities with an increase in road casualties, proposed designs had to go through a significant review and audit process. Proposals then went through a consultation stage with the local residents and traffic regulation orders needed to be considered. As resources were finite within the design team, delays were expected to take place when designing and placing new road safety schemes.
- It was suggested that a list of responsibilities for the statutory, custom and practice aspects of each of the organisations within the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership be provided to the committee.

**Resolved:** That;

(i) The new terms of reference for the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership be shared with the Environment, Economic Growth and Transport Scrutiny Committee.

(ii) A list of responsibilities setting out the statutory, custom and practice aspects of each of the organisations in the partnership be provided.

(iii) A request to convene an Inquiry Day on the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership be made to the Scrutiny Management Board at its meeting scheduled on 16 April 2024.

**5. Water Resource Management**

The Chair welcomed to the meeting County Councillor Shaun Turner, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change, John Davies, Head of Service Highways Management Service, Ray Bennett, Principal Development Support Officer, Laura Bigley, Principal Flood Risk Officer and Kirstie Williams, Highways Group Manager – Countywide Projects.

The committee was presented a report which provided an introduction into what a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) is. The report highlighted the roles of various teams within the Highways Service in relation to water management and gave examples of SuDS schemes within Lancashire.

The report also addressed three key questions which were set out in the In-year request form submitted to the Scrutiny Management Board at its meeting on the 8 November 2022.

Comments and questions raised by the committee were as follows:

- On the flooding of highways from land under riparian ownership, it was confirmed that Highway Operations, who were responsible for maintaining the highways drainage systems, would investigate incidents of flooding from

private land. Work was undertaken in conjunction with the Flood Risk Team whereby statutory notices could be issued to private landowners who did not comply. However, it was highlighted that enforcement could be difficult as sufficient evidence and legal clarification was needed.

- It was stressed that when United Utilities' assets were broken and causing water damage to highways, communication took place to address these various cases and whilst most cases had been resolved, it was acknowledged some issues were still outstanding. Serious legal enforcement could be taken; however effective communication and collaboration was viewed as a more favourable option as legal enforcement could become lengthy and complex in nature.
- The internal drainage systems of private properties were not examined by Highways as they did not come under the responsibility of the Traffic Management Act 2004, which detailed that highways were to be kept clear of as much traffic congestion as possible and that safety was prioritised. The Local Planning Authority was responsible for ensuring that private property developments and their internal drainage systems were suitable for specific locations. The duty on the Highway Authority was to review traffic and transport, not water.
- It was noted that United Utilities was not a statutory consultee. However, Flood Risk Management were a statutory consultee team for major developments, this meant that they could examine how water was being dealt with upon large estates. As construction work began, it was common for developers to want streets to be adopted as highway, which enabled the Highways Authority through the Development Control Team to investigate how street drainage operated, using section 38 of the Highways Act.
- It was highlighted that for new urban developments, any development constructed that was impermeable would create additional surface water runoff. This was expected to be managed through the design and implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, which would be specific for each site and had to meet strict criteria for water storage.
- It was noted that additional training on how Sustainable Drainage Systems were designed and implemented could be provided for members of the committee.
- Members of the committee raised concern over repeated flooding of underpasses within Skelmersdale. Officers confirmed that they would make enquiries over this issue outside of the meeting.
- It was confirmed that the £1 million Highway Drainage Capital Cost, would be spent towards a longlist of areas where the county council had identified issues with Highways water drainage. It was acknowledged that the county council needed to consider alternative options and assess how modern technology could assist. It was further acknowledged that a long term plan was needed.
- On the scale of the problem and democratic input into the longlist, it was highlighted that capital cost set aside was for resolving relatively small and localised drainage issues. The longlist of issues did not go to Cabinet for approval, but the overall funding was made available for officers to resolve issues on the list.

- It was noted that the most cost effective solutions were prioritised when replacing ageing drainage systems. This could include the installation of a Sustainable Urban Drainage System.
- Officers highlighted that Lancashire County Council has a statutory responsibility as a lead local flood authority to have a local flood risk management strategy in place. This strategy was approved by Cabinet in November 2021 and has had two annual monitoring reports published. One objective of the strategy was to develop natural flood risk management, which aimed to identify opportunities to work with landowners to construct additional storage to help manage water within catchment areas.
- It was hoped that new biodiversity net gain requirements would help to create more joint working with landowners and partners to help identify opportunities and the right solutions for the development of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems.
- It was expected that schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 would be implemented in 2024.
- It was suggested that representatives from United Utilities be invited to attend a future meeting of the committee and that further discussions would take place between the Chair of the committee and the Clerk to define the reasons for such a request. The topic of river dredging was suggested.

**Resolved:** That no recommendations on Water Resource Management be made at this time.

## 6. Work Programme 2023/24

A copy of the committee's work programme for 2023/24 which contained an update on progress with responses to the committee's recommendations on enabling net zero infrastructure was presented.

It was noted that the Scrutiny Management Board at its meeting held on 16 January 2024 had agreed the committee's request to add the Transport Asset Management Plan item to the Work Programme.

**Resolved:** That;

(i) The Environment, Economic Growth and Transport Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2023/24 be noted.

(ii) The formal response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate to the committee's recommendations on enabling net zero infrastructure be noted.

## 7. Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

## 8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Environment, Economic Growth and Transport Scrutiny Committee would be held on Monday 11 March 2024 at 10:30am in Committee Room B – The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston.

H MacAndrew
Director of Law and Governance

County Hall
Preston