

PUBLIC

MINUTES of a meeting of the **IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – PLACES** held on 23 February 2022 at County Hall, Matlock.

P R E S E N T

Councillor S Bull (in the Chair)

Councillors N Gourlay, D Greenhalgh, J Nelson, R Redfern and J Siddle.

Also in attendance were Councillors K S Athwal, C Hart and S Hobson, J Battye (Place), A Chandler and C Flinton (Corporate Services and Transformation), J Gould (Place), M Parker (Place) and R Ward (Place).

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors D Collins and P Niblock.

Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest

1/22 **MINUTES RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17 November 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2/22 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

Question from Councillor Mary Dwyer

I am a Councillor on Belper Town Council. Full Council passed this motion on 8th February this year as we agreed that many roads in Belper need to be a 20 mph zone for reasons of safety and the emissions that faster speeds cause, polluting populated areas.

“We agree to support '20's Plenty for Derbyshire', in it's calls for 20 mph as normal for settlements in Derbyshire in line with Government and globally agreed best practice of wide area signed 20 mph limits”.

The Town Clerk has sent this motion to Cllr. Athwal the Cabinet member for Highways.

Can you please let me know why DCC's criteria for 20mph don't recognise factors other than safety?

Safety is such an important reason for reducing speed limits to 20mph in built up areas such as Belper but the reduction in emissions in such built up areas is also very important both for peoples' health and climate change.

Response

Derbyshire County Council takes its road safety responsibilities very seriously and the reduction of collisions and casualties is one of the key investment areas within its Local Transport Plan. An annual service plan of safety related projects is put together each year, based upon well-established interventions to reduce the overall figures and to target specific trends of types of incidents. The plan enables us to prioritise measures which give us the most benefit for the Council's investment. Benefits are both in relation to people's safety and financial (such as reductions in hospital costs and the expense of emergency services attending the scene).

The use of 20 mph limits and zones are just one of many highway interventions and tools to contribute to safer roads in Derbyshire. There are however differing levels of success from all measures. These typically also include measures such as traffic signals, roundabouts, road surfacing, road signage and of course speed limits. These rates of return or success of measures can differ greatly and the annual programme of safety measures for the monies received from Government must give the best value for our money across Derbyshire's road network. Sadly, the annual investment we receive means a system of prioritisation must be employed to address sites with poor collision histories.

The reduction in any traffic speeds will of course make our roads safer, encourage healthier lifestyles and reduce carbon emissions. The key challenge is though, ensuring the public respect those limits and drive accordingly. The erection of signs alone can be effective to some degree, but small reductions only derive small benefits in comparison with other safety measures. The health benefits also obviously rely upon the reduction in speeds. There are also national criteria on the setting of local speed limits, which needs to ensure the limits set are characteristic of the environment to ensure the respect of the public and to give the Police a manageable enforcement task.

The County Council is supportive of the general aims of the '20's plenty' national campaign, and like you we want to see safer roads, better opportunities for healthier living and cleaner air.

For your information, we will be implementing 20mph zone trials in two towns in Derbyshire to promote clean air and cycling, making them "Green Towns." Once these pilots have been chosen, delivered, and evaluated, broader implementation could then be considered.

The reason for a trial rather than fuller roll out is that there is little evidence at this stage to suggest that they achieve any significant reduction from signed only 20 mph limits in traffic speeds or any large reduction in road casualties. Without significant speed reduction the associated health benefits are also reduced. This view was supported by Department for Transport's own research document in 2018 and our own evaluation of similar schemes in Derbyshire some years ago. Bearing the above in mind, the trials in association with the commitment to our "Green Town" commitment will allow us to take another look at a 20 mph speed limit encompassing a larger area in order to re-evaluate the merit of such schemes in association with other green measures or controls.

Once we have completed our trials, we will of course share the findings and re-consider requests for 20 mph limits on a larger scale.

I hope that the information provided has clarified the Council's current position. If you require any further information or clarification please contact our Highways Hub directly by email: highways.hub@derbyshire.gov.uk

3/22 **FLOOD RESILIENCE/LOCAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY** Julian Gould and Richard Ward attended the meeting to inform the Committee of the lessons learned from flooding incidents and to consider the review of the Derbyshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

Derbyshire had experienced a number of major flooding incidents over the past three years, with the most significant ones being November 2019 (384 properties flooded), February 2020 (96 properties flooded) and January 2021 (66 properties flooded). With not only property flooding but highway flooding to 100's of roads across the County during these events, it had been a significant challenge for the Council, but a challenge that it was, and still is, well prepared for.

The Council's Emergency Planning Team, who was responsible for the co-ordination and management of the response to such events, always undertook post event de-briefs as a matter of course with all key personnel and organisations. From these de-briefs, changes could be considered where deemed necessary to the various documents and procedures. To try and manage customers' expectations, and more effectively manage the flood risk with the limited capacity the Flood Risk Management Team had, the Council needed to consider different ways and methods of managing flood risk in the future. A few suggestions as to how this could be achieved were presented. Some of these suggestions, along with others, were being considered in the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy review. The Team had now begun the process of reviewing the Strategy and it was hoped that following a consultation process, the revised Strategy would be submitted to Cabinet in May 2022.

It was agreed that Members could contribute to the production of the Strategy with their own experiences of the flooding within their particular area.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman wished to thank Julian Gould and Richard Ward for their presentation and pass on the Committee's appreciation and thanks to the Emergency Planning Team, Flood Risk Management Team and all officers and volunteers who had assisted during the flooding.

RESOLVED that the Committee (1) supports any actions and lessons learned. Which come out of any post flooding event de-brief; and

(2) supports the review of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

4/22 **PREVENT AND CHANNEL** Councillor Carol Hart, Cabinet Member for Health and Communities was welcomed to the meeting and provided the Committee with a brief introduction to this item. Christine Flinton, Head of

Community Safety and Alison Chandler, Prevent Lead attended the meeting to provide a presentation and inform Members of the statutory Prevent Duty and Channel guidance.

Prevent was one of four strands of CONTEST 2018, the Government's counter-terrorism strategy and the objectives were to:

- Tackle the causes of radicalisation and respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism;
- Safeguard and support those most at risk of radicalisation through early intervention, identifying them and offering support; and
- Enable those who had already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate.

Section 36 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security 2015 Act (CT&S Act) had placed a duty on local authorities to ensure that a Channel Panel was in place for their area. This should constitute a single panel, with a single chairperson, covering the needs of adults and children. In the case of two-tier authorities, it was the responsibility of the county council to chair the panel and take on all the responsibilities as detailed in the Channel Duty Guidance 2020. Section 41(3) of the CT&S Act made provision for two or more local authorities to have a panel in place for a combined area, allowing for proportionate and efficient use of resources. Derby and Derbyshire had a combined panel.

Channel was a key element of the delivery of Prevent which focussed on providing multi-agency support, at an early stage, to people who were identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. In November 2020, the Government had published revised Channel Duty guidance. This guidance strengthened the role that local authorities played in the Channel process, placing the certain requirements on upper tier local authorities. These requirements were highlighted.

The County Council had made significant progress towards ensuring the statutory requirements had been met and these were outlined in the presentation which was attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked Christine Flinton and Alison Chandler for their informative presentation.

RESOLVED that the Committee notes (1) the statutory duties imposed on the Council by the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people becoming involved in terrorism; and

(2) notes the work completed and the progress made, to support implementation of the statutory guidance within Derbyshire.

5/22 **COMMUNITY MANAGED LIBRARIES** In April 2018 Cabinet approved the Public Library Strategy which proposed to transfer 20 'tier 4 libraries' to community management. Initially, 10 groups/organisations had

completed an Expression of Interest form (EOI) and subsequent successful Business Cases had been received for Woodville, Old Whittington, Wingerworth, Melbourne and Hayfield libraries. The group at Hayfield had since withdrawn from the process.

Councillor Sue Hobson, Cabinet Support Member for Strategic Leadership, Culture, Tourism and Climate Change, Joe Battye, Director – Economy and Regeneration and Michelle Parker from the Library Services attended the meeting to provide the Committee with an update on the Strategy.

Active roll out of the Strategy had been placed on hold for 18 months during 2020 and 2021 due to the impacts of the pandemic, meaning that libraries could not be transferred, and this, alongside the delay and changing environment due to Covid-19, had resulted in the loss of some interested groups.

In August 2021, Woodville Library had successfully transferred to community management and the Library Service was continuing to provide oversight and management to the community group to ensure successful transition. The Library Service was also actively engaged with those groups/organisations with a successful EOI and Business Case at Old Whittington, Wingerworth and Melbourne. There was also ongoing interest for the potential transfer of Tideswell and Etwall libraries.

There had been no interest from the public in the Community Managed Mobiles offer. Mobile library drivers required HGV qualifications and there was a shortage nationally of HGV drivers. The Library Service has four mobile library vehicles, two in use and two spares. The two spare vehicles were overdue replacement, with the two main vehicles being due replacement in 2023. There were also costly regular maintenance and checks.

If there was a lack of customer/community support for the proposals outlined within the report, the Library Service would need to review all aspects of current service provisions, with a potential requirement to make further significant reductions to opening hours, staffing, the materials fund and mobile library provisions.

Whilst the Library Service did not currently collect customer satisfaction surveys, it was recognised that this left a gap in data. A customer satisfaction indicator was currently under development and would be implemented across all libraries with effect from April 2022.

There were many elements of the transfer of Woodville Library to community management that went well and remained positive and there were key areas of learning which would help the Library Service with future developments and these were highlighted.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked everyone for the presentation and requested that Members were kept informed and a further update be presented at a future meeting.

RESOLVED that the Committee notes (1) the report;

(2) that an annual customer satisfaction indicator was in development and would be implemented across all libraries from April 2022; and

(3) the risk that if there was a lack of customer/community support for the proposals outlined within the paper, the Library Service would need to review all aspects of current service provisions.

6/22 **WORK PROGRAMME** The following items were suggested as possible areas of work for future consideration and continued briefing:

- Broadband access
- Future Highways Model
- Enhanced Bus Strategy
- Libraries (in 12 months')

Meeting finished: 4.02pm

