
Minutes of the meeting of the Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee, that was held in Committee Room 1, County Hall, Chelmsford on Thursday, 17 November

[A YouTube recording of the meeting is to be found online.](#)

Present:

Members:

Councillor A Goggin	Chairman
Councillor D Blackwell	Vice-Chairman
Councillor S Crow	
Councillor P Gadd	
Councillor P Honeywood	
Councillor D Land	
Councillor R Moore	
Councillor J Newport	
Councillor L Scordis	
Councillor M Skeels	
Councillor M Steel	Vice-Chairman
Councillor M Vance	
Councillor H Whitbread	

Officers:

Tracey Vickers	Head of Sustainable Transport
Kris Radley	Essex Cycling Strategy Lead (Essex Highways)
Justin Long	Senior Democratic Services Officer (clerk to the meeting)
Lisa Siggins	Democratic Services Officer

Councillor J Lumley (joining remotely)

Councillor L Scott, Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport.

Welcome and Introduction

Councillor 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 S Barker. Cllr J Lumley was substituting for Cllr S Barker and was joining the meeting remotely.

3. No Declarations of interests were made.

The Chairman, Councillor Goggin, reminded members that any interests must be declared during the meeting if the need to do so arose.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 20 October 2022 were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

The 'matters arising' appendix was noted. It was agreed that any outstanding issues from past meetings would be included in this report moving forward.

3. Questions from the Public

Jean Quinn, Colchester Cycling Campaign asked a question on the introduction of school streets following a recommendation by the Essex Climate Commission.

In response, Councillor L Scott reported that 5 school street projects were underway – none of which involved road closures – and he hoped to develop more within the budget constraints faced by the Council. He had visited examples including in the London Boroughs of Redbridge and Barnet, and a healthy school streets strategy was being developed to inform the work moving forward.

It was confirmed that the Council's approach was focused on traffic management and behaviour change which would only then progress to closures where there was local and political support.

John Meehan, Chelmsford Cycling Action Group, asked a question proposing better monitoring of the delivering of schemes, the inclusion of cycle routes on the Highways Information Map, and a review of the Chelmsford Cycling Action Plan.

In response, Councillor L Scott reported that limited funding meant it was often necessary to deliver schemes in a phased approach, there was a vision for a mapping tool that captured the proposed and planned network, there was a full list of 200 proposed schemes across the county, and work was underway with districts and boroughs to identify resources to refresh local actions plans.

It was agreed that a list showing schemes designated for delivery in the short-term would be provided, and officers would come back to the Committee on the proposal to include cycle lanes on the Highways Information Map.

4. Work Programme

The updated Work Programme was noted.

5. Sustainable Transport

Councillor Scott introduced a presentation which can be found [here](#). He expressed his gratitude to officers for their outstanding work.

Members were invited to ask questions and provide comment. Key points raised during this discussion included:

- It was noted that the ECC Sustainable Transport team consisted of 27 officers spread across many areas including school streets, active travel, community rail and major projects with no dedicated ECC cycling resource.
- Officers were challenged on whether the performance indicators and targets in the 2017 Cycling Strategy had been achieved. In response, it was reported that modal shift and cycling statistics were difficult to measure and there was a need for a strategy refresh with plans in place to monitor numbers more accurately.
- It was agreed that the new Cycling Strategy would come to the Committee (prior to the public consultation stage).
- It was reported that the general trend for cycling figures (locally and nationally) had in recent years been that usage had peaked, plateaued and more recently slightly dropped.
- The importance of Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) were noted, and it was reported that ECC supported district and boroughs in developing the plans in areas such as data gathering.
- Concerns were raised about the approach to cycling infrastructure and whether more could be done at a lower cost, but in response it was noted that the Government's approach was focused on funding high-quality infrastructure.
- Officers reported that the national average of cost of installing 1km of ([LTN 1/20](#)) cycle lane was £800,000 to £1million. Given these costs, it was suggested that more cost-effective solutions were needed particularly in rural areas.
- Concerns were raised about whether adequate resources were being given to cycling and sustainable transport. It was agreed that officers would provide data on the budget and staffing allocated to cycling by comparable local authorities (including Cambridge/Cambridgeshire).
- Further concerns were raised about the s106 process and a perception that Essex Highways demanded less for sustainable transport provision compared with contributions for improvements aimed at car traffic. It was agreed that more information would be provided to Cllr P Gadd on this specific point.

- Members praised the e-scooter project in Colchester, and it was noted that the nationwide trial has been extended by the Department for Transport until May 2023.
- It was agreed that officers would report back on the feasibility of an annual (public) cycle scheme monitoring report.

6. Date of Next Meeting

The Committee noted that the next scheduled meeting would take place on Monday 12 December, 10:30am at County Hall.

7. Urgent Business

No items were raised.

Chairman