
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, 21 July

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

Present:

Members:

Councillor A Goggin	Chairman
Councillor S Barker	(from Item 5)
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	

ECC Officers:

David Forkin	Head of Maintenance and Operations
Justin Long	Senior Democratic Services Officer (clerk to the meeting)
Lisa Siggins	Democratic Services Officer
Jasmin-Harley Carswell	Democratic Services Officer

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

Altered Order - In the interests of the efficient conduct of the business, items were considered in a different order from that set out in the agenda. These Minutes represent the order in which they were considered.

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 Councillor Blackwell and Whitbread.

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

Subject to a clarification to Item 7, the Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 30 June 2022 were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

The 'matters arising' appendix was noted.

3. Questions from the Public

It was noted that no questions had been received from the public.

4. Work Programme

The updated Work Programme was noted.

It was agreed that the Committee would request an update on sustainable transport initiatives particularly on cycling infrastructure as well as e-scooters.

It was noted that items on library statistics and the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) had been added to the Work Programme.

5. Highways Maintenance Performance Update

Councillor Scott reported that there had been only one major incident on the road system during the extreme temperatures experienced on 18 and 19 July. He praised officers for their hard work in difficult conditions.

The Cabinet Member encouraged members to submit requests in a timely manner to the 'member-led pothole scheme'.

Councillor Scott tabled a short-written update which can be found [here](#). Members were invited to ask questions and provide comment. Key points raised during this discussion included:

- Members requested information on how many potholes were being reported, the ratio of these being repaired, and the total defects outstanding. Members further requested annual figures to support the quarterly figures provided and for all information to be broken down by division, where possible.
- The principle behind urgent 'make-safe' interventions was discussed. It was noted that the highest risk problems needed to be dealt with urgently (within

2 hours) for public safety, and there was not normally the time to book a permit to close the road, order traffic management infrastructure and get together all the equipment and hot asphalt; therefore, issues were fixed temporarily with the cold material the call-out crews carried on their trucks.

- It was suggested that figures on these 'make-safe' repairs could be included in future reports to better reflect the volume of work being undertaken.
- The difference between 'defect' and 'enquiry' was clarified and it was noted that multiple enquiries on the same issue would generate only one 'defect'.
- It was agreed that officers would work to ensure that the 'report it' tool fully links-up with the highways map to ensure all roads in the county are included.
- It was noted that several the 20mph speed limits introduced as a part of the response of the Covid 19 pandemic were now being made permanent.
- It was reported that a series of 'speed surveys' were being conducted across the county and were due to be completed in the autumn. The Cabinet Member outlined that enforcement remained key and he was meeting the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, Roger Hurst to discuss the issue.
- It was suggested that the Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP) could be invited to a future meeting of the Committee to discuss its work and how it coordinates with highways and the police on issues such as enforcement.
- The Cabinet Member reported that there were ongoing challenges around recruitment and retainment of staff, but staff levels were relatively stable.
- It was agreed that the updated Annual Road Condition Survey would be made available for members.
- It was agreed that Councillor Scott would provide further quarterly updates to the Committee.

6. LED Streetlight Rollout

David Forkin gave a presentation on the Phase 4 rollout of the LED streetlights project which can be found [here](#). It was reported that this phase involved the replacement of 85,000 streetlights.

It was noted that supply issues meant key components (telecells) were not currently being delivered. This would affect the rollout of the programme by approximately 4 months. It was anticipated however that this supply issue would be resolved by November and the project would finish on time in 2024.

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

- It was confirmed that the project was being part funded through an interest-free (non-extendable) loan from Salix Finance, a non-departmental public body owned wholly by the Government.
- It was reported that contingency planning had been put in place for various aspects of the project, but the level of the supply issues being experienced (a 6-month delay to deliveries) had not been anticipated.
- It was confirmed that all LED lights would have the ability to be dimmed (or brightened) and this mechanism would be utilised depending on local circumstances.
- It was noted that all ECC owned lights would be replaced but not all lights in the county were owned by ECC; some were owned privately or by other local authorities (e.g. parish councils).
- Figures for the overall budget for the project and for the return-on-investment date (i.e. when it would break-even) would be reported back to the Committee.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The Committee noted that the next scheduled meeting would take place on Thursday 15 September, 10:30am at County Hall.

8. Urgent Business

No items were raised.

Chairman