

(Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting of the sub-committee scheduled to be held on 15 January 2019.)

Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee

13 November 2018

Present: Councillor Janet Hunter (Chair)
Councillors B Burdis, J Cassidy,
D Drummond, J Harrison, K Lee,
M Madden, P McIntyre, J Mole,
M Rankin and J Walker.

EP13/11/18 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor W Samuel.

EP14/11/18 Substitute Members

Pursuant to the Council's constitution the appointment of the following substitute members was reported:-

Councillor J O'Shea for Councillor W Samuel

EP15/11/18 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no Declarations of Interest or Dispensations reported.

EP16/11/18 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 11 September 2018 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

EP17/11/18 Highways Asset and Network Management

The sub-committee met to examine how the Authority was managing its highway assets and networks, to assess the impact of recent investment in the highway network and consider the Cabinet's future plans and priorities.

In October 2017, the sub-committee had heard how the Cabinet had adopted a new Highway Asset Management Plan 2017 - 2032 (HAMP), setting out the Authority's approach to maintaining North Tyneside's highways and responding to the Elected Mayor and Cabinet's policy direction which included providing a greater emphasis on footways. At that time the sub-committee agreed that it should be presented with the HAMP Annual Information Report for scrutiny.

Mark Newlands, Highways and Infrastructure Manager, attended the meeting to present the HAMP Annual Information Report which had been presented to, and noted by, Cabinet at its meeting on 15 October 2018. The report set out progress so far, plans for the future and operational detail for the management and planning of maintenance work on highway infrastructure assets.

Members of the sub-committee asked questions and made comments when they gave particular consideration to the:

- a) advantages and disadvantages of replacing flag stones on footways with tarmac;
- b) options available to the Council to maintain concrete roads;
- c) timeframe for the removal of temporary speed restrictions on the A1058 Coast Road at the Silverlink junction with the A19;
- d) proposed programme and timing of works to utilise the £1m of extra funding for highway maintenance recently allocated by the government;
- e) scope for the Council to obtain contributions from developers toward the costs of highway maintenance through the Community Infrastructure Levy;
- f) preparedness of highway assets to withstand increased levels of commercial traffic from industrial developments such as Indigo Park;
- g) obligations on utility companies to reinstate highways and footways to certain standards and the sanctions available to the Council should the standards not be met; and
- h) missed opportunity for the sub-committee to have contributed to the development of the updated Highway Inspection Policy prior to it being approved by Cabinet in October 2018.

The sub-committee examined in more detail the level of capital and revenue funding available to maintain assets (£4.666m in 2018/19) as a proportion of the overall value of assets (£1.4bn). There was currently a backlog of highway repairs calculated to be worth £20m and, despite the £1m additional government grant in this financial year, the government funding models meant the Authority had to make up the shortfall which was unsustainable. Members were mindful that the planned growth in housing and industry contained within the Local Plan was likely to lead to an increase in highway assets requiring maintenance and also increased rates in car ownership and usage. These factors led members to express concerns regarding the future sustainability of the HAMP. It was suggested that the sub-committee's comments be referred to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport together with a recommendation that he review the future sustainability of the HAMP to ensure that it continues to deliver well maintained and accessible highway infrastructure throughout its lifetime (2017-2032).

Nick Bryan, Highways Network Manager, attended the meeting to present an updated Network Management Plan. The plan set out how the Authority intended to manage the peaks in highway operations using a corridor-based approach to manage demand on the network through better use of technology, promoting behavioural change and investing in infrastructure improvements when it was appropriate to do so. It would capture locations where concerns around congestion, infrastructure provision, air quality, and network resilience had been raised.

The sub-committee were also presented with emerging data to demonstrate some of the benefits to arise from the significant recent investment in the highway network at locations such as the Coast Road/Beach Road, Norham Road, Holystone Roundabout and along the North Bank of the Tyne in terms of reducing the numbers of accidents and supporting the local economy.

The sub-committee recognised that the Council's Transport Strategy sought to encourage and address increased demand to cycle and walk by improving the street network and putting cycling and walking first and to improve bus priority and support an integrated public transport network. In this context members examined in more detail how bus lanes could best be operated and how data relating to pedestrian and cycling journeys could be obtained to inform investment in cycling and pedestrian routes.

It was **agreed** that (1) the Highway Asset Management Plan 2017 - 2032 (HAMP) Annual Information Report and Network Management Plan be noted; and (2) the sub-committee's comments regarding the sustainability of the Highways Asset Management Plan be referred to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport together with a recommendation that in the light of these comments, he review the future sustainability of the HAMP to ensure that it continues to deliver well maintained and accessible highway infrastructure.