

ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Thursday, 20 October 2022

Present: Councillor EA Grey (Chair)

Councillors S Foulkes V Wilson
S Percy H Gorman
T Smith N Graham
A Gardner O Osanlou
L Fraser T Elzeiny

29 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed attendees and viewers to the meeting and reminded everyone that the meeting was webcast and retained on the Council's website for two years.

30 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Paul Connolly, he was deputised by Councillor Tracy Elzeiny.

31 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests and any other relevant interest and to state the nature of the interest. No such declarations were made.

32 MINUTES

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2022 be approved as a correct record.

33 PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

33.1 Public Questions

The Chair indicated that 8 questions had been received.

Stuart Clerk asked a question regarding the West Kirby sea defences and the impact on lifeboat provisions. The questioner asked if the council was aware

of the potential risk to life in regards to the Sandy Lane gate, and what action did the committee propose to address the issue, and who was responsible for the consequences of possible injury or loss of life if Lifeboats become restricted.

The Chair responded by explaining the ultimate reduction of risk to life due to the decrease in flood risk provided by the West Kirby Flood Alleviation Scheme. The Chair explained where both pedestrian and vehicle access could be found along Sandy Lane and Dee lane, as well as the Wirral Sailing Centre entrance and exit. These accesses would be closed at times of flood. Operational procedures were being developed in collaboration with RNLI to ensure the flood risk provisions did not affect operations from Dee Lane and Sandy Lane.

Phil Waterford asked a question regarding an issue with parking in the vicinity of St Peters School, Heswall. Mr Waterford asked if Highways Officers could reassess the situation and bring recommendation that address these concerns.

The Chair responded explaining that the junction in this area was covered by a Traffic Regulation Order (double yellow lines). Concerns regarding safety issues had been noted. An assessment of the parking conditions would be undertaken in December 2022 as part of the Traffic Regulation Order. This could take up to 6 months and would result in a significant spend of public funding. Advisory warning notices had been requested to discourage pavement parking. Two crossing patrols were employed within the vicinity of the school in order to encourage more active travel.

Nicola Verkade asked a question on behalf of Frank McArdle regarding the use of LiDAR data in determining beach heights at Hoylake Beach and a possible error in this data of up to 30cm. The question requestion how much confidence did the committee place in the use of the LiDAR technique.

The Chair responded by explaining that the use of LiDAR was one of the methods used to look at beach topography and was suitable for use in Hoylake, this is because it covered 100% of the large area in question. The data had been used to create contour plots, and repeat surveys have provided digital data that indicate broad scale changes in elevation through time. Utilising data over a period of time limits the inaccuracy as the data is repeated over decades. Traditional methods of beach profiling rely of extrapolation to provide whole area data. LiDAR is now standardised technique used worldwide.

Mr Kelly and Margi Drummond asked questions regarding the residents of The Oaks as possible pilot scheme users of porous parking mats on green spaces.

The Chair responded that the use of green spaces as parking areas required careful consideration against the council's declared Climate Emergency and resources. Officers are aware of residents requests for green spaces to be transformed into parking areas. A report covering this issue was due to come to committee in the new year (2023) so an appropriate policy may be considered.

Hannah Rapley asked a question regarding the frequency of alley way cleaning in Seacombe, and if this would be the previously promised monthly basis.

The chair responded to say that the Council had a statutory duty to maintain passage through an adopted or specified alleyway to ensure a throughfare for residential use. Biffa are contracted to remove all Litter, bulky items, hazardous waste and other specified materials from passages and alleyways (Entries), irrespective of size or type of material and irrespective of how the material arrived at the Location.

Charlotte Smith asked if the committee could provide an outcome of the consultation regarding Hoylake Beach.

The Chair responded by explaining that over 3000 responses were received for the initial consultation undertaken in June, July and August. The report regarding this consultation and management options will be brought to committee in November.

33.2 Statements and petitions

Edward Lamb presented a petition to the committee which demonstrated thanks toward Wirral Council for the installation of a cycle link, improvements to it, and the overall quality of the cycle network across Wirral.

The Chair thanked Mr Lamb for this petition.

33.3 Questions by Members

Councillor Gorman asked for an explanation for the removal of litter bins throughout the borough. Including one at the junction of Storeton Road and Mendip Road amongst others. Councillor Gorman wanted to know the exact number of bins that have been removed in total and whether there is a plan for replacement.

The chair responded to confirm that litter bins were removed if they were damaged or in need of replacement due to condition or style. Removed bins are usually replaced at the same time as this is more efficient.

The Lead Commissioner, Strategic Transport Infrastructure introduced the report of the Director of Regeneration and Place. This report sought comments from the Committee in regard to the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority to support the development of the Birkenhead Central Gateway Programme. The report also noted the approved slippage of £1,092,129 from 2021/22 development funding grant award. The development funding would support key regeneration projects including Argyle Street, Dock Branch Park, Hind Street and Woodside.

Members were informed that the development of the transport projects supported the delivery of several key catalyst projects and neighbourhoods identified in Birkenhead 2040, the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) programme and the wider regeneration of the Left Bank. This would ensure that the Council achieves delivery of transport and regeneration schemes within the Borough as part of a Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) wide programme of schemes and interventions.

The Committee asked if Ward Members had been consulted and were assured that they would be aware of the project. Members also discussed Active Travel as a Government Policy and noted that available funding should be spent wisely.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

35 **FUTURE HIGH STREETS FUND MOVEMENT SCHEMES**

The Lead Commissioner, Strategic Transport Infrastructure introduced the report of the Director of Regeneration and Place. The report provided Members with an update regarding the work undertaken to progress the Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) Movement Schemes in Birkenhead. The schemes were:

- Charing Cross / Grange Road, Birkenhead; and
- Conway Street / Europa Boulevard, Birkenhead

The report requested that Members note the progress made in the development and design of the schemes and sought approval to undertake public and stakeholder consultation and engagement in relation to both schemes.

Committee queried the ‘work in progress’ part of the proposals included in the Appendix. It was confirmed that “work in process” was referenced as this element was not completed in time to be included in the report. Committee were advised that regular updates would continue to be provided on the proposals as the development for the project continues.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

36 **ACTIVE TRAVEL FUND TRANCHE 2 - BAYSWATER ROAD & LEASOWE ROAD**

The Lead Commissioner, Strategic Transport Infrastructure introduced the report of the Director of Regeneration and Place. The report considered the objections and expressions of support received following consultation regarding the proposed mandatory cycle link along A554 Bayswater Road/Harrison Drive, Wallasey Ward. This scheme had been developed as part of Tranche 2 of the Department for Transport's (DfT) Active Travel Fund. In accordance with the Council's constitution consideration of the approval of the implementation of the scheme was a matter for this Committee given that in excess of 14 objections had been received in response to the public consultation on the scheme. The scheme also sought approval for the removal of the Leasowe Road scheme in the Leasowe and Moreton East ward, and the Moreton West and Saughall Massie ward from the Tranche 2 programme.

The purpose of this scheme was to create an environment that is safe for both pedestrians and cyclists and to help embed walking and cycling as part of new long term commuting habits.

Members queried the cost increase of the project, with officers confirming the following reasons why this increase had occurred:

- The scheme was put forward as part of Active Travel tranche 1 as part of the emergency COVID response to be delivered in a few months with no consultation, but was not afforded the funding until tranche 2 and by this point consultation was required again and this incurred additional costs and additional staff time.
- The original scheme was based on high level outline design estimates costed before LTN1/20 was applicable – the application of the new design standard included additional design features which increased the scheme cost.
- There has been a general increase in the cost of materials and rates due to inflation increases

Members also queried why The Crescent scheme in West Kirby has been removed from the programme and a further discussion was held to explain this was due to the forthcoming West Kirby Masterplan process and that it was considered that any active travel proposals would be considered as part of this comprehensive approach.

Members were keen to ensure early delivery of the projects as well as oversight of any slippage within the scheme.

Resolved – That

- (1) the implementation of a mandatory cycle link along the A554 Bayswater Road/Harrison Drive, Wallasey, as set out in Appendix 1 of this report be approved; and**
- (2) the Director of Regeneration and Place be authorised to:**
 - (a) Submit a change control request to the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority to withdraw the Leasowe Road scheme from the Active Travel Tranche 2 programme;**
 - (b) Submit a change control request to the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority to enable £111,000 of budget previously allocated to the Leasowe Road scheme to be allocated to the A554 Bayswater Road/Harrison Drive scheme; and**
 - (c) Effect an associated virement so that the budget for the proposed mandatory cycle link along Bayswater Road/Harrison Drive is increased from £70,000 to £181,000.**

37 2022-23 BUDGET MONITORING QUARTER 1

The Finance Business Partner introduced the report to the committee. The report set out the financial monitoring information for the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee as at quarter 1 (1 Apr – 30 Jun) of 2022-23. The report provided Members with an overview of budget performance, including progress on the delivery of the 2022-23 saving programme and a summary of reserves to enable the Committee to take ownership of the budgets and provided robust challenge and scrutiny to Officers on the performance of those budgets. Managing a budget required difficult decisions to ensure that a balanced position could be presented. Regular Member engagement, which this report formed part of, was considered essential in delivering effective governance and financial oversight. At the end of Quarter 1, there was a forecast adverse position of £2.014m on the Committees net revenue budget, of £63.905m. This position was based on activity to date, projected trends in income and expenditure and potential mitigation to offset areas of adverse variance.

Committee queried the waste contract which had increased by 900K. It was clarified that that this in an index linked contract and that it is an inflationary increase.

Resolved – That

- (1) the forecast revenue position presented at Quarter 1 be noted.**
- (2) the progress on delivery of the 2022-23 savings programme at Quarter 1 be noted.**
- (3) the forecast level of reserves at Quarter 1 be noted.**
- (4) the forecast capital position presented at Quarter 1 be noted.**

38 WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The chair presented the report to the committee, which provided the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year. The work programme for the Environment Climate Emergency and Transport Committee was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

In response to a further request that there was to be a workshop held for Committee Members on waste management and the development of a waste strategy.

Resolved – That the work programme be noted.