



<u>Committee and Date</u>
Council
26 July 2018

PORTFOLIO HOLDER ANNUAL REPORT FOR HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT

Councillor Steve Davenport – Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report provides information on key achievements and developments during the previous year, as well as highlighting strategic priorities for the forthcoming year.

2. Reviews, Task and Finish and Scrutiny.

- 2.1. A number of reports, task and finish group sessions and Scrutiny sessions were undertaken during the year. The summary of the activity and outcomes are presented below:

- **Environmental Maintenance Grants (EMG)** – A thorough review of the EMG process and governance was undertaken. This consisted of an away day with councillors and officers to test and challenge the issues. Further representatives from town and parish councils attended and there was a thorough challenge of the process. This resulted in a paper being presented to Cabinet that was subsequently approved. The new process for the EMG has now been developed and the grants are ready to receive funding requests, via the new criteria.
- **Road works and Shrewsbury Integrated Transport Plan (SITP)** - A full day with Members and key officers consisting of a site visit, discussions, presentations and learning points around promoting works, communication, legal basis for decisions, pressures and the basis for the current processes. The outcome concluded that there were some improvement points, but overall the process was sound.
- **Winter Maintenance** – A report to Scrutiny considered Shropshire Council's Highways Winter Policy and Operational Plan. All aspects of the service were debated and further work to implement Snow Volunteers etc. was agreed.
- **20's Plenty** - A Scrutiny meeting considered a proposal on 20's plenty, and presentations and sessions for different perspectives were aired. The current approach was agreed, however additional considerations for new builds were raised for further consideration.

- **Service requests and Complaints** - a review of the processes and systems for service requests and the handling of complaints was considered. The anticipated improvements that the new IT system would bring plus the number of service requests being received by Highways and Transport (circa 2000 per month), were also factors for consideration, especially during the recent poor winter weather which has exacerbated the issue.

3. Kier Contract

- 3.1. The Kier contract became live on 1st April 2018; the contract is circa £21.2 million per annum and operates seven days per week, twenty four hours per day, every day of the year. The contract delivers on all aspects of work, including highways, emergency responses, bridges and structures, street scene, workshops, street lighting, severe weather, traffic schemes, drainage, etc... The contract was procured and the transition from one contractor to another, including training of staff, transfer of IT, stock, materials and plant and equipment was undertaken.

4. Shropshire Highways - assessed as a Level 3 Highways Authority.

- 4.1. For the second financial year running Shropshire Highways was assessed as a level three (highest level) highways authority, this required assessment and challenge against twenty two national criterion, and Shropshire achieved sufficient scores to merit the level 3 award. Not only does this provide a kudos and recognition of the hard work, but also supported the declining central government capital grant by awarding the service an additional £2 million in the financial year.
- 4.2. The assessment is an annual event and will be resubmitted this financial year.

5. Shropshire Highways awarded £3.88 million for the A529.

- 5.1. A bid was submitted to the Department of Transport (DFT) for the A529 near Market Drayton, as this was assessed as a high risk road in respect of risk issues for driving. A bid of £200,000 per kilometre was submitted and an award of 100% was provided, thus £3.88 million. Final details of the award conditions are being sought from the DFT, and subject to this the designs, consultations and delivery over the next year will be planned, programmed and delivered.

6. National Code of Practice for Highways.

- 6.1. A new national code of practice comes into effect on October 1st 2018, this has necessitated reviews of operations, training for all staff to new national recognised and accredited standards, and all highways inspectors have been retrained on a course with examination and are now listed on the national highways inspector register. Development of a three year programme for works and further embedding of the asset management approach is required to meet this national requirement. Further reports are being presented to Cabinet for consideration.

7. Local Transport Plan 4.

- 7.1. Work on developing a new Local Transport Plan (LTP4) for Shropshire commenced in May 2018. Shropshire Council has a statutory duty to have a Local Transport Plan (LTP) via the Local Transport Act (LTA) 2008. The LTA 2008 provides local authorities with the power to review and propose their own arrangements for local transport governance to support more coherent planning and delivery of local transport. The LTP is therefore the key platform through which Shropshire Council can strategically plan for all aspects of transport and highways in Shropshire, including walking, cycling, public transport, car based travel and freight as well as management and maintenance of highways and interfaces with other corporate strategies and initiatives.
- 7.2. The LTP can also provide a framework by which Shropshire can secure investment, respond to change, and manage, maintain and monitor its highway and transport systems. Good transport is a vital factor in building sustainable local communities; it contributes to the achievement of stronger and safer communities, healthier children and young people, equality and social inclusion, environmental objectives and better local economies.
- 7.3. Current project work is focused on clarifying the strategic framework and context within which the LTP is being produced. This is being developed through the review of relevant current and emerging strategic documents at a national, regional and local area level as well as identifying and collating a range of data to provide an overview of Shropshire based evidence and challenges.
- 7.4. Work is also ongoing in setting up a preliminary engagement workshop for key internal and external stakeholders, including town and parish councils, due to take place in September. This workshop will be used to collate information on common themes, views and priorities for transport that will inform the vision, values and objectives of the document. It is planned that a full public consultation on the draft document will be carried out before March 2019.

8. Shrewsbury Integrated Transport Plan.

- 8.1. It should be remembered that funding for the proposed SITP has been secured and will comprise a total of £12.1m of investment in the town. This has been secured through the following sources:
 - c.50% funded through The Marches LEP Regional Growth Fund
 - c.50% funded through Shropshire Council's developer contributions.
- 8.2. Once the key junction improvements are completed, a programme of enhancement works in Shrewsbury town centre will be carried out. This work began in early 2018 and is set to be completed by autumn 2018. Improvements in the town centre will incorporate a range of traffic management and public realm enhancements as a part of the overall SITP.
- 8.3. The locations of the improvements include:
 - Town Centre Gateway at English Bridge / Abbey Foregate

- “Light touch” enhancement of existing spaces at The Square
- “High Street Style” improvements at Mardol and Roushill
- Junction improvements at Dogpole, Town Walls / Belmont, Murivance / Swan Hill, Murivance / St. John’s Hill, Murivance / Quarry and Mardol / Smithfield Road
- Junction improvements at Bellstone / Shoplatch and Mardol / Roushill
- College Zone at Claremont Bank
- Pride Hill Enhancement.

9. Car Parking Strategy

- 9.1. At its meeting on 17th January 2018, Cabinet gave approval for the implementation of Part 1 of the new Parking Strategy Framework.
- 9.2. Managed car parking is important to the vitality of our town centres. Ensuring that customers and visitors have a range of options when choosing to visit and use the town is critical. Encouraging on street parking to be used for quick and convenient access to the town centre for those convenience led trips, allowing regular movement and flow in the town centre and directing longer stay shoppers and workers to the designated car parks will help encourage sustainable use of car parks and encourage more pedestrian use.
- 9.3. A consultation on the Traffic Regulation Orders and on and off street pay and display traffic regulation has been undertaken, and reports to July Cabinet have been submitted for consideration.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)
Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) Councillor Steve Davenport, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport
Local Members All local members affected.
Appendices Nil