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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET PANEL ON TRANSPORT

MEETING HELD IN THE REMOTE MEETING
ON TUESDAY, 18TH OCTOBER, 2022 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Councillor Ruth Brown (Chair), David Levett, Ian Mantle, Ian Moody, Michael Muir, Sean Nolan and Mandi Tandi*

In Attendance:

Ian Fullstone (Service Director - Regulatory), Louise Symes (Strategic Infrastructure and Projects Manager), Edward Leigh (Senior Transport Policy Officer) and Louis Mutter (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer)

Also Present:

At the commencement of the meeting approximately 15 members of the public, including registered speakers.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio Recording: 2 minutes 55 seconds

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Sam Collins and Alistair Willoughby.

2 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio Recording 3 minutes 8 seconds

(1) The Chair welcomed Members, officers and public organisations to the first meeting of the Cabinet Panel. The Chair informed the Panel that each meeting will focus on a particular theme. This meeting would be hearing from the North Herts Council Senior Transport Policy Officer on the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan as well as Rory McMullan, Head of Road Safety & Active Travel at Hertfordshire County Council

(2) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council policy, this meeting would be audio recorded as well as filmed. The audio recordings would be available to view on Mod.Gov and the film recording via the North Herts Council YouTube Channel.

(3) Members were reminded to make declarations of interest before an item, the details reminder about this and speaking rights was set out under Chair's Announcements on the agenda.

3 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio Recording: 4 minutes 38 seconds

There was no other business notified.

4 PRESENTATION ON ACTIVE TRAVEL BY HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Audio Recording – 4 minutes 42 seconds

Tuesday, 18th October, 2022

The Head of Road Safety and Active Travel at Hertfordshire County Council, Rory McMullan, gave a visual presentation on Active Travel and highlighted the following points:

- Hertfordshire County Council is currently working on an Active Travel Strategy to update policies from the last strategy published in 2013;
- Reducing car traffic in residential areas is very important for quality of life, health and well-being; the impact of high traffic on people's mental health is not well documented;
- Investment in active communities will enhance travel across Hertfordshire, reduce congestion and increase economic activity;
- Increasing awareness through community & stakeholder engagement can help improve road safety and reduce the fear of change;
- HCC has been working with Love to Ride to expand the number of people cycling

The following Members, officers and member of public asked questions and took part in the discussion:

- Councillor Ruth Brown
- John Webb – Transition Town Letchworth
- Councillor Michael Muir
- Paul Ward – Knebworth Parish Council
- Edward Leigh – Senior Transport Policy Officer
- Mike Clare – Hitchin Forum
- Councillor David Levett
- Julia Crear – Living Streets
- Bill Sellicks – Hitchin Forum

In response to questions the Head of Road Safety and Active Travel advised:

- Love to Ride & HCC is mostly interested in new cyclists but current cyclists can still sign up;
- Based on recent numbers in Hertfordshire Travel surveys, 1,9% of people cycle regularly, we're looking at a much lower percentage of people cycling compared to who can cycle;
- 56-57% people think it's too dangerous to cycle on the road as its currently presented to them;
- The Speed Management Strategy is a live document so discussions around speed limits in residential zones can take place;
- The data from Speed Indicator Devices is not particularly useful as they detect birds and cyclists, the average speed cannot be calculated using these devices; SIDs would assist in giving a rationale for decisions but could not be used as a basis for policy.

The Chair thanked Rory McMullan for his presentation.

It was:

RESOLVED: That the Presentation on Active Travel by Hertfordshire County Council was noted.

5 CONSULTATION ON LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

Audio Recording – 1 hour 4 minutes 10 seconds

The Senior Transport Policy Officer presented the report entitled Consultation on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and highlighted the following key points:

- Have been working with the Planning Team to get good transport design integrated into new developments from the outset;
- Sustainable Travel Towns – an initiative of the County Council; created a partnership of County, District and Town Councils alongside other external organisations such as BIDs and Heritage Foundations, to pioneer new interventions in Royston & Letchworth;
- The LCWIP Consultation is about improvements to both walking & cycling; creating wider pavements, safer junctions, pedestrian & cycle crossings, protected cycle lanes and modal filters;
- This LCWIP focuses on North Herts towns, Knebworth and Hitchin-Stevenage;
- A number of priority routes in rural areas have been identified;
- More resources will be required to audit these priority routes and propose interventions;
- You can take part in the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan Consultation at Hertfordshire.gov.uk/LCWIP-NorthHerts which is live until 14 November.

The following Members, officers and members of public participated in a discussion:

- Councillor Ruth Brown
- Bill Sellicks – Hitchin Forum
- Julia Sonander – Transition Town Letchworth
- Paul Ward – Knebworth Parish Council
- Guy Reed – Ashwell Parish Council
- John Webb – Transition Town Letchworth
- Councillor Mandi Tandi

In response to questions raised during the discussion, the Senior Transport Policy Officer advised:

- Information on rural routes are included in the reports;
- Comments are not published immediately, they have to be approved by someone before they're published to avoid defamatory/libellous statements;
- Prioritisation does tend to favour the schemes with the largest impact, which are inevitably high cost, but we do need to be sure we are not biasing the priorities;
- E-bikes allow cyclists to travel longer distances; we need to make sure we have the infrastructure to enable people to do that;
- Cycling safety is picked up by the Local Transport Note, which was published in 2020; this note codified what is good, safe design;
- The LCWIP was developed with the Emerging Local Plan in the background, aware of the developments planned with the idea that developers may be willing to pay for infrastructure improvements within development contributions;
- Landowners of new sites contribute to infrastructure in two ways; they fund the infrastructure that is needed to make the site function, as well as Section 106 payments.

RESOLVED: That the Panel:

(1) Notes the report;

(2) Be encouraged to, individually and through the Area Committee, respond to the North Hertfordshire District LCWIP consultation draft attached at Appendix 1, and encourage residents and local organisations to do so too.

6 WORK PROGRAMME & ACTION TRACKER

Audio Recording – 1 hour 51 minutes 8 seconds

The Chair led a discussion and welcomed any actions raised during the meeting to be added to the Action Tracker.

The following actions were raised:

- Ensure that all comments made as part of the LCWIP consultation have been received due to the delay in publication;
- To gather information on the number of adults that can cycle in North Herts, as well as how many are aware of the new publication of the Highway Code.

The Senior Transport Policy Officer commented that survey work around cycling could be done by Sustainable Travel Town Programmes due to the amount of work required.

7 AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Audio Recording – 1 hour 55 minutes

The Chair led a discussion between Members, officers and public organisations to identify additional agenda items for future meetings.

The following agenda items were proposed:

- EV Charging;
- Electric Bikes/Scooters – Informing the public on the regulations around alternative methods of transport;
- A theme of ‘micro-mobility’, currently awaiting government legislation on e-scooters; what local authorities need to do about this;

The meeting closed at 9:29 pm

Chair