

TORRIDGE HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC ORDERS COMMITTEE

8 October 2019

Present:-

Devon County Council

Councillors A Eastman (Chair), L Hellyer, T Inch, B Parsons and A Saywell

Torrige District Council

Councillor J Mckenzie

Attending in Accordance with Standing Order 25(2)

Councillors B Pennington and N Manners

Apologies

Councillor R Wiseman

* 69

Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 June 2019 be signed as a correct record.

* 70

Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There was no item raised as a matter of urgency.

* 71

Highways Permit Scheme

(Councillor Parsons declared a personal interest by virtue of his membership of the County Council's Cabinet which was considering proposals for a permit scheme the following day)

Councillor N Manners (Bradford and Cookbury Parish Council) attended in accordance with Standing Order 25 and spoke to this item in relation to the proposed fees, levels of inspection and quality checks.

The Committee received a presentation from the Highways Systems Manager on a proposed permit scheme for approving works on the highway and the introduction of statutory regulations. The presentation covered:

- the current noticing system for informing the County Council as Highways Authority of proposed road works;
- the Council's statutory duty to coordinate works and reduce disruption;
- the requirement for all local authorities to consider introducing a scheme by April 2020;
- the project timeline;
- the scope covering all statutory undertakers and DCC Highway works and in phase 2 all other privately licenced works;
- types of highway works included in the proposed scheme;
- permit discounts available for recommended good practice; and
- the range of conditions permitted.

Discussion points with the Officers included:

- the provisions within the proposed scheme for emergency works which also allowed for the imposition of reasonable conditions by the County Council as appropriate;

- up to 10% of the works would be inspected with costs being recovered (above that costs could not be recovered from the utilities);
- any faults or poor reinstatement works could be reported to the County Council by parish councils or the public;
- fee levels and limits were determined by the Regulations and designed for the recovery of costs (with an additional 12.4 FTE staff proposed) and surpluses were not permitted under the Scheme; and changes to fee levels could be made (over a three period) as appropriate;
- there was no provision for the setting of 'bonds' to recover additional costs arising from poor quality reinstatement but fines to recover additional costs were permissible;
- it was envisaged that there would be environmental benefits arising from the new scheme relating to reduction in congestion/delays and re-use of materials/rubble etc for example;
- the Scheme would apply equally to the Local Authority and its contractors as well as Utilities and private contractors;
- the proposed timeline included a period for consultation (including the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service) before 'going live' in March 2020 for statutory undertakers and Devon Highways; and March 2021 for private contractors; and
- an update from the Cabinet Member for Highways Management to Members on future trends/changes with reference to electric vehicles, charging points, induction roads and investment in new associated infrastructure.

The Chair thanked the Officer for the informative presentation.

[N.B. presentation attached to these minutes of this meeting and additional information on the Scheme was available at: www.devon.gov.uk/workspermit-scheme]

* 72 **Brandis Corner (Bradford and Cookbury Parish Council) - Dangers Related to the Junction and aspects of Mitigation and Road Markings**

In accordance with Standing Order 23(2) Councillor B Parsons had asked that the Committee consider safety issues at Brandis Corner (A3072) and poor road markings and at other locations in his Division. He asked that priority be given to the safety issues at Brandis Corner.

Councillors B Pennington and N Manning (Bradford and Cookbury Parish Council) attended in accordance with Standing Order 25 and spoke to this item concerning safety issues at this location relating to poor visibility which had led to incidents and near misses. They suggested mitigation measures such as a yellow box, a 'stop' sign, double white lines to prevent overtaking, speed restrictions and improved signage (the current sign was dirty and not clearly visible).

The Neighbourhood Highway Manager reported that he would investigate the matter with a view to a Road Safety Assessment and report back to Members.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Parsons, **SECONDED** by Councillor Saywell and

RESOLVED that a Report be circulated to Members and if necessary consideration be given to convening a special meeting of this Committee to consider this matter.

* 73 **Barton Road - Uneven Road Surfaces: Concerns by Buckland Brewer Parish Council**

In accordance with Standing Order 23(2) Councillor B Parsons had asked that the Committee consider the Parish Council's concerns about the generally poor conditions of pavements and the impact on elderly residents in particular. The Neighbourhood Highways Manager reported that the route had been checked, that no defects meeting the Council's criteria had been identified, and therefore no action was planned.

The Neighbourhood Highway Manager referred to the 'Doing What Matters' initiative addressing issues and priorities raised by local communities. The pilot has been well received in the twelve trial parishes in Torridge and West Devon and it was planned to extend it to other parishes and an urban area with the intention of rolling it out across Devon in the next 12-18 months.

* **74** **Holsworthy Signage**

In accordance with Standing Order 23(2) Councillor B Parsons had asked that the Committee consider the removal of unauthorised signage which had been previously raised. The Neighbourhood Highway Manager undertook to investigate.

* **75** **Grinacombe Moor (Broadwoodwidge Parish Council) - Heavy Traffic passing through during early morning hours, noise and impact on the Road Surface**

In accordance with Standing Order 23(2) Councillor B Parsons had asked that the Committee consider concerns from the Parish Council relating to heavy traffic in the Ashmill area, impact on the roads and resultant noise nuisance. The Parish Council had requested road patching works on the Ashmill Road towards Halwill to alleviate the problems. The Neighbourhood Highway Manager reported that there were limited actions that could be undertaken in respect of HGV routing and that he would investigate the proposal for patching repairs.

* **76** **Aids to Movement Budget and the Need for dropped crossings in the Clifton street area of Bideford East- access by wheelchair or mobility scooter**

In accordance with Standing Order 23(2) Councillor L Hellyer had asked that the Committee consider the level of the Aids to Movement budget which she felt was insufficient to meet local demand and difficulties for wheelchair and mobility scooter access in the East of the Water area with its difficult topography.

The Neighbourhood Highway Manager reported that whilst individual schemes were normally relatively inexpensive the overall demand for improvements across the District and County would have significant resource implications. This was a matter for further Member deliberation during the forthcoming budget scrutiny exercise.

* **77** **Petitions/Parking Policy Reviews**

No requests for reviews of parking policy had been made.

* **78** **Delegated Powers**

The Committee noted the Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste (HIW/19/75) on actions taken under delegated powers since the last meeting.

* **79** **Dates of Future Meetings**

24 March 2020 at the Bideford Town Hall.

26 June and 9 October 2020 and 3 February 2021 (venues to be confirmed).

***DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 12.07 pm