
Minutes of the meeting of the Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee, that was held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Chelmsford on Thursday, 21 March 2024

Present:

Members:

Councillor A Goggin	Chairman
Councillor J Fleming	Vice-Chairman
Councillor S Crow	
Councillor P Gadd	
Councillor P Honeywood	
Councillor J McIvor	
Councillor J Newport	
Councillor L Scordis	
Councillor A Sheldon	
Councillor C Siddall	
Councillor M Skeels	
Councillor M Vance	

Officers:

Tracey Vickers	Head of Sustainable Transport
Vicky Lewis	Senior Transport Planner (Jacobs)
Emma Tombs	Interim Democracy Lead
Justin Long	Senior Democratic Services Officer (clerk to the meeting)
Lisa Siggins	Democratic Services Officer

Councillor L Shaw – Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Sustainable Transport

Welcome and Introduction

Cllr A Goggin, the Chairman of the Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee, welcomed those in attendance.

1. Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

The report on Membership, Apologies and Declarations was received, and it was noted that:

1. The membership of the Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee was as shown in the report.
2. Apologies had been received from Cllr D Blackwell and Cllr A Wiles

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 22 February were approved as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman.

It was confirmed that information on LHP (Local Highway Panel) budgets was still being sought by the Chairman and that an all-members' briefing was due to take on the 'reset' of LHPs on 27 March 2024.

3. Questions from the Public

There was one question from a member of the public and this was taken under Item 5.

4. Work Programme and Communications Review

The updated Work Programme was noted. It was reported that an item had been added on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and this had been provisionally scheduled for the May 2024 meeting.

5. Essex Cycling Strategy

The Deputy Cabinet Member introduced the presentation which can be found [here](#).

It was reported that the strategy was a key document that updated the 2019 plan with a more aspirational approach and with six key outcomes aligned to both LTP4 (Local Transport Plan 4) and Everyone's Essex. It was confirmed that the strategy would sit under the new LTP, which was due to be adopted later in the year.

A public question was put by Cllr Mat Court (Brightlingsea Town Council). In response, it was confirmed that information would be circulated on road maintenance and the concern that poor road condition was a barrier to cycling, and it was agreed that initiatives such as the proposed [Sunshine Coast Greenway](#) should be integrated into the broader cycling network. Officers agreed to liaise directly with Cllr Court on the latter point.

Following the presentation, members were invited to ask questions, and during the discussions the following key points were raised:

- Cycling had a role in tackling poverty by providing a low-cost travel option for people to access work, education, and other opportunities. Meanwhile, the evidence for the economic benefit of cycling was to be found in research such as: [The Pedestrian Pound \(livingstreets.org.uk\)](https://livingstreets.org.uk)
- The initial plan for consultation on the strategy was outlined. It was reported that this would include a mix of online and in-person opportunities as well as engagement with local cycling groups. Members highlighted that engagement with schools and young people was crucial as well as with all cycling groups (including off-road/MTB cycling groups).
- It was confirmed that baseline evidence was needed to inform the outcome specific targets. Members were supportive of the six proposed outcomes but wanted to see further detail as well as a focus on infrastructure.

- It was agreed that achieving 'buy in' from residents was crucial especially when it came to route specific proposals; members proposed that this 'buy in' should include where residents *did* and *did not* want cycling routes.
- Members agreed that a more flexible approach was needed to [LTN 1/20](#) guidance in the strategy. It was felt that achieving this standard was not always realistic particularly in rural areas.
- Concerns were expressed by some members on whether the available funding was in place to deliver the strategy, and it was agreed that further information on budget would be shared with the Committee.
- Members highlighted the importance of engaging with district councils at every stage. This should include ensuring that post-adoption districts consider the strategy, as a part of the wider LTP framework, when developing policies.
- Members expressed some frustration about the lack of funding secured for cycling and sustainable transport under the current (national) Section 106 arrangements. It was agreed that information on Active Travel contributions would be circulated to the Committee.
- It was furthermore agreed that a breakdown of Ride London funding would be circulated to the Committee.

6. Withdrawn Call-in: FP/051/02/24 North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) Joint Committee Draft Minutes 01.02.24

The Committee noted the report and the action taken including the plan to circulate agendas for both NEPP and SEPP (South Essex Parking Partnership) meetings to county members.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The Committee noted that the next scheduled meeting would take place on Thursday 25 April 2024.

8. Urgent Business

No items were raised.

9. Urgent Exempt Business

No items were raised.

Chairman