

STREETSMART, HIGHWAYS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 25 JANUARY 2017

PRESENT:- Councillors Colin Lovell (Chair), John Ballman, Alan Bishop, Matthew Courtliff, Wayne Crabbe, Paul Dixon, Mary Friend, Nick Martin, Jane Milner-Barry, Kevin Parry, Timothy Swinyard, Vera Tomlinson, Chris Watts, Peter Watts, Steve Weisinger, David Wood and Julie Wright.

23. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd November 2016, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

24. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. No declarations were made.

25. Public Question Time

Mr Barry Jennings asked a public question regarding street lighting in Stratton St. Margaret. At the request of the Chair, the Cabinet Member for StreetSmart, Highways and Transport responded at the meeting.

Mr Brian Cockbill asked a public question regarding street lighting in Stratton St. Margaret and Nythe. At the request of the Chair, the Cabinet Member for StreetSmart, Highways and Transport responded at the meeting.

26. Libraries Task Group - Update

Mr Patrick Weir updated the Committee in respect of work undertaken by the Task Group since the Committee last met including:

- Work undertaken to retain the maximum number of libraries within the Borough following the Cabinet adoption of a Libraries Strategy in December 2016.
- Progress on the establishment of a core library service.
- Consideration of delivery models for non-core libraries.
- The forthcoming report to the February meeting of the Cabinet which would include an Options Appraisal study.
- Transitional funding arrangements for community bids to run non-core libraries.
- The closing dates for expressions of interest and business plans for organisations wishing to operate non-core libraries.

Councillor Chris Watts, Chair of the Libraries Task Group, responded to questions

from members and commented on:

- The increasing range of options available for community led libraries.
- Indications from parish councils that they wanted local libraries to have increased operating hours.
- Work undertaken by the Task Group to help extend core library service provision.
- Support offered by parish councils to support libraries within their parished areas.

Resolved – That the update be noted.

27. Highways Street Lighting Proposals

The Committee considered (a) a report of the Head of Highways and Transport setting out the Council's proposals for the development of a street lighting LED business case and trials for dimming and part night lighting, and (b) the business case for a LED replacement street lighting programme. Councillor Keith Williams, Cabinet Member for StreetSmart, Highways and Transport, and Mr Tim Price, Service Manager Highway Infrastructure, introduced the report commenting on:

- Financial pressure on the current street lighting budget.
- Public feedback received in respect of a street lighting trial held in West Swindon.
- Criteria for a proposed part night lighting trial involving residential and commercial locations which was subsequently withdrawn as a result of public concern.
- An upcoming LED light trial to assess efficiency savings.
- The Council's lamp post replacement programme.

Following the presentation of his report Councillor Keith Williams responded to members' specific questions and observations on the following matters:

- The use of high pressure sodium lights to reduce electricity and maintenance costs.
- Consultees for the upcoming LED lighting trial.
- The marginal savings of using part night street lighting.
- The funding of a replacement street lighting programme should the LED street lighting trial show significant financial savings.
- The system of automated lighting times for street lighting, including the use of light sensors.
- The future introduction of a central management system for street lighting.
- The potential availability of funding for LED street lighting through a bid to the Government's Challenge Fund.
- The method used by electric suppliers for assessing the electric bill for street lighting and how this could in future be refined through the introduction of a smart network.
- Current and future use of green technology, such as solar power, in the provision of street lighting.

Resolved – (1) That the Cabinet Member Briefing Note dated 10th October 2016

circulated with the Cabinet Member's report be noted.

(2) That street lighting trials within the Borough be noted.

(3) That the Cabinet Member for StreetSmart, Highways and Transport be thanked for his presentation.

(In accordance with the Code of Conduct Councillor Timothy Swinyard made a personal and non-prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of this item as he was employed by Halcrow.)

28. Highways Asset Management Incentive Fund

The Committee received a report reviewing the Council's current approach to Highway Asset Management and its ongoing action plan in response to the Government's recent changes to highway maintenance grant funding linked to the Incentive Fund.

Councillor Keith Williams (Cabinet Member for StreetSmart, Highways and Transport) and Mr Tim Price (Service Manager, Highway Infrastructure) explained the grant funding to highway infrastructure through the Government's Incentive Fund which was an evidence based self-assessment through twenty-two questions based upon of the following three bands:

1. Asset Management Policy;
2. Benchmarking and Efficiency Resilience;
3. Customer Questions and Operation Service Delivery.

Based upon the assessment of the responses to the Incentive Fund Questions, and a Department of Transport Audit, the Council would be placed into one of three bands which would determine the level of Government Grant during the Financial Year. The Council would make a submission to the Department of Transport on 2nd February 2017.

Following the presentation of his report Councillor Keith Williams responded to members' specific questions and observations on the following matters:

- The Council's current framework for maximising its grant funding within the highway department's current resources.
- The role of parish councils and partner organisations in the Council's return to the Department of Transport.
- Procurement systems with partner local authorities.
- Peer reviews and benchmarking as part of the department's work and its return to the Department of Transport.
- That the Council's Section 151 Officer was required to approve the accuracy of the Council's submission to the Department of Transport in respect of the Highway Asset management Incentive Fund.

Resolved – (1) That the Cabinet Member Briefing Note dated 1st November 2016 circulated with the Cabinet Member's report be noted.

(2) That the Council's submission to the Department of Transport in respect of the Highway Asset management Incentive Fund be noted.

(3) That the Cabinet Member for StreetSmart, Highways and Transport be thanked for his presentation.

29.

Highways Six Month Review

Councillor Keith Williams, Cabinet Member for StreetSmart, Highways and Transport, made an oral presentation in respect of the six month highways review and responded to members' specific questions and observations in respect of:

- Procurement work with Wiltshire Council to reduce street lighting costs.
- The re-establishment of the Road Safety Partnership with an emphasis on education and training.
- Current position of the Winter Maintenance Programme and salt stock levels.
- The recent incident at the Junction 16 M5 motorway roundabout when contractors ruptured a gas main and remedial action to repair it.
- The maintenance of rapid transport corridors within the Borough.
- Work on the Greenbridge Roundabout layout, including lane redesign.
- The Street Works Delivery Plan.
- Road closures for the forthcoming Swindon Half Marathon.
- Engagement with local residents in respect of the development of new plans for a Thamesdown Drive extension.
- The reopening of the public toilets at the central bus station following a number of incidents at the site.
- Development work on the M4 motorway Junction 15 Roundabout.
- On-going work on the Eastern Villages highways and water pipe design funded through the Department of Transport and the Local Enterprise Partnership.
- Continued work to minimise disruption, including the production of a newsletter, during highway and utility work.
- The Wichelstowe town centre and East Wichel parking strategies.
- Issues relating to the Fleming Way Road and pedestrianised area design.
- Parking issues in the North Star area, including the outlet centre.
- The promotion of road safety through school visits.
- Resurfacing of older roads and pothole repairs.
- Traffic flow issues at Bruce Street Bridges.
- The Council's three year highway inspection plan.

Resolved – That the Cabinet Member for StreetSmart, Highways and Transport be thanked for his presentation.

30.

Work Programme 2016/17

The Committee received the report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services setting out the agreed items for inclusion in the Committee's Work Programme 2016/17.

Resolved – That the Committee's Work Programme for 2016/17 be noted.