

SOUTH LAKELAND HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION WORKING GROUP

Minutes of a Meeting of the South Lakeland Highways and Transportation Working Group held on Wednesday, 16 October 2019 at 10.00 am at

PRESENT:

Mr SB Collins (Chairman)

Mr J Bland
Mr N Cotton
Mrs BC Gray
Mr WJ Wearing

Mr M Wilson
Mr J Airey
Mr GD Cook
Mrs S Evans

Also in Attendance:-

Mr G Archibald	-	South Lakeland District Council
Mr M Dooz	-	Traffic Manager Team Leader
Mr P Hosking	-	Highways Network Manager
Mr M Brierley	-	Infrastructure Planning Officer
Mr M Hardman	-	County Bridges Manager

23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

24 MINUTES

Page 10, Minute 16. 2019/20 Gully Cleansing Programme update. Penultimate paragraph, second line, add in 'to be' between needed and cleared.

Following a discussion regarding actions arising from the minutes, members agreed that an Action Log for the Working Group would be established to capture actions from the meeting to ensure they were resolved. The Action Log would be included on all future agendas.

A short discussion took place on the review of sharing of bridge repair costs with contractors which had been raised in the discussion of the Victoria Bridge Update. The Highway Network Manager undertook to keep members apprised of this review.

RESOLVED that, subject to the addition above, the minutes of the meeting held on 2 September 2019 be approved.

25 BRIDGES AND STRUCTURES PROGRAMME

Members received a presentation from the County Bridges Manager on the Management of Bridges and Structures. This covered the following:

- Background information
- Gathering intelligence on structures stock
- Programme development (the work bank, prioritisation process)
- Annual Capital Programme
- Undertaking works
- Contracts
- An example of the process to undertake a bridge repair
- 2019/20 Capital Programme – status update
- Flood response

In a response to a member query about a machine that could view damage under water, the County Bridges Manager talked about the ultrasound machine which looked at defects under water and the challenges of interpreting the images produced. This had not yet been used in flood conditions.

A member asked about Miller Bridge in his division to which the Highways Network Manager undertook to provide a response.

A short discussion took place on the works funded by the Capital Programme and whether it was separate to the works being undertaken following Storm Desmond. It was confirmed that Storm Desmond works were separate and was funded by the Infrastructure Recovery Programme whereas the works in the Capital Programme was residual works.

A member referred to a bridge in his division that been completed over budget. In response, the County Bridges Manager reported on his work to improve efficiency such as using local contractors to reduce costs.

In reporting on the status update for the South Area, the County Bridges Manager talked about how the county was split into 3 main areas and about his future work which included a whole life costing of bridges in the county and rates per piece of work. He talked about the financial challenges in funding the service area.

A member queried whether work would be undertaken on reviewing river banks upstream from bridges as issues there sometimes impacted on county council bridges. It was clarified that it was the property owner's responsibility to maintain river banks, however issues with river banks did impact on bridges.

Discussion turned to the disproportionate number of bridges in South Lakeland compared to other areas in the county and the large number of consenting authorities in the county who had to agree to repairs, of which some were not always agreed. Clarification was provided on who undertook inspections, the costs for inspection and who had responsibility for bridges that crossed railway lines. The Highways Network Manager commented on the work undertaken with the Canal and River Trust relating to maintenance of bridges over canals. Members were interested to know about the working relationships that officers had with other

organisations. The County Bridges Manager outlined the excellent working relationships with organisations such as the Environment Agency.

A member asked about the powers the County Council had as Highways Authority when there was a significant problem with a bridge and whether the County Council was too risk averse. The County Bridges Manager commented on the power exercised through the Infrastructure Recovery Programme.

A member reported that he had liaised with the Chief Executive and Head of Planning at the Lake District National Park Authority regarding a local bridge that required scaffolding. The bridges team would be asked to contact them regarding works to the bridge. He advised that scaffolding would be placed on the bridge rather than in the river which would avoid needing to ask for permission from the Environment Agency which may hold up the works.

With regard to the budget for the whole county, a member asked if funding was apportioned on an asset basis. The County Bridges Manager confirmed that he was currently reviewing how funding was apportioned across the county and recognised that apportioning it to areas with a higher number of assets would be prudent.

Following a member query, the Highways Network Manager explained how the repairs for Millthrop Bridge (Sedbergh) would be funded and that damage to the bridge was the subject of a police investigation. The County Bridges Manager reported on the budget for the service area.

The County Bridges Manager advised on how some bridges in the county which were the responsibility of the County Council may not be recorded. The Chair asked that this be resolved. The County Bridges Manager considered that this may be down to having reduced resources. To remedy this situation a member suggested that other organisations such as local history societies could help with recording assets. The County Bridges Manager reported on the resources the team used to obtain bridge location information and the difficulty of ascertaining bridge ownership.

The Chair thanked the County Bridges Manager for his informative presentation.

RESOLVED that,

- 1 An update be provided to Councillor Cook on Miller Bridge
- 2 The presentation be circulated to members

26 DEVOLVED CAPITAL SCHEMES IDENTIFICATION 2020/21 AND BEYOND

A briefing note from the Highways Network Manager was considered which related to the Devolved Capital Schemes Identification 2020/21 and beyond. The briefing note informed members of the progress made to date on the identification of NPRN schemes for the 2020/21 financial year capital programme which was devolved to the Local Committee.

The Highways Network Manager advised that over the summer, the Highways service had been assessing the potential devolved carriageway resurfacing schemes which had been identified by members of the public and highways staff. Appendix 1 to the briefing note identified the areas and the assessed scores for all of the requests. Officers would start working up the costs.

In response to a member question, the Highways Network Manager talked about the schemes that had been awarded a '0' PAS score. The locations may have isolated defects that did not require full resurfacing and may be resolved before the end of the financial year. He confirmed that on some roads which had defects, repairs may not be actionable

The Highways Network Manager provided estimations on when repairs may be undertaken on individual roads in various divisions following individual queries from members. The Highways Network Manager undertook to report back on the status of road resurfacing at U5695. It was confirmed by the Traffic Management Team Leader that lines on roads would not be painted if patching was required. This was undertaken in liaison with Highways. An update was given on Silver Street in Staveley where road surfacing had been delayed. It was noted that if schemes were not delivered, they would be at the top of the list the following year.

RESOLVED that, the position be noted.

27 A590 DIVERSION ROUTES

The Highways Network Manager presented a briefing note on A590 Diversion Routes. This updated members of the discussions held with Highways England to reduce the impact on the local road network following incidents on the A590 and the subsequent diversions onto the county network.

The Highways Network Manager advised that he and the Traffic Manager had met with Highways England to discuss diversion routes already in existence. It had been accepted at the meeting that the Police needed to reinforce the routes as they were not always followed by motorists especially on the A590 towards Barrow. Members' attention was drawn to the Appendix to the briefing note showing the diversion routes.

The Highways Network Manager recognised that some routes in particular were not followed and that some used were not appropriate for HGVs. Highways England would be revisiting this and would review whether HGVs should be stopped or diverted when there was an incident. It was highlighted that this would depend on the length of time the road was expected to be closed and where the destination of the HGV was. Members were thanked for drawing attention to this issue.

Discussion took place on the length of time roads were closed and how this was dependent on the type of incident. Members asked to see a similar document for diversions following incidents on the M6.

RESOLVED that,

- 1 The position be noted.
- 2 A map showing diversion routes following the closure of the M6 be considered by members.

28 CYCLE ROUTES AROUND SOUTH LAKES AND KENDAL

The Infrastructure Planning Officer gave a presentation on cycle routes around South Lakes and Kendal. Maps were available for members which showed cycle routes around South Lakeland and Kendal.

A member asked about the anticipated longevity of a cycle hub and asked for an example of a successful cycle hub. The Infrastructure Planning Officer offered an example of a cycle hub in Leeds and advised the citadel in Carlisle would become a cycle hub. The member asked whether the Department for Transport's (DfT) Cycle Infrastructure Plan was in existence. The Infrastructure Planning Officer commented that the DfT was committed to cycling and walking infrastructure plans and advised that officers were awaiting guidance on infrastructure and Best Practice.

Members' attention was drawn to the current, proposed and aspirational routes in the area, all of which were in the public domain. The maps presented at the meeting would be circulated to the Working Group.

The Infrastructure Planning Officer provided information about the routes presented on both maps. The South Lakeland map also included information about the Lakes and Dales Loop. The Infrastructure Planning Officer advised that a route across the Kent estuary alongside the railway line, before it connected to the wider network, would cost approximately £7 million.

He confirmed that all known routes had been mapped, however, some of the routes were aspirational with some unlikely to come to fruition. Input on all known routes had been received from Highways England and County Council Officers. Some routes may need the County Council to undertake maintenance in order for them to be useable. A route at Greenodd would reroute cyclists off the main road. Other routes may reroute walkers and cyclists off the A595. Officers were working with Highways England to try and increase the priority of some schemes. Members were informed that the maps were work in progress and changes were anticipated.

A member asked if there was a project plan in place for each route which would identify responsibility and costs for example so that progress could be tracked and it would be identifiable where resources were required. The Infrastructure Planning Officer explained that a spreadsheet with this type of data was available for the Kendal area. This would be circulated around the Working Group.

It was highlighted by a member that £50m would be spent on flood defences in Kendal. He queried whether this information had been integrated into the maps. The Infrastructure Planning Officer advised that there was an off road route behind a local club which would be used as access for contractors which could then be used

as a footway. Once work was completed, then officers would review changing traffic signals.

A query was raised on blue routes marked on the maps. The Infrastructure Planning Officer explained the reasoning behind the signing of routes and how this meant they were inspected more often and risk assessed. The Highways Network Manager highlighted that this fitted into the routine highway inspection process and that routes were inspected as a cycle route, not just an ordinary route.

A member expressed her extreme dissatisfaction at the planned cycle route on Shap Road as it did not follow best practice guidelines and that the County Council would be responsible if someone was hurt. She did not support the route and would be taking the matter further to ensure the public's safety.

A short discussion took place on clearing the road of debris following bad weather, in order to protect the safety of cyclists. Members were advised by the Highways Network Manager that South Lakeland District Council's street cleansing team would address this matter. A member queried whether cyclists and pedestrians could be separated on routes and if future DfT guidance would include recommending wider routes for cycle ways. The Infrastructure Planning Officer advised on the current route width and commented that Britain was constrained due to its narrow streets compared to those abroad. He confirmed that current Government guidance was for shared use routes.

In response to a member question, the Infrastructure Planning Officer reported on the cycle training available in Britain. He stated that an accident involving a cyclist would be recorded as a traffic accident but would let members know after the meeting whether this only applied on a public highway.

A member highlighted that signage on the Burton Road cycle scheme was poor and it was questioned whether this was being monitored. The Infrastructure Planning Officer stated that a safety audit would be undertaken after the scheme had been constructed.

A member welcomed the cycle routes information and considered that a route along the canal from Kendal to Preston would be an excellent route but it would require a hard surface.

Members were informed that a series of workshops would be held, with one for members to be held in December 2019. Kendal Town Council would be invited to the member Workshop.

RESOLVED that

- 1 PDF versions of the maps presented at the meeting be circulated to members
- 2 The spreadsheet containing individual route project data for the Kendal area be circulated to the Working Group
- 3 Kendal Town Council to be invited to the Member Cycle Route Workshop

29 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF JET PATCHING

The Highways Network Manager presented a briefing note on the effectiveness of spray injection patching (jet patching). The briefing note updated members on the effectiveness of the patching operations already undertaken in Cumbria and informed members of the next steps regarding the treatment option as a future maintenance solution in an overall toolkit of measures available to the Highway service.

The Highways Network Manager described how jet patching worked and explained it was being used on country lanes, instead of permanent patching and was useful when surface dressing was being undertaken. The process was successful, however, this did not address underlying structural issues. Members were informed of the next steps.

The Chair advised that at the Highways Improvement Board consideration had been given to adding a small roller to the 'Velocity' highways vehicle. The Highways Network Manager advised that there was potential for this to happen.

A member queried the financial viability of jet patching. The Highways Network Manager advised that treating pot holes in this manner ensured repairs had a longer life span and that the method had been tested so it was thought to be an effective semi-permanent treatment to lower classes of road. The Highways Network Manager confirmed that jet patching was best performed in dry weather. A member advised that jet patching had been performed on roads in his division and had worked well.

RESOLVED that, the position be noted.

30 HEALTHY WAYS TO SCHOOL

Mr Cotton reported on the Healthy Ways to School initiative.

South Lakeland Local Committee had allocated £20,000 to the Healthy Ways to School initiative which encouraged children to walk, cycle or be dropped off a distance to school. Mr Cotton reported on the increasing levels of traffic, the danger of pollution and parking problems surrounding schools therefore the objective was to reduce this by financially supporting various initiatives.

The County Council's Parking Manager had been working on resolving parking problems at schools. The aim was to obtain match funding for three or four school schemes per year and to encourage schools to update their Travel Plans. Schemes could include walking buses, 20mph speed limits on roads near schools and the provision of road crossings. Children, parents and Parish Councils would be asked to make scheme suggestions which would then act as a template for the future.

Mr Cotton advised on how to apply for funding and that funding could be connected to the refresh of school Travel Plans. It was acknowledged that some schemes

would be weather dependent and that schemes would not be suited to all schools therefore there could not be a one size fits all solution.

The Highways Network Manager advised that engineering works may be required in order to facilitate the implementation of schemes, this could be to improve footways for pram and buggy use for example and that this may be a better use of members Works budgets than spending a considerable sum on legal work for double yellow lines and other measures. It was acknowledged that these types of improvements could benefit the wider community.

Mr Wilson showed members a number of resources used in the recent 'Clean Air Day' and explained that they could still be used in local areas.

RESOLVED that the position be noted.

31 ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE WORKING GROUP

The Highways Network Manager undertook to give a member an update on the position with Stramongate Bridge.

Items for the December 2019 meeting were identified as follows:

- Kendal Experimental Order
- M6 Diversion Routes
- Footways.

32 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Working Group would be held on 11 December 2019.

The meeting ended at 12.40 pm