



To be submitted to the Council at its meeting on 23rd March, 2017

REGENERATION, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

29th November 2016

PRESENT: Councillor Jackson (Chair)
Councillors Darby (substitute for Bolton), De Freitas (substitute for Rudd),
Cairns, Rogers, Shreeve, K. Wheatley and Wilson.

Officers in attendance:

Angela Blake	Director of Economy and Growth
Angela Culleton	Assistant Director Environment
Zoe Campbell	Scrutiny and Committee Advisor
Mark Gibbons	Transport Officer – ENGIE
Mark Scarr	Deputy Head of Highways and Transport –ENGIE
Mike Sleight	Environmental Management Officer
Beverly Stanton	Scrutiny and Committee Support Officer
Dave Tipple	Relationship Manager
Paul Windley	Democratic and Scrutiny Team Manager

Also in attendance:

Councillor Watson	Portfolio Holder for Energy and Environment
Councillor P Wheatley	Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Skills and Housing
Tony Bramley	Shoreline – Chief Executive

There were two members of the press and six members of the public present.

SPREH.44 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bolton and Rudd.

SPREH.45 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest in any items on the agenda for this meeting.

SPREH.46 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Regeneration, Environment and Housing Scrutiny Panel meeting held on the 20th September 2016 and 18th October 2016 were agreed as an accurate record.

SPREH.47 **TRACKING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SCRUTINY PANEL**

The Panel received a report tracking its previous recommendations.

At SPREH.40, Mr Scarr explained that Engie were working on a possible bid to the Department for Transport Challenge Fund for money to carry out essential highways maintenance to the A180, Estate Roads and Moody Lane. Further updates would follow.

At SPREH.66 (Removal of Willow Tree at the River Freshney), Mr Sleight stated that the tree was yet to be observed to see what the best approach was. The Panel agreed for it to stay on tracking.

At SPREH. 87, the Panel requested that Officers come back to the panel with a robust approach to the governance of the future highways schemes.

At SPREH.38, the Panel stated that it had been published that central government funding was becoming available for affordable housing. They hoped that the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Skills and Housing had taken the appropriate measures to make sure these funds had become available for North East Lincolnshire.

At Appendix B to the tracking report, the Panel were content with the comments received back from the Humberston Fitties Select Committee. They agreed for this item to be removed from tracking.

At Appendix C to the tracking report, the Panel stated that they did not think the report submitted covered the Panel's concerns. They explained that their concerns were more around the road being a statutory 40mph speed limit because when drivers came out of the dip in the road there was poor visibility.

At Appendix D to the tracking report, the Panel agreed that the Social Housing in the East Marsh had been dealt with and they agreed that it could now be removed from tracking.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted and the tracking report updated.

SPREH.48 **FORWARD PLAN**

The Panel received considered the published Forward Plan and Members were invited to identify any items for examination by this Panel via the pre-decision call-in procedure.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the forward plan be noted.
- (2) That the North East Lincolnshire Transport Plan Quarterly Update (end of Quarter Three) be circulated to this Panel via email for information:

SPREH.49 **JUNCTION IMPROVEMENT SCHEME**

The Panel considered a report on the programme for improvements to three major junctions on North East Lincolnshire's strategic highways network. The report had previously been to Cabinet on the 26th October 2016.

Mr Scarr explained that they still had meetings planned with Ward Councillors, but it was essential that a conclusion to these schemes was met. ENGIE had a preferred option at each of the three junctions that met the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) objectives and which would significantly improve congestion and road safety issues but wished to consider the views of this panel on the preferred options

The Panel received a presentation on the three junction improvement schemes.

The Panel discussed the junction improvement scheme at Littlecoates Road/Cambridge Road first. They wondered what would happen to the gas main if this scheme went ahead.

Mr Gibbons stated that the gas main could be diverted, but this would require additional costs. He explained that officers were hoping to keep the existing pelican crossing on Littlecoates Road and this would be incorporated into the new design. Mr Gibbons said that the designer of these schemes would take a more holistic approach and they would make sure that everything needed would be in the correct place.

The Panel agreed that something needed to be done at this junction to make sure the traffic ran smoother. One member of the panel believed that traffic lights were needed, or that Cambridge Road could become a one way system.

Mr Gibbons explained that it would be difficult to make Cambridge Road a one way system as there was the Local Development Order (LDO) on the previous Western School site, which would need a two way access scheme.

The Panel asked if the intelligent traffic light system would detect cyclists. They stated that they had experienced advanced stop lanes before and they were normally blocked by vehicles, which made it hard for cyclists to use. They felt that traffic lights always hindered traffic and caused a lot more queues. The Panel commented that the traffic goes a lot further back than this roundabout and if traffic lights were implemented a lot more problems would occur beyond this junction.

Mr Gibbons explained that the intelligent light system can be programmed so it detected cyclists. The intelligent traffic light system would work around

the volume of traffic in each road. It would be able to re-allocate a specific traffic light to turn green so that the traffic flow moved a lot quicker.

The Panel stated that at this junction, cars were actually moving all the time and there wasn't much of a delay. They believed that if lights were implemented it would cause more of a delay and at some point cars would be stood still.

Mr Gibbons agreed that the cars moved all the time, but it was at a very slow pace. He explained that the mini roundabout caused confusion for drivers as it was not always obvious where cars were intending to go. This contributed to a standstill at all three approaches.

The Panel moved on to discuss the second option of a full sized roundabout. They believed this would help because it would provide two lanes for traffic to move quicker.

Mr Scarr stated that option two did not take into account pedestrian crossings and the signalised junction would provide a safer way for pedestrians to cross. The panel was advised that an enlarged roundabout option contained significant additional risk due to required removal of a tree which was the subject of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and additional land-take requirements.

One member of the panel stated that, since Western School had been closed, the volume of pedestrians had reduced. They thought that all the schemes had been ill thought out and Officers needed to look beyond these junctions as the problem started there. They added that there were concerns about stationary traffic which could block drives and would make it harder for residents to have access to their properties.

The panel clarified that they were happy to agree to the larger roundabout option contrary to officer's recommendations because they perceived that the other option of making it into a signalised junction would add to the congestion.

Mr Windley explained to the panel that a petition had been received on this junction improvement and would be received by Cabinet in due course. The petition organiser would be invited to address Cabinet.

The Chair moved on and summarised the options for the junction improvement scheme at Nun Corner roundabout.

The Panel stated that the video showed traffic moving smoothly and they did not think that there was currently a problem outside of peak times. They clarified that this was in a conservation area, an attractive part of the borough and there was not one resident who thought the roundabout could be improved with traffic lights. The Panel did not think the plans put forward for cyclists were safe enough options and believed that changing the lanes would benefit traffic at peak times.

Mr Scarr stated that safety for pedestrians and cyclists could only be

improved with the use of traffic lights in this location. He asked Members to remember that there was going to be an additional 900 homes on Scartho Top and that the council, as highway authority, had two statutory duties; to manage North East Lincolnshire's road network with a view to secure expeditious movement of traffic and to take steps to reduce and prevent accidents.

The panel thought that the proposals they were putting forward did cover statutory duty. They thought this was a good area to show off as the entrance to the town and they would hate to lose it. They thought it would be better to not accept either option presented, but to consider other options with the existing and further additional lanes. The Panel wanted to make sure that the scheme included safety for cyclists and pedestrians.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Skills and Housing mentioned that traffic signals were already in situ in other parts of the borough which were also conservation areas.

The Panel then went on to discuss the junction improvement scheme at Tollbar roundabout. They stated that they appreciated a lot of work had gone into these designs and had been widely consulted with councillors and parish councillors, although concerns were raised about inaccurate information that had been presented. The panel explained that ward councillors and residents had a strong desire for the roundabout to have part time signals. They liked the option of an underpass but understood this would not be within budget.

Mr Gibbons explained that the retention and signalisation of the roundabout was affordable, but was not the best option. He clarified that to signalise the roundabout as suggested, only one entrance to the roundabout would be on green at any one time, which would add to the delays. Mr Gibbons stated that they also had to think about pedestrian safety because if they were to put crossings a good distance away from the junction, people were less likely to use them. He said that some of these options would mean using land outside the highways boundary and it would be third party land that would need to be acquired prior to delivery.

The panel specified that traffic flow outside peak times flowed differently, but they wanted officers to understand that residents were against options put forward. If a signalised junction was put in, it meant that residents would go through the village to miss traffic light delays, thus, cause problems elsewhere in the village. The panel believed that officers had not thought about housing developments that had been approved for future developments and they needed to think of schemes that diverted traffic away from this roundabout. They were aware the disruption was from school drop offs, but they believed this could be solved if the local authority enforced the school no stopping zones.

Mr Windley stated that a petition for debate had been received in relation to the Tollbar junction improvement scheme and was due to be formally received by Council on the 15th December 2016.

Ms Blake explained that if a scheme was not to take place, the funding received from the Greater Lincolnshire LEP would be returned for that specific scheme. This did not mean that a future bid could not be submitted for a different scheme.

The panel believed that, contrary to officer advice, the best option was to retain the roundabout and put measures in place which avoided peak time congestion.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET –

- (1) That the junction improvement at Littlecoates Road / Cambridge Road be the enlarged roundabout option.
- (2) That the existing roundabout be retained at Nuns Corner with the incorporation of additional approach lanes and enhanced cycling and pedestrian crossing facilities.
- (3) That the roundabout at Tollbar be retained but with part-time peak hour traffic signals incorporating improved pedestrian crossing facilities, particularly on the northern arm for the benefit of Tollbar Academy students.

SPREH.50 SHORELINE HOUSING PARTNERSHIP MERGER CONSIDERATIONS

The Panel received a report that considered a potential Shoreline Housing Partnership merger.

Mr Bramley explained they had considered this merger because it would give them the opportunity to build a bigger programme that would provide more affordable homes. He stated that for this merger to go ahead, it had to be tangible and not half-hearted. Mr Bramley clarified that both organisations were charities so they were not doing this to gain financial benefits, but it was to secure long term benefits for their future tenants.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

SPREH.51 THE SALT MARSH

The Panel considered a briefing on the latest status of the Saltmarsh in Cleethorpes.

Mr Sleight explained that another survey had been completed and it showed there was no significant growth onto the beach. However, there were concerns over how the sand dunes were causing tides to go onto the saltmarsh. This had resulted in a habitat for the saltmarsh to grow. He stated that Natural England was not happy with herbicides being used. Mr Sleight said that all staff had been adequately trained and had managed the saltmarsh well over the 365 days of the year. Nevertheless, officers had shown concerns on how the beach was developing.

The panel clarified that on their site visit there was apparent growth of the saltmarsh beyond the designated line. They explained they were told by officers that they had been requested to clear the growth the day before the panels visit and they believed they had not received the necessary training or equipment to be able to remove the saltmarsh properly and safely. The panel explained that there was obviously an accumulation of mud on site and were concerned over the number of issues this had caused in the summer months, especially around the safety of visitors. One member of the panel stated that overall it had not progressed onto the beach, so it was just a case of the Beach Team keeping on top of the growth.

Ms Culleton explained that she thought it would be beneficial for panel members to receive pictures that show the saltmarsh over a number of years. This would then give the panel an idea as to what officers had to deal with.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That an update on the Saltmarsh and associated sand dunes be submitted to the Regeneration, Environment and Housing Scrutiny Panel at the start of the next municipal year.
- (3) That the latest Hull University report on the Saltmarsh be circulated to members of this panel.

SPREH.52 **REGENERATION PARTNERSHIP QUARTER TWO REPORT**

The panel considered a report from ENGIE containing a summary of performance against key performance indicators for quarter two.

The panel had concerns over the performance targets, as they looked as if they had not been increased following over-performance. The Panel also commented that the investment performance, whilst well ahead of target, seemed to have stalled .

Mr Tipple explained that performance targets were looked at on a yearly basis and North East Lincolnshire Council led on economic development. He clarified that investment would plateau at certain stages and then grow again as infrastructure was improved.

The panel welcomed the reduction in the road accident casualty statistics but was concerned that there still appeared to be a higher number of casualties in North East Lincolnshire when compared to some similar counties. They wondered whether officers knew what kind of work others were doing to reduce their figures at a quicker pace_than in North East Lincolnshire.

Ms Culleton explained that the Community Safety Team had analysts who collated figures around road safety and she believed it would be useful for

another report to be received by this panel to assist with road safety issues.

The panel believed that the killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents benchmarking information crossed over with the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Panel and needed to be referred to them so that they had a good understanding of the high figures mentioned in the Regeneration Partnership Quarter Two Report.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the briefing paper be noted.
- (2) That the killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents benchmarking information be referred to the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Panel in order to understand the apparently high figures for North East Lincolnshire in the Regeneration Partnership Quarter Two Report.

SPREH.53 **GREEN SPACE STRATEGY**

The Panel considered the Green Space Strategy report.

The Panel commented on the definition that was included in the Green Space Strategy. They believed that it needed to be at the beginning of the report to clarify they were talking about ‘public’ green spaces in North East Lincolnshire.

Ms Culleton explained that the strategy had already been to Cabinet, and because it was still in draft any formatting issues could be resolved.

The Panel thought that the report needed to reflect community involvement to encourage residents to look after their own green spaces.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That it be noted that the Green Space Strategy was a supporting document for the new Local Plan.
- (2) That the Green Space Strategy be updated with the suggested formatting amendments made by the Panel.

SPREH.54 **QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDER**

There were no questions to the Portfolio Holder.

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.36 p.m.