

PUBLIC

MINUTES of a meeting of the **IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – PLACES** held on 22 September 2021.

P R E S E N T

Councillor S Bull (in the Chair)

Councillors D Allen (substitute Member), M Ford (substitute Member), D Greenhalgh, P Niblock, R Redfern, J Siddle and A Stevenson.

Also in attendance was N Bennett (Place Department).

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors D Collins and N Gourlay.

12/21 **MINUTES RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 28 July 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

13/21 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS** There were no public questions.

14/21 **FUTURE HIGHWAYS MODEL BRIEFING** Neill Bennett, the Highways Strategy Manager attended the meeting to provide the committee with a briefing on the Future Highways Model (FHM), the progress to date, next steps and the role of the committee in providing further scrutiny as part of the overall FHM programme.

The presentation provided committee members with an outline of how the FHM had been instigated, the progress to date and the next steps in its development. The presentation outlined how the approved outline business case (OBC) would re-shape the service to deliver a commissioning approach to highways service delivery using the mixed economy approach and what that would provide in ensuring service objectives and goals will be delivered, benefits realised and value for money (VfM) assured.

A waypoint review had been undertaken in 2018, on the progress to implement the FHM. However, the Service had been significantly disrupted by the challenging circumstances over the past 24 months, with Toddbrook Reservoir, three flooding events impacting the county and the impacts of Covid-19. In addition, staff pressures and lack of capacity had meant that inadequate resources had been available to develop the work.

The Programme objectives were:

- Replace ineffective services with a robust 'mixed economy' operating model, delivering best practice.
- Create clearly delineated client and delivery (provider) functions and roles, with integrated leadership.
- Establish a distinct function for executive and political briefing, engagement and priority setting.

- Deliver improved structures, reporting and accountability.
- Enable the commissioning of alternative function providers.
- Manage budgets and operating costs at a functional level.
- Replace the current evolved, vague structures with defined functions.
- Aim to deliver significant business benefits.
- Review, upgrade and/or replace current depots and remote offices.
- Comprehensive assessment of options considered that:
 - Aligned with DCC priorities and goals
 - Provided demonstrable delivery of VfM and were
 - Achievable

The committee's involvement with the FHM will be around communication and engagement, as scrutiny would have a key role to play as part of the FHM governance. Consideration would be given to how the committee could assist the FHM going forward, but focus could be provided on achieving VfM, climate change issues and resources, particularly recruitment including apprenticeships.

On behalf of the committee, the Chairman thanked Mr Bennett for his presentation and looked forward to regular updates and feedback.

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