

minutes



Meeting HIGHWAYS SELECT COMMITTEE

Date Monday, 5 March 2007 (commencing at 2.00 pm)

Membership

Persons absent are marked with 'A'

COUNCILLORS

The Hon Joan Taylor (Chair)
Andy Stewart (Vice-Chair)

A	Jen Cole	Sheila Place
A	Bruce Laughton	Ken Rigby
A	Jim Napier	David Shaw
	Philip Owen	

MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting held on 12 February 2007, having been circulated were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cole and Laughton.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None.

LEICESTERSHIRE WEIGHT LIMITS

Chris Charnley, Acting Group Manager (Highway Management) introduced the report on the weight limits on some Leicestershire roads, and the impact of the limits on roads in Nottinghamshire. He drew particular attention to access by lorries to the Langar Industrial Estate. He pointed out that, following a moratorium, Nottinghamshire County Council was again looking at introducing weight limits, though this was unlikely to be on the area-wide basis adopted by Leicestershire.

Councillor Stewart referred to problems on minor roads off the A606 near Upper Broughton. Mr Charnley stated that these had been included in the county's review of weight limits. Councillor Owen believed there should be flexibility in how criteria were applied, to reflect local concerns. Councillor Taylor referred to a weight limit imposed by Derbyshire County Council at Riddings. In her view, there should be closer relationships with other authorities. Mr Charnley pointed out that vehicles did have a right of access to premises. He explained how currently the County Council

contracted Trading Standards to enforce weight limits, given that the Police gave low priority to this.

NOISE FROM ROAD SURFACES

Bernard Younger, Team Manager, Network Management introduced the report on the County Council's policies regarding noise from road surfaces. He explained that the County Council met government guidelines for new roads, but had no policies for existing roads. Members suggested that noisy surfaces might be a priority for maintenance, and drew particular attention to the B600. Mr Younger stated that this road was maintained to an acceptable standard. He pointed out that there were no Best Value performance indicators for road noise.

HIGHWAYS MANAGEMENT BUDGETS

Mr Charnley introduced the report which explained the current approach to highways management budgets. He referred to an intention to work closely with members to gather their views on how practice might be improved. Councillor Stewart believed that Area Managers should have at least a small budget to meet local needs. He suggested that the effectiveness of the current system should be monitored.

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE AND AREAS FOR RECOMMENDATION

Helen Lee, Scrutiny Research Officer, explained that the survey of members had elicited a wide range of views, with highways complaints forming a large part of members' workloads. She circulated a summary of the responses. More analysis of the results was needed.

Martin Gately, Scrutiny Officer, took members through a summary of the evidence which they had received at meetings since September, along with possible recommendations for members' consideration. Comments made during discussion included the need for planned investment on B and C roads and for planned maintenance of rural footpaths; how would the closure of Gravelly Hollow, Calverton be reviewed; questioning the value of continued investment in village gateways; the Police ceasing to use hand held safety cameras from 1 April 2007; the role of Community Speedwatch; and the process for making traffic regulation orders.

It was agreed that a draft final report be prepared on the basis of the evidence received and comments made.

The meeting closed at 4.15 pm.

CHAIR

Ref: highways select/m_5mar07