

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

**Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny and Policy Development
Committee**

Meeting held 30 July 2014

PRESENT: Councillors Cate McDonald (Chair), Ian Auckland (Deputy Chair),
Neale Gibson, Ibrar Hussain, Steve Jones, Alf Meade,
Robert Murphy and Pat Midgley (Substitute Member)

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ray Satur, Martin Smith, Steve Wilson (with Councillor Pat Midgley attending as his duly appointed substitute) and Paul Wood.

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

4.1 9th April 2014

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 9th April 2014, were approved as a correct record and, arising therefrom, (a) Matthew Borland, Policy and Improvement Officer, stated that (i) a response to the question raised by Julie Fakes with regard to Crookes Cemetery had been sent by Sue Nadin, Bereavement Services Manager and Registrar, and (b) the Chair stated that she would forward the issue raised by Councillor Alf Meade, relating to the carbon emission tax, to Councillors Ben Curran and Jack Scott, requesting that a response be provided to all Members.

4.2 4th June 2014

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4th June 2014, were approved as a correct record.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 There were no questions raised or petitions submitted by members of the public.

6. STREETS AHEAD ACTION PLAN ON STREET LIGHTING

- 6.1 Ian Kirby, Technical Manager, Regeneration and Development Services, and Graeme Symonds, Network Director, Amey, gave a presentation on the Streets Ahead Action Plan on Street Lighting, including details of performance, as requested by the Committee at its meeting held on 9th April 2014.
- 6.2 Mr Kirby reported on the actions relating to the communication of recurring faults to the public, the communication of updates to customers and Member-reported faults, the repair process for recurring faults and the improved performance being achieved. Mr Symonds reported on further actions, including improvements made in terms of the process for street light installation, changes to the structure and supervisor roles within Amey's Street Lighting Team, better co-ordination between the street lighting and footpath programmes, the employment of two District Network Operator designers, who were responsible for identifying the presence of the 5th core network and giving approval for designs and redesigns prior to any required excavation works, and an extensive training programme to ensure the workforce was competent and safe. The performance statistics highlighted improvements in terms of lights in operation, repair times, both in respect of Amey and Northern Powergrid, and the number of faults repaired by Northern Powergrid within 10 days, as at December 2013, and March and June 2014.
- 6.3 Members of the Committee raised questions and the following responses were provided:-
- Where possible, every effort was made to ensure that safe and suitable walking routes were provided for pedestrians where excavation works had taken place. There had been some issues where there had been insufficient room to provide such alternative routes.
 - In terms of the sequencing of the works, standard practice was to complete the works from the outside to the inside of the highway, which comprised the street lighting, footpath and carriageway. However, in some cases, there had been issues with regard to the street lighting, which had resulted in the works being completed the other way round in order to maintain progress.
 - It was not standard practice under the project to bolt down all the yellow boards used for diverted footpath routes. A decision as to whether they were bolted down would be made on a risk assessment basis.
 - Some street lights were left on during the day for the purpose of

powering up the network, when setting up the new lights. It was appreciated that the public would be concerned about this practice, and efforts would be made to look at how the reasons behind this practice could be communicated to them.

- Whilst there had been some level of progress in terms of improving the installation times in respect of the new street lights, it was still taking an average of five/six months to complete the process. There were now three teams dealing solely with the installation of the new street lights, and two teams concentrating on resolving any outstanding issues with those street lights already installed, and this had resulted in a slight improvement in installation times.
- It was accepted that a number of the problems regarding the street lights had not been resolved within the times specified. This was mainly as a result of the large scale of the 5th core network, which was not being identified until excavations had exposed the cable system, often leading to long delays whilst the necessary redesigns took place.
- Amey were hoping that the improvements being implemented would result in new excavations being open for no longer than four weeks.
- It was not possible for signs to be erected on barriers indicating when the excavations would be filled in due to the uncertain nature of the works required on any particular section of lighting cable.
- The reason for the change in the time period in terms of some of resurfacing works in the Greystones area, from three to ten days, would be investigated, and a response provided to Councillor Neale Gibson.
- Wherever possible, street lights were installed at the back of the footpath. Where this wasn't possible, and they had to be located at the front of the footpath, the new British Standards state that they should be situated a minimum distance of 800mm from the kerb. In terms of the street light on Baslow Road, statutory undertakers' equipment had prevented the column being located at the rear of the footpath, and because the designers rigidly followed the British Standards, the lighting column ended up in the middle of the pavement. The issue had been identified and the street light had been moved to an alternative location on the other side of the road. As the British Standards had a reasonable practicability qualification, there was scope to reduce the 800mm distance in certain situations so, hopefully, the Baslow Road situation should not recur in the future.

6.4 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the information reported as part of the presentation, together with the responses to the questions raised, in particular, those issues relating to communication and the need for improvements in this area of the project in order to keep residents fully informed; and
- (b) requests that arrangements be made for Council officers and Amey to attend a future meeting of the Committee to provide a further update on progress.

7. CABINET MEMBER RESPONSE TO THE COMMITTEE'S CYCLING INQUIRY

7.1 The Committee considered a report of Councillor Leigh Bramall, Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development, which had been submitted to the meeting of the Cabinet held on 23rd July 2014. The report contained information on the Committee's Cycling Inquiry and attached, as a appendices, a response from Councillor Bramall, which contained a number of proposed actions, and details of timescales in respect of such actions.

7.2 In attendance for this item were Dick Proctor, Transport Planning Manager, and Mick Nott, Cycle Sheffield.

7.3 Prior to the consideration of the report, the Chair referred to a letter she had received from Councillor Harry Harpham, Deputy Chair, Cabinet, asking that the Cabinet's thanks be passed to her, the other Members of this Committee and anyone else involved, for all the hard work in undertaking the Inquiry and for the outcomes achieved, which would hopefully drive forward cycling in the City, and build on the legacy from the recent Tour de France.

7.4 Dick Proctor reported on the recommendations from the Inquiry, together with the Cabinet Member response to each of the recommendations, and the following responses were made to questions from, and comments made by, Members of the Committee and Mick Nott, under the following headings:-

7.5 *Strong Leadership*

7.5.1 Dick Proctor stated that there was already evidence of cross-service working in the Council, together with broader networking, and that the recommendations under this heading would start to be progressed after the Summer holidays.

7.5.2 Mick Nott stated that he had already met with Councillor Leigh Bramall to discuss the issue of strong leadership, and had indicated

that whilst Cycle Sheffield was pleased with the recommendations and the Cabinet Member's response, the organisation would continue to lobby the Council in this regard. He added that he was aware that cycling was growing rapidly in Sheffield, but not elsewhere in the City region, and that he believed that the hard work undertaken by Cycle Sheffield in promoting cycling in the City had proved very beneficial.

- 7.5.3 In response to questions from Members of the Committee, Dick Proctor stated that David Caulfield, Head of Regeneration and Development Services, would be the responsible Council officer for driving the project forward within the Council, and that the Sheffield City Region leadership would take a collective approach.

7.6 Getting the Right Infrastructure in Place

- 7.6.1 Dick Proctor stated that the Council was giving particular prominence to the strategic network to start with, and was working with the public transport operators, although there were still outstanding issues regarding funding mechanisms. There was a need to look at the funding balance from both a strategic and local point of view. He stated that further work was required in connection with the arrangement of cycling and walking audits.

- 7.6.2 Mick Nott stated that whilst Cycle Sheffield was pleased to note the Cabinet recommendations, he believed that there should be an officer appointed in the Council, solely to deal with driving the project forward. He also believed that funding should be targeted on specific projects, such as new schools and colleges. He stated that whilst Cycle Sheffield was now being able to view some development plans much earlier, which provided a better opportunity for comment, he believed that officers needed training in connection with what cycling facilities would be appropriate as part of large-scale development schemes.

- 7.6.3 In response to questions raised by Members of the Committee, Dick Proctor stated that as there was only limited funding available at the present time, the Council needed to identify priority work and then work out what was practical using such funds. He stated that the Head of Regeneration and Development Services was looking to see how the issue regarding the requirement for a Cycle Audit to be undertaken in connection with all development schemes could be written into the planning conditions. The Chair added that there was a need to develop strategic plans to enable the Council to be able to make bids for funding for specific projects.

7.7 Getting People Cycling

- 7.7.1 In response to questions from Members of the Committee, Dick Proctor stated that it was important for people to start cycling at a

young age, and that it was very important to ensure that the roads were safe. The Council had invested in a number of 20 mph zones and was well aware of the benefits of officers visiting schools in order to educate children and young people on all aspects of road safety.

7.7.2 Mick Nott stated that there was an issue with regard to the safety of pedestrians, as well as cyclists. He believed that there was a need for increased enforcement regarding speeding and that continued work was required with regard to developing more 20 mph zones, as part of a long-term strategy, which would involve the lobbying of Members of Parliament. He concluded by expressing his thanks and appreciation to the Committee in terms of the Inquiry, particularly referring to the cross-party support.

7.8 RESOLVED: That this Committee:-

(a) notes the contents of the report submitted to the Cabinet on 23rd July 2014, containing a response to its Cycling Inquiry, together with the information now reported and the responses provided to the questions raised and, in particular, the support shown by the Cabinet in agreeing a new strategic approach to broaden and increase participation in cycling in the City; and

(b) requests that an update report be submitted to a meeting in 12 months' time.

8. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15

8.1 Matthew Borland, Policy and Improvement Officer, submitted a report setting out a number of options in terms of how the Committee could scrutinise topics, together with a number of potential topics for the Committee to consider as part of its Work Programme 2014/15. The four proposed ways in which the Committee could consider to scrutinise topics included in-depth work, single topic meetings, items for business meetings and written briefings, and set out a number of suggested topics under each of the four headings.

8.2 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

(a) notes the contents of the report now submitted, together with the comments now made; and

(b) agrees:-

(i) the four options with regard to how it could choose to scrutinise topics;

- (ii) that house building and the local economy be considered as part of a piece of in-depth work, with the Chair to contact Councillor Chris Weldon, Chair of the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee, to see if this work can be undertaken as a joint scrutiny exercise;
- (iii) that the future role of the City Centre be included as a piece of in-depth work;
- (iv) that broadband and economic development and the Waste Strategy be discussed at single topic meetings; and
- (v) that the Chair, Deputy Chair and the Policy and Improvement Officer should develop a draft Work Programme 2014/15 based on the comments now made, for submission to its next meeting for further consideration.

9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- 9.1 A special meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday, 28th August 2014, at 11.00 am, to consider the call-in of the decision of the Highway Cabinet Member Decision Session on 12th June 2014, regarding parking permit prices.
- 9.2 The next scheduled meeting of the Committee will be held on Wednesday, 10th September 2014, at 4.30 pm, in the Town Hall.