

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL
CASTLE MORPETH LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

At the meeting of the **Castle Morpeth Local Area Committee** held at Council Chamber - County Hall on Monday, 12 February 2024 at 4.40 pm.

PRESENT

J Beynon (Chair) (in the Chair)

MEMBERS

R Dodd
J Foster
G Sanderson
R Wearmouth

L Dunn
M Murphy
D Towns

OFFICERS

L Little
R McCartney
McKenzie

Senior Democratic Services Officer
Highways Infrastructure Manager
Senior Highways Officer, Highways
Improvement

Around 3 members of the press and public were present.

18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Darwin, Dickinson and Jones.

19 MINUTES

The minutes of the Castle Morpeth Local Area Council held on Monday 15 January 2024, as circulated, were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

20 LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN PROGRAMME AND HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE INVESTMENT IN U AND C ROADS AND FOOTWAYS PROGRAMME 2024-25

The report set out the details of the draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) and Highway Maintenance Investment in U and C roads and footways programmes for 2024-25. Final approval of the programme would be made by the Executive Director for Place and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Improving our Roads and Highways taking into consideration the actual level of funding

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received from Department of Transport (DfT) and feedback from the Local Area Committees.

R McKenzie, Senior Programme Officer (Highways Improvements) provided an introduction to the report advising that the draft LTP programme for 2024-25 was based on a settlement from the DfT from which a sum would be retained by the North East Joint Transport Committee to cover central transport costs. The Council had therefore developed a £26,193,624 LTP programme which consisted of improvements and maintenance schemes over the four key areas of sustainable transport; safety; roads; and bridges, structures and landslips. The full details of the draft programme were set out in Appendices A to D of the report. The Council was also intending to carry out an additional £4,450,000 of highway maintenance investment in U and C roads and Footways programme utilising Council's capital funding with the details set out in Appendix E. The funding for the programme would be subject to approval of the Council's Capital Programme at the County Council meeting on 21 February 2024.

Information would be provided in response to Councillor Foster query on what works would be carried out for the £40,000 which had been identified for Stakeford Crescent in Appendix E.

Councillor Dodd was advised that it was too early to identify a timescale in respect of the work to be undertaken on the A696 in Belsay however he would be notified once the timing had been agreed.

Councillor Sanderson stated that all Councils were facing the same challenges due to roads not being constructed for the types and number of vehicles which were now using the network and the impact of the weather on surfaces. He advised that the Administration would continue to fund and fight against potholes. In response to his query regarding the £449,000 identified for highway maintenance and advance design it was clarified that this was for Council staff to undertake preliminary design and testing in advance in order to be ready for each programme.

Councillor Murphy was advised that the exact allocation from the £100,000 identified for safety schemes for the scheme within her ward was not known as it would depend on the outcome of discussions on the requirements.

In relation to the research into better methods of repairing potholes it was confirmed that pilot schemes were undertaken, and laboratory testing continued on different types of fillings as part of the normal programme of work. A report had already been provided on the pilot scheme in the North of the County. Councillor Sanderson advised that additional funding had been included in the budget if this was agreed by Council. He stated that roads were worse in some other areas of the Country and that this Administration were determined to address the problem in this County for the roads they had responsibility for. Members were also informed that whilst it was preferable to do a patch repair, this was not always possible due to the need to act quickly and make repairs within 24 hours in some instances and also the suitability of the structure of the road itself.

Councillor Dunn queried the provision of a pedestrian crossing close to the shop in Ellington to address worrying safety concerns, and also the works to the

footpath on the bridge on the U405 which were supposed to have been included in the programme. It was confirmed that the footpath works were due to be started and the pedestrian crossing had also already been looked at.

In response to a question from Councillor Towns related to the trial of and future use of recycled plastic in the binding for the resurfacing of roads, the Committee was advised that a report was being prepared on this. The query in relation to the extension of the 30mph limit from the school to cover the entrance to the new estate within his Ward would be fed back to officers for a response.

RESOLVED that the information provided and comments made by Members be noted.

CHAIR.....

DATE.....

Ch.'s Initials.....