

# ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 14 March 2023

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 Cox

63 **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.

64 **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

65 **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.

Councillor Steve Foulkes wished it to be noted for transparency that he held a role as Deputy Holder of Portfolio for Transport and Air Quality but did not wish to state a personal or pecuniary interest.

66 **MINUTES**

The Chair highlighted that minute 55 should read that the work local communities and traders do across Wirral was appreciated by the Chair, the Leader of the Council, and staff across the organisation.

The Chair noted that under the work programme item, Car Free Day had been included but this was no longer a single day but a rolling programme of events across the combined authority.

**Resolved – That subject to the above changes, the minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2023 be approved and adopted as a correct record.**

## 67 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair indicated that 6 public questions had been received.

Children from Pensby Primary School asked a question about when a crossing would be considered on Pensby road between Greenbank drive and Ashlea road. The Chair thanked the children for attending and asking their important question and reported that the Combined Authority Transport Plan Programme report being considered later in the meeting included a full review list of locations of requests for road safety improvements from the community. This location was included on the list and confirmed the proposal to introduce a 20mph speed limit but also mentioned that The Council would undertake a pedestrian crossing assessment in the area.

Hannah Crook asked a question about the lack of speeding measures outside Heswall Primary School. The Chair responded that Wirral Council had introduced a 20mph speed limit outside Heswall primary School and provided a fully trained School Crossing Patrol to assist the school community. It was outlined that Wirral Council's Road Safety Team were proactively working with Heswall Primary School and Merseyside Police to develop education initiatives and interventions. Monitoring of the speed and parking complaints were being undertaken.

A supplementary question was asked about road closure for St George's Primary School in Wallasey and whether this could be done for Heswall Primary too, the Chair stated that a written response would be provided within 10 working days.

Kelly Newell asked a question about when changes to the traffic system at Spital would be made following her son being involved in a tragic accident which had left him with life changing injuries in 2020. The Chair thanked Kelly for asking her question and suggestions on improving road safety, a topic close to the Chair's heart, and gave assurance that officers were working hard on this location, and it was progressing as fast as possible whilst ensuring the best possible outcome. The Chair outlined that it was vital that any changes made did not end up causing more harm than good and so the preliminary studies must be done properly.

David Cross asked what risk assessments the Council had conducted at the Three Stags Crossroads and suggested the use of rumble strips as a traffic calming measure. The Chair responded that the proposed scheme would be considered further down the agenda - alongside schemes at other locations - for inclusion in the appropriate transport programmes to be delivered in 2023-

24 and beyond and thanked Mr Cross for the suggestion of rumble strips but outlined that such measures could only be used in areas where the noise impact would be minimal.

Lisa Anderson asked if the Committee would ensure the whole of the junction was made safe on Spital Road after her father lost his life following an accident. The Chair empathised with Lisa and agreed that all possible means of making roads safer should be put in place as soon as possible. The Chair reported that the area would be considered as part of the junction improvement scheme proposed at Spital Crossroads which was due to be considered further down the agenda.

Councillor Mike Collins asked if money from the Active Travel fund could be used to provide a crossing that the children and community of Pensby were asking for. The Chair replied that Active Travel Funding was provided for the delivery of named schemes which had been approved by Active Travel England on behalf of the Department for Transport and as such once the funding had been awarded it could not be used for the delivery of other schemes.

## 68 **STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS**

Councillor Mary Jordan made a statement which urged the Committee to work with residents to make the junction at Spital Crossroads safe for all users and echoed the concerns and comments made by the public questioners.

The Chair read a statement which thanked the members of the public that had attended Committee and shared their stories and concerns. The Chair gave assurance that officers were working hard to address the concerns about road danger and any delay was due to the need to ensure no mistakes were made and the best possible solutions were put in place.

The Chair informed the Committee that a petition had been received from Hannah Crook in relation to a crossing being needed for Heswall Primary School on Whitfield Lane.

A second petition had been received in relation to twinning Birkenhead Park with Central Park with over 260 signatures.

A third petition had been received from Pensby Primary School requesting traffic calming measures be put in place on Pensby Road.

## 69 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS**

There were no questions by Members.

## **WEST KIRBY FLOOD ALLEVIATION - VARIATION OF CONSTRUCTION PHASE CONTRACT AND ACCEPTANCE OF FLOOD DEFENCE GRANT FUNDING**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services introduced the report which provided an update on the delivery of the West Kirby Flood Alleviation project and sought approval for an increase in the construction contract sum and acceptance of additional grant funding.

Following approval from the Committee in November 2021, a contract was awarded to Volkerstevin Ltd on 22 April 2022 under the Environment Agency's collaborative delivery framework, it was reported that due to a range of factors, construction progress and the cost had been affected and as a result of the necessary contract variations to accommodate this, the target cost of the contract had increased from £9.64m to £14.28m. The Director of Neighbourhood Services outlined that no additional Council funding was required and had received approval of a bid for additional grant funding from the Environment Agency which totalled £4.4m.

In response to a Member query on the liaison with the RNLI, the Assistant Chief Executive reported that there was a good working relationship with the RNLI however a key piece of information on how one of their vehicles returned to the station was shared late in the process and the Council had proposed a solution to address this.

The Senior Manager – Flood and Coastal Risk Management gave details of areas where costs had been minimised and savings had been made across the project and gave assurance that there was no further anticipated increase in costs and that the project was still on track to be completed within the timescales set out.

Members raised concern over how the project had impacted the local economy.

Members and Officers put on record their thanks to Colin Clayton, Assistant Director Parks and Countryside, who was due to retire, for his significant contribution and work during his time at the Council and wished him well for the future.

It was moved by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Steve Foulkes that the officer recommendations as detailed in the report be approved with the addition of a fourth recommendation thanking officers for their hard work throughout the project.

Councillor Andrew Gardner indicated that he was supportive of the motion and proposed a friendly amendment that the report be referred to the Audit & Risk Management Committee so that consideration can be given to reviewing

concerns relating to the procurement of the construction contract and the increase in cost of the project. The Chair accepted this as a friendly amendment.

The substantive motion was then put and agreed by assent. It was therefore -

**Resolved – That**

- (1) additional Flood Defence Grant Funding and Local Levy Grant Funding of £4,400,000 provided by the Environment Agency be accepted.**
- (2) a variation in the value of the construction contract with VolkerStevin Ltd for the West Kirby Flood Alleviation Scheme from £9,640,000 to £14,282,000 be approved.**
- (3) the Director of Law and Governance be authorised to negotiate and finalise the associated grant funding agreements and contract variations.**
- (4) Officers be thanked for the considerable amount of work put into the project.**
- (5) the report be referred to the Audit & Risk Management Committee so that consideration can be given to reviewing concerns relating to the procurement of the construction contract and the increase in cost of the project.**

71 **CITY REGION SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SETTLEMENT HIGHWAY STRUCTURAL MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2023-24**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services introduced the report which requested approval for the disbursement of grant funding from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority's (LCRCA) City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) for 2023/24 into Wirral Council's Capital Programme for Highways Structural Maintenance and Bridge Maintenance. The report also requested approval for the disbursement of the indicative funding for years 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27 in the same programme. The report contained a recommendation of acceptance of an indicative highway condition matrix that will be used to inform future programme investment decisions.

The schemes recommended to be delivered under the programme included Plan and inlay with hot-rolled-asphalt, surface treatments, footway reconstruction and bridge maintenance.

In response to Member queries, the Senior Highway Maintenance Manager reported that where possible, materials were replaced like for like and consultation had been undertaken with vulnerable groups through the active travel forum. It was reported that the funding provided long term planning abilities and things such as dividing wards into 12 zones and tackling en bloc was something that would be considered in the future.

The Senior Highway Maintenance Manager informed Members that when roads were resurfaced, the markings could be reassessed to support any traffic calming or active travel measures in place in coordination with the network team.

### **Resolved – That**

- (1) the proposed programme of works for Wirral’s Carriageways, Footway Improvements and Bridge Maintenance for 2023/24, using grant funding allocated to Wirral Council by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) in the 2023/24 City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS), Combined Authority Transport Plan Programme (Highways Structural Maintenance), as set out in Appendix 2 to this report be approved.**
- (2) the indicative RAG-rated highway network condition matrix as set out in Appendix 3 to this report, be approved to be used by the Director of Neighbourhood Services as one of the decision tools when developing highway structural maintenance programmes.**
- (3) the Director of Neighbourhood Services be authorised to:**
  - (a) accept the grant funding and any subsequent additional grant allocated to the council in the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) Combined Authority Transport Plan programme (Highways Structural Maintenance)**
  - (b) in consultation with the Chair and Party Spokespersons of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee, to revise or amend the delivery or implementation of the work programmes, as deemed necessary, having due regard for the available resources and applicable risk-based prioritisation of locations selected for intervention and treatment.**
- (4) the Director of Law and Governance be authorised to negotiate and finalise any grant funding agreements on behalf of the council, amongst the relevant subject areas over the next 4 years, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report.**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services introduce the report which sought approval of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) Combined Authority Transport Plan (CATP) programme for 2023/24 as well as the indicative recommended CRSTS CATP programme for 2024-2027.

The schemes delivered under the programme covered three main schemes which were the Local Safety Schemes, Active Travel improvements and Traffic signal and pedestrian facility improvements. The Director of Neighbourhood Services reported that the Council had a statutory duty to take steps to reduce and prevent collisions. Officers carry out an annual review to determine where schemes or improvements may help to reduce and prevent collisions.

In response to a Member query on proposed experimental schemes, the Senior Network Manager outlined that the schemes may create network capacity issues but would be made permanent if successful.

Members noted that due to the allocation of funding being predictable, programmes could be scheduled for 5 years ahead and that there was a necessity to build infrastructure to promote active travel and to ensure that the funding was used.

#### **Resolved – That**

- (1) the proposed City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement Combined Authority Transport Plan programme for 2023/24 as set out in Appendix A to this report be approved.**
- (2) the indicative City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement Combined Authority Transport Plan programme for 2024/27 as set out in Appendix B to this report be approved.**
- (3) The Director of Neighbourhood Services be authorised to:**
  - (a) accept the grant funding allocated to Wirral Council by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority for the 2023/24 City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement Combined Authority Transport Plan programme and any related grant funding subsequently awarded.**
  - (b) in consultation with the Chair and Spokespersons of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee amend the programme having regard for available resources and risk-based prioritisation of schemes.**
- (4) the Director of Law and Governance be authorised to negotiate and finalise any grant funding agreements associated with these recommendations.**

## 73 **ECET QUARTER 3 REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING BUDGET REPORT**

The Senior Finance Business Partner introduced the report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services which set out the e financial monitoring information for the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee as at quarter 3 (1 Oct – 31 Dec) 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 provide robust challenge and scrutiny to Officers on the performance of those budgets.

At the end of Quarter 3, there was a forecast adverse position of £2.928m on the Committees net revenue budget, of £63.782m. This position was based on activity to date, projected trends in income and expenditure and potential mitigation to offset areas of adverse variance. Income generation had not yet returned to pre pandemic levels in Quarter 3 due to footfall and usage in some areas which remained less than it was in 2019/20. There had been some improvement since Quarter 2 due to new pricing structures, and slight increase in footfall now that most areas were fully operational but there was a risk of further impact in Quarter 4.

### **Resolved – That**

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

## 74 **LIVERPOOL CITY REGION'S ZERO WASTE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2040**

The Director of Neighbourhood Services introduced the report which sought endorsement of the adoption of the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Zero Waste Strategic Framework 2040 which would minimise waste-related carbon emissions through actions to prevent, reduce, recycle and re-use resources and will encourage a circular economy. The strategy will link into the LCR Pathway to Net Zero Strategy and Wirral's own target to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2041 (through the Cool2 Climate Strategy for Wirral). The strategic framework outlined the proposed LCR strategy and aims to provide a single LCR voice on all zero waste actions. The strategy covered all material resources and waste issues for the LCR and, accordingly, took a wide view to encompass both business and household waste.



In response to concerns raised by Members about the level of detail in the framework, the Assistant Director, Parks and Countryside outlined that if the framework was to be approved, officers would work in partnership with authorities across the city region to develop the strategy with the detail required. It was anticipated that the strategy would be presented to the Committee for consideration in September 2023.

The Chair moved the officer recommendations as detailed in the report, seconded by Councillor Steve Foulkes.

Councillor Tony Cox moved an amendment, that the following sentence be added, 'further and more comprehensive data to be provided and the strategic framework as set out in the appendix needs to have firm actions appended to points which were currently no more than high level aims.' This was seconded by Councillor Andrew Gardner.

The amendment was put and lost (4:7).

The original motion was then put and agreed unanimously. It was therefore –

**Resolved – That the Liverpool City Region Zero Waste Strategic Framework 2040, to reduce waste-related carbon emissions be endorsed.**

## 75 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chair introduced the report of the Director of Law and Governance which provided the Committee with an opportunity to plan and review its work across the municipal year.

The Chair asked that a report on Blue Flag Beaches and an update on Liverpool airport on the consultation regarding changes to flight paths be added to the work programme.

**Resolved – That with the inclusion of Blue Flag Beaches and Liverpool airport consultation, the Environment Climate Emergency and Transport Committee work programme be noted.**