

Thurrock: A place of opportunity, enterprise and excellence, where individuals, communities and businesses flourish

## Lower Thames Crossing Task Force

The meeting will be held at **6.00 pm** on **23 April 2018**

**Council Chamber, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 6SL**

### Membership:

Councillors Peter Smith (Chair), Gerard Rice (Vice-Chair), John Allen, Roy Jones, Tom Kelly, Steve Liddiard, Brian Little, Bukky Okunade and Terry Piccolo

Matt Jackson, Thames Crossing Action Group Representative  
Westley Mercer, Thurrock Business Board Representative  
Linda Mulley, Resident Representative  
Peter Ward, Business Representative

### Substitutes:

Councillors Chris Baker, Colin Churchman, Gary Collins, Oliver Gerrish, Clifford Holloway, Joycelyn Redsell, Sue Sammons and Graham Snell

### Agenda

Open to Public and Press

	<b>Page</b>
<b>1 Apologies for Absence</b>	
<b>2 Minutes</b>	<b>5 - 14</b>
To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force meeting held on 19 March 2018.	
<b>3 Items of Urgent Business</b>	
To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
<b>4 Declaration of Interests</b>	

<b>5</b>	<b>Update on Liaison with Highways England</b>	<b>15 - 16</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Highways England Action List</b>	
<b>7</b>	<b>Health Impacts</b>	
	Presentation by the Director of Public Health.	
<b>8</b>	<b>Highways England Update - Health Impacts</b>	
<b>9</b>	<b>Lower Thames Crossing Task Force Priorities</b>	<b>17 - 20</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Work Programme</b>	<b>21 - 22</b>

**Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:**

Please contact Lottie Raper, Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to [direct.democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:direct.democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)

Agenda published on: **18 April 2018**

## **Information for members of the public and councillors**

### **Access to Information and Meetings**

Members of the public can attend all meetings of the council and its committees and have the right to see the agenda, which will be published no later than 5 working days before the meeting, and minutes once they are published.

### **Recording of meetings**

This meeting may be recorded for transmission and publication on the Council's website. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be recorded.

Members of the public not wishing any speech or address to be recorded for publication to the Internet should contact Democratic Services to discuss any concerns.

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact Democratic Services at [Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)

### **Guidelines on filming, photography, recording and use of social media at council and committee meetings**

The council welcomes the filming, photography, recording and use of social media at council and committee meetings as a means of reporting on its proceedings because it helps to make the council more transparent and accountable to its local communities.

If you wish to film or photograph the proceedings of a meeting and have any special requirements or are intending to bring in large equipment please contact the Communications Team at [CommunicationsTeam@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:CommunicationsTeam@thurrock.gov.uk) before the meeting. The Chair of the meeting will then be consulted and their agreement sought to any specific request made.

Where members of the public use a laptop, tablet device, smart phone or similar devices to use social media, make recordings or take photographs these devices must be set to 'silent' mode to avoid interrupting proceedings of the council or committee.

The use of flash photography or additional lighting may be allowed provided it has been discussed prior to the meeting and agreement reached to ensure that it will not disrupt proceedings.

The Chair of the meeting may terminate or suspend filming, photography, recording and use of social media if any of these activities, in their opinion, are disrupting proceedings at the meeting.

## Thurrock Council Wi-Fi

Wi-Fi is available throughout the Civic Offices. You can access Wi-Fi on your device by simply turning on the Wi-Fi on your laptop, Smartphone or tablet.

- You should connect to TBC-CIVIC
- Enter the password **Thurrock** to connect to/join the Wi-Fi network.
- A Terms & Conditions page should appear and you have to accept these before you can begin using Wi-Fi. Some devices require you to access your browser to bring up the Terms & Conditions page, which you must accept.

The ICT department can offer support for council owned devices only.

## Evacuation Procedures

In the case of an emergency, you should evacuate the building using the nearest available exit and congregate at the assembly point at Kings Walk.

## How to view this agenda on a tablet device



You can view the agenda on your [iPad](#), [Android Device](#) or [Blackberry Playbook](#) with the free modern.gov app.

Members of the Council should ensure that their device is sufficiently charged, although a limited number of charging points will be available in Members Services.

To view any “exempt” information that may be included on the agenda for this meeting, Councillors should:

- Access the modern.gov app
- Enter your username and password

# DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

## Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

## When should you declare an interest *at a meeting*?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

A detailed description of a disclosable pecuniary interest is included in the Members Code of Conduct at Chapter 7 of the Constitution. **Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about disclosable pecuniary interests.**

**What is a Non-Pecuniary interest?** – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

### Pecuniary

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

**Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:**

- **Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;**
- **Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and**
- **leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon**

**If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps**

### Non-pecuniary

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



**You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.**

## Our Vision and Priorities for Thurrock

An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.

1. **People** – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay
  - High quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time
  - Build on our partnerships with statutory, community, voluntary and faith groups to work together to improve health and wellbeing
  - Communities are empowered to make choices and be safer and stronger together
  
2. **Place** – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future
  - Roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places
  - Clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in
  - Fewer public buildings with better services
  
3. **Prosperity** – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations
  - Attractive opportunities for businesses and investors to enhance the local economy
  - Vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all
  - Commercial, entrepreneurial and connected public services

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force held on 19 March 2018 at 6.00 pm

---

**Present:** Councillors Peter Smith (Chair), John Allen, Roy Jones, Tom Kelly, Steve Liddiard, Brian Little and Bukky Okunade  
(arrived 6.08pm)

Matt Jackson, Thames Crossing Action Group Representative  
Westley Mercer, Thurrock Business Board  
Linda Mulley, Resident Representative  
Peter Ward, Thurrock Business Representative

**Apologies:** Councillors Gerard Rice (Vice-Chair)

**In attendance:** Steve Cox, Corporate Director Place  
John Lamb, Interim Assistant Director - Lower Thames Crossing  
Ian Wake, Director of Public Health  
Charlotte Raper, Democratic Services Officer

Tim Jones, Highways England  
Gary Hodge, Highways England  
Ian Kennard, Highways England

---

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

### **52. Minutes**

The minutes of the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force meeting held on 19 February 2018 were approved as a correct record.

### **53. Items of Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

### **54. Declaration of Interests**

Councillor Jones declared that, as residents of Thurrock, every Member of the Task Force had an interest in the future of the proposed scheme.

Councillor Jones also noted that there were two representatives from the business community and, following input from residents asked whether there would be an opportunity for another resident representative. The Chair highlighted that Matt Jackson, who was appointed as a representative of the Thames Crossing Action Group, was a resident of Thurrock and represented

the views of some 10,000 residents. It was therefore considered that there was sufficiently balanced representation.

#### **55. Update on liaison with Highways England**

The Corporate Director of Place presented the item which provided the Task Force of an update regarding the meetings held between Council officers and Highways England since the last meeting of the Task Force.

The Resident Representative noted that the meetings were described as weekly, however only two items had been listed. She sought assurances that no topics were being discussed without being reported to the Task Force. It was explained that not every week contained a meeting owing to diary constraints. Members were however assured that all matters discussed at the weekly meeting would be brought to the Task Force.

#### **56. Highways England Action List**

Representatives from Highways England provided a brief outline of works progressed since the last meeting of the Task Force which mostly centred around project related development matters. There was also ongoing work around ecology and environmental surveys, ground surveys, air quality surveys, environmental mitigation works and contract and procurement strategies.

The Task Force was updated that statutory consultation would now not take place until late summer / early autumn. Information would continue to be shared with Council officers and weekly meetings would continue.

The Chair requested that Highways England provide a response regarding the 17 point document referenced at the previous meeting, though he did not expect them to have a response to hand.

Councillor Kelly requested certain items be added to the action list, given the continuing problems Thurrock faced when issues arose with the crossing. He felt the two routes should be connected and form a bypass for one another; residents should have alternative routes when issues arose. He was also concerned by the figures used by Highways England, which suggested the proposed Lower Thames Crossing would siphon off 14% of the traffic leaving 130,000 vehicles using the current crossing which would then backfill with more traffic on the existing crossing. The current congestion issue would therefore not be resolved. There was a lack of investment on the current crossing. He therefore requested:

- More ambitious plans
- Figures to be checked
- Justification of £6bn cost of crossing

Highways England understood the challenges; Members were advised that the entire UK network was under pressure however the existing Dartford



Crossing did have its own issues and therefore a traffic summit with officers had been proposed. While the investment and studies were not within the remit of the department present directly, representatives would ensure they were coordinated and communicated, and could be discussed further if necessary. New crossings and routes released pent up demand, which was difficult to predict (i.e. create new car trips). Work with the Dartford Crossing, A2 and M25 was already featured within present schemes and would be a continuum, but no, the Lower Thames Crossing would not solve traffic problems at the Dartford Crossing.

The Chair urged Highways England to put pressure on the Department for Transport regarding the existing network of road – irrespective of roads being local or motorway.

The Task Force heard that there was currently a study underway looking at the Thurrock – Dartford Corridor to consider short to medium term measures, both in terms of highway solutions and opportunities for public transport and other alternative measures. The first meeting was scheduled for Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> and would begin the process.

Councillor Liddiard queried whether putting sections of the route in cut and cover would reduce pollution particulates. Members were informed that the particulates would be reduced where the route was covered however they would be more concentrated at either portal.

The Chair highlighted that the A14 route (tunnel on the approximate alignment of the current crossing) included a filtered tunnel, which was seen as being very beneficial to the community.

## **57. Thurrock Business Board - Requests of Highways England**

The Thurrock Business Board representative presented the item highlighting the Board's specific requests of Highways England, which centred around two key areas. Firstly that the network was better managed up to opening of any new crossing; Secondly that any new crossing was able to benefit the local Thurrock economy – through jobs and an improved economy – as well as genuine improvements to transport including rail.

Representatives from Highways England confirmed that they would formally respond once they have reviewed the content.

HE advised Members that rail developments were outside of the remit of Highways England and would fall to the Department for Transport. The Business Representative added that it was crucial to invite the right people to for discussions around rail with the Department for Transport, especially the big freight companies.

The Task Force were assured that Highways England aimed to get as much expertise as possible and training within Thurrock, working very closely with

local communities, chambers of commerce and other such organisations. It was crucial that this work started now with colleges and apprenticeship schemes. Highways England were currently working with a not for profit organisation, 'Class of Their Own', working to bring Design, Engineering and Construction into schools, this scheme was in the early stages but was a key part of providing jobs for the long term in the local area.

The issues around the current Dartford Crossing required a much wider debate, hence the proposed traffic summit. There were a number of difficult situations to be managed and the Lower Thames Crossing was about managing the entire network, not simply the addition of another route.

The Chair advised that the current crossing required a state of the art traffic management system, and this should be included in the Council's 'shopping list'.

The Corporate Director of Place recognised that rail was beyond the remit of Highways England and suggested that officers could liaise with the Department for Transport if the Task Force so wished. The Task Force agreed that this should occur.

The Resident Representative stressed that that the business perspective was understandable, but additional railway through the tunnel could result in even greater impact to the Green Belt and open spaces.

She continued that she was understandably sceptical regarding business opportunities for Thurrock, following previous comments from Highways England that "there would be a need for tea bags and milk that Thurrock could provide (Jan '18 taskforce).

The Thurrock Business Board Representative also highlighted concern on HEs supply chain expressing concern regarding theory versus reality i.e. once contracts were signed Highways England would have no control over subcontractors and therefore who would deliver the work. He stressed that projects should directly benefit the communities they would affect most and that HE must be specific in what is specified in tender content and selection processes.

Councillor Allen reiterated that he was opposed to the scheme, but if it were to go ahead Highways England would need to provide the best outcomes for residents, as the route would affect the borough for over 100 years.

Councillor Liddiard noted that Tilbury would be host to the Lower Thames Crossing, Tilbury2, the RWE Npower power station and quite possibly the majority of the new housing to be built in Thurrock. He sought assurances that there would be coordination between these schemes; otherwise he could envisage very real problems for the area. The Corporate Director of Place informed the Committee that Nationally Strategic Infrastructure Projects, such as the Lower Thames Crossing, Tilbury2 and the power station, did need to reflect each other in their submissions to the Planning Inspectorate given the

cumulative effect of development in one area. The Business Representative confirmed that NSIPs had to consider the cumulative impact of other schemes in the area, depending on the stage of those schemes. As Tilbury2 had been ahead of the others it had to give some consideration however, the Development Consent Order application for the Lower Thames Crossing would be submitted later.

The Lower Thames Crossing would therefore have to give full consideration to other developments as that DCO Application followed all the others.

#### **58. Highways England Closed Session - 5 March 2018**

The Chair presented the item which provided transparency regarding a closed session between Highways England and elected Members of Thurrock Council, including a number of questions raised and their outcomes. Residents were assured that all the information presented at the meeting was available within the public domain.

Councillor Jones sought clarity regarding Project Led Decisions and what they entailed, would there be no consultation regarding the elevated sections of the route? Tim Jones assured the Task Force that they could consult with Highways England regarding anything they wished, however some areas were subject to engineering limitations. Councillor Jones continued that there had been some changes already, such as going underneath the A13. He questioned whether there was room for discussion around lowering the route near East Tilbury. There were a number of constraints in that area, such as network rail routes and the existing road network; however Highways England were trying to minimise the impact as much as possible.

Councillor Little repeated his request from several months ago that, if Highways England were planning things with which residents and Members would not be happy (e.g. the elevated sections over the Fens; the LTC going over the railway near East Tilbury) business cases be provided to evidence their justifications and the alternative option.

The Chair requested that future meetings of the Task Force be held in the Council Chamber.

#### **59. Highways England Update - Visual Impact**

Highways England presented their visual impact fly through.

Councillor Jones felt the presentation was a poor show from Highways England. The visuals had been delayed and the Task Force had waited a long time but they didn't show much. He asked whether any other visual impact presentation had been shown elsewhere. He also noted that diagrams placed before Members were dated November 2017, so asked why they had not been presented to the Task Force earlier. It was confirmed that the visual presentation was stated that this project was still in the very early stages of

design and the design was still being developed. He felt it was showing more than most road schemes would show at this early stage.

Councillor Allen urged Highways England to get the design right to ensure the health and wellbeing of residents are key design elements regardless of cost. He felt it would be better to double the amount of investment if necessary, as the road was due to be tolled and would therefore return the overall cost tenfold. Health and wellbeing and the environment were paramount and in the words of Highways England would provide a “much better product”.

The Thames Crossing Action Group Representative echoed Councillor Jones' concerns around drawings dated November 2017 and noted that businesses had been shown information upfront while drawings continued to be withheld from the Task Force and residents of Thurrock. He continued to highlight that the visuals had shown Heath Road as closed. Highways England had repeatedly advised residents at community meetings that communities would not be split by the project; however the closure would separate Chadwell-St-Mary and Orsett Heath from the local health hub at Orsett Hospital. The Task Force were reminded that the presentation and route were very much work in progress.

The Resident Representative expressed her deep disappointment. She had thought the presentation would have been realistic within the context of the borough but no local points of reference such as houses were shown. She felt the whole thing was unacceptable. Highways England had used the word 'mitigation' since the beginning of the process, but between the 'non-negotiable' Project Led Decisions and the visuals shown there were no signs of any mitigation. She felt that the Task Force were simply being used to facilitate consultation that is expected of Applicants within the Development Consent Order process but at no point are Highways England actually evidencing how they have listened and responded to any of the issues raised.

Councillor Okunade stated that the presentation is simply too fast to understand and appreciate. She suggested it would be helpful to have a more robust visual with narration as it was hard to follow and recognise.

Councillor Jones asked whether a better visual, including a side on view and the location of houses, would be brought to the Committee; it would also be helpful to see visuals for the Kent side of the scheme, as a comparison. Members were simply hoping to get the best deal for Thurrock, and be given the same considerations as Kent.

Highways England accepted the criticisms and observations of the Task Force, which was part of the reason they attended meetings. The comments around narration were taken on board as a useful suggestion. There were already plans to provide a perspective from different roads however the accuracy of detail was more important than

The Chair requested an update in 3 months, if possible. There would be new information in 3 months' time, and Highways England hoped to share

information with the Task Force in line with their agendas. It was difficult for Highways England to get data validated, so until that point it was more about how things were done than the specific figures. For this reason there would be no air quality report until the time of the statutory consultation.

Councillor Little highlighted that the room was filled with residents who had attended hoping to see the model, and he believed they would likely feel let down. He expressed the view that the lack any recognisable features (i.e. houses) was a real issue, as they would provide the ability to recognise both the location and impact of the scheme. He continued to highlight the fact that he had been informed repeatedly by Highways England that there would be no road closures, and so he had advised residents the same. The presentation showed a closure in Heath Road and as Portfolio Holder for Transportation and Highways, an Orsett Ward Councillor and a resident of Orsett Heath he should have been made aware prior to the meeting of the Task Force. Councillor Little also echoed Councillor Okunade's comments regarding the speed of the visualisation and the suggestion of narration, adding that it would benefit from different views in future.

Highways England confirmed that Heath Road was the only road considered for closure. Plans had previously included Baker Street but had been amended to keep it open and work was underway to investigate ways to keep Heath Road from closing too. All public rights of way were also unaffected by the route.

Councillor Jones reiterated that the visual model had been suggested by Highways England and the Task Force had only put pressure once it had been postponed. Business meetings had been shown visual models and this was a problem.

The Thames Crossing Action Group Representative informed the Task Force that the visual model had been broken down with additional information on their website. He asked whether any additional information would be shared at the Southend Business Group meeting on Friday. It was confirmed the information shared would be the same as shared at the Task Force.

Highways England presented the visual model again and the Task Force discussed certain sections of the route in more detail to clarify locations etc. There remained considerable ambiguity as to which road was which as presented by the Technical Director and the TCAG representative talked the Task Force through the various links from the fly through. The Chair made it clear that if a resident of Thurrock was needed to describe HE's fly through it proved that the visual model was not detailed enough and would need to be enhanced and brought back before the Task Force.

Tim Jones stated that in terms of air quality impacts on the local community Highways England would not realise any Air Quality data until the summer i.e. just before the start of the Consultation process as it would be wrong to release this until there was full validation.

The Interim Assistant Director reminded that Highways England had made assurances that Thurrock Council would receive monthly air quality data and it was for that reason that each month Thurrock Council had been asking this. As HE were now stating it would not be released until the summer Thurrock would need to understand – perhaps from HE’s Chief Scientist – why such normal data sharing of monthly validated outputs could not be shared as was common place between Local Highway Authorities and HE elsewhere across the country.

Ian Kennard then stated that Highways England was already about to release the monthly validated data.

Thurrock reasserted the need for the data and Highways England to confirm whether or not data would be shared, given confusion within Highways England.

#### **60. Lower Thames Crossing Task Force Priorities Update**

Councillor Kelly requested an addition regarding traffic modelling data regarding the Tilbury link road and between the Orsett Cock roundabout and the M25. He also noted that it would not be difficult for Highways England to provide written responses to a number of the priorities listed.

#### **61. Work Programme**

Councillor Little urged Highways England to ensure that the Health Impact item was delivered in a way that was easily understandable, and in plenty of time ahead of the meeting, rather than on the same day. Highways England reiterated that there would be no Health Impact Assessment as an HIA is not a legal requirement.

The Interim Assistant Director – Lower Thames Crossing stated that both Thurrock and Gravesham Council’s had formally asked for an HIA. Indeed Essex had also stated that an HIA would provide a basis on which the full impacts could be understood, managed and mitigated. It was disappointing to be formal informed, and in this manner, that the views of these Councils were not being heard.

Highways England said that whilst they were not required and thus would not undertake a Health Impact Assessment it was advised that Department for Transport had requested that HE undertake a Distributional Impact Assessment and this would be more fully described at the next Task Force.

The Director of Public Health questioned why no Health Impact Assessment would be undertaken, when Highways England had undertaken these for much smaller schemes such as the A14, M3 and the smart motorway. Given that the Lower Thames Crossing was a £6bn scheme, Highways England must set out at the basis on which the decision to reject a Health Impact Assessment had been made? Clarity was sought as to who would be making

the decision, Highways England or the Department for Transport and where might a challenge be made to the calls for a Health Impact Assessment. Highways England agreed to take the question away and review the details.

**The meeting finished at 7.40 pm**

Approved as a true and correct record

**CHAIR**

**DATE**

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Democratic Services at [Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)**

This page is intentionally left blank



## Lower Thames Crossing Task Force

### Briefing Note: Update on liaison with Highways England

**Purpose of the briefing note:** To provide background on the ongoing engagement between Thurrock Council and Highways England. April 2018

- 1.1 Following the Preferred Route Announcement last summer, Highways England has had a series of ad hoc contacts with Thurrock Council. Thurrock has been keen to ensure appropriate, regular and consistent interaction in order to challenge and review substantive items. Since September 2017 the LTC Task Force has continued to reinforce to Highways England the requirement for their structured engagement.

Officers continue to emphasise concern to Highways England that the Preferred Route Announcement (PRA) choice was unsound and that there is no contemporary evidence base that justifies the scheme. Equally, Officers continue to demand that Highways England fully reflect local demands for better design, all appropriate mitigation and removal of harm caused by the scheme such that any eventual Application captures the full scheme impacts and cost to Thurrock.

1.2 Ward Member Meetings

Highways England has not advised of any meetings with Ward Councillors since the 19<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

1.3 Meetings with Highways England

One meeting was held in late March and the focus of that was meeting was health impacts associated with the crossing. . Thurrock Officers met with the LTC team and sought clarification as to how health impact might be assessed and underlined the previous requests for an HIA.

Owing to Easter no meetings have occurred during April which reflects issues associated with diaries / pre-arranged leave by both Highways England, their consultants and Thurrock Officers.

A meeting convened by Highways England on the matter of tunnel design and safety has been held since the last Task Force. This is occurs every 8-10 weeks and key representatives (both sides of the River) include Police, Fire & Rescue and Local Council representatives are invited.

The above excludes various Letters, emails and ad hoc phone calls.

**For any questions regarding this briefing note, please contact:**

**Name:** Steve Cox, Corporate Director of Place  
John Lamb, Interim Assistant Director – Lower Thames Crossing

## **Thurrock Lower Thames Crossing Task Force - Summary of Key Priorities**

While Thurrock Council remains opposed to the proposed Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) being developed by Highways England in the Borough, as part of the response to the Preferred Route Announcement, Thurrock Council established a cross party 'Lower Thames Crossing Task Force' which included representation of local residents, the business community and the local action group opposing the scheme.

The following list captures some of the most frequently raised concerns, issues and priorities associated with the project to date. Thurrock Council and the Task Force remain opposed to the Highway England development of a crossing in this location. However the list below is intended to illustrate the real cost of the LTC on Thurrock and its communities and if Highways England take these seriously and factor the cost of remedy it will fundamentally affect the Business Case for the scheme. This can be read in conjunction with the Thurrock response to PINS.

It is without prejudice and those attending the Task Force will keep this list under review as and when HE provides additional information.

### **1. Business Case**

- a. How much of this scheme is
  - i. Time savings for trips already on the road network?
  - ii. Real jobs and growth and how much of this will be in Thurrock?
  - iii. Simply creating more journeys by car and longer trips?
  - iv. If jobs was the highest priority (not a few minutes shaved off M25 journey times) how would this scheme compare to say a Crossing at Canvey?
- b. Who is to fund the entirety of the scheme?
- c. Tilbury Docks link road
  - i. Is this confirmed as part of the core 'funded' project?
  - ii. HE must design – for genuine consultation – a dual carriageway
  - iii. There are notable views as to the relative merits of downgrading the A1089. What are HE proposals and how will HE manage this sensitivity.
- d. When can local contractors access all current and future HE contracts?

### **2. Involvement of Thurrock Council**

- a. HE to commence full and detailed technical assessment with Thurrock Officers and how each and every scheme aspects is genuinely captured by HE and local harm fully mitigated and costed in their current understanding of their proposal.
- b. As a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project HE must
  - i. Accept that this scheme must be scrutinised in exactly the same manner as other NSIP's such as Purfleet, Tilbury 2 etc. albeit the sheer scale, impact and potential lack of benefit to Thurrock makes this all the more concerning.

- ii. As developer, understand the full and significant impacts on Officer resources and democratic time and our ability to respond in advancing *any* Application of a DCO.

### **3. Alternatives to this proposal**

- a. The Planning Inspectorate has demanded these be set out – when will HE share with Thurrock how they intend this respond?
- b. All the historic crossing capacity (1963, 1980, 1991). This crossing will last 120 years at least. Will there ever be anything other than more and more roads when there is a need to safeguard and future proof for alternatives modes.

### **4. What is the scheme and how will the network operate?**

- a. When will we know the precise capacity of the crossing? This has already become 3 lanes through the tunnel, then up to the A13 but no detail thereafter.
- b. What is the capacity of the Tilbury Docks Link road and will the proposed design work?
- c. M25 / A2 Junction will be diversion point for the LTC; then back on to the M25. Can you prove that the entire network will be able to cope and that LTC does not simply create a new connection but with roads and junction either side at gridlock?

### **5. Design of the new Crossing**

- a. HE to provide detail of when and where Thurrock can genuinely influence HE proposals. HE must demonstrate where we can or cannot influence the scheme. The DCO process demands genuine consultation rather than keep telling us what you have decided.
- b. The tunnel portal as currently described is within the SSSI. HE must undertake full assessment (now) to adequately consider and respond to demands that it stay in tunnel until North of the railway line (*a key concern of the taskforce*).
- c. HE must provide alternative options for tunnelling and cut and cover at all junctions and sensitive areas. These worked up options to be discussed in detail with Thurrock Council prior to the Application for the DCO.
- d. All slips to have detailed designs developed for cut and cover as now being developed north of Thurrock on the M25. These designs to be open for genuine consultation and consideration by Thurrock Council.
- e. The legacy impact of road elevations – especially over the MarDyke valley needs to be fully recognised and addressed. A detailed understanding of the potential for cut and cover instead of highly elevated structures is needed including areas such as Chadwell St Mary, Orsett, Baker Street, Stifford Clays / Blackshots, Ockendon, Bulphan.
- f. More detail is needed beyond the current red line boundary and we need to have guarantees that HE is designing in robust mitigation including significant planting (5-10 metres) either side of the road (for masking the road, wild life protection, and creation of new community links for cycling, walking and equestrians).
- g. Where is HE's construction plan in terms of access routes / haul routes to enable construction to commence.

## **6. Incident Management**

- a. Action is needed now on current gridlock – can HE lobby DfT for strategic action reflecting the local observations that the actual need is for better management of the current crossing rather than any suggestion of a new crossing.
- b. A new state of the art traffic control centre is need now. Why is it worth spending £6bn for a new crossing but not £60m for state of the art integrated traffic control 24/7 covering the current crossing and local roads either side. Robust network management is now needed as any crossing is a decade away and once in place would secure additional capacity that supposedly is only possible with a £6Bn LTC. The incident management, delay in response and absence of smart management (including alerts, roadside information, recovery) is not as good as elsewhere in the country (i.e. as now being developed in the West Midlands).
- c. Full Borough wide traffic micro-simulation is needed to understand the knock on effect of incidents on either network. Any new crossing is a decade away – so requires action now, especially with planned housing growth.
- d. As HE have now confirmed that tankers will have unescorted use of the use of any new crossing, can they confirm they will ban / restrict tankers using the current tunnels and thereby remove the delays currently seen?.

## **7. Environmental, ecological and health impacts**

- a. The severance of the new road – visual and communities will create separation and segregation especially in historic settings such as Coal House Fort.
- b. Construction impacts of noise, dust and road traffic need to be fully mitigated especially given the prevailing SW wind.
- c. The visual intrusion demands a maximum tunnelling and the remainder fully screened.
- d. More road trips will result in greater pollution than would otherwise be the case and an air quality assessment must be undertaken.
- e. A Full Health Impact Assessment must be produced by HE to consider the full health impact of the proposed route on local populations.
- f. Pollution models for noise, air, light and vibration must be set out for the community.
- g. How much of the Greenbelt will be lost to this scheme and how might HE mitigate the risk of making the Borough being less attractive to house builders.
- h. Each and every community, and heritage asset Including Coal House Fort, Tilbury Fort and East Tilbury Village will be irreplaceably damaged – where has HE experienced and mitigated this across its many years of experience.

## **8. Consultation**

- a. HE has adopted approaches to consultation that removed over 10,000 voices against this scheme. Can HE confirm that they will work more transparently in the future to ensure genuine consultation and show how Thurrock can genuinely influence the scheme?
- b. HE has yet to produce a detailed consultation timeline and the approaches to the Council and local community have lacked any visible plan, and appear ad hoc. When can we have presented a clear communication strategy?
- c. When will HE provide a basic 'fly through' of the current proposals as used in other schemes? Even if this subsequently changes it has been six months since the PRA.
- d. When can detailed drawings be presented to allow local communities to be informed?

## **9. Charging**

- a. Tolling has been removed in Scotland and M4 Severn Bridge into Wales. LTC should be free at point of use to benefit the local economy and business on both side of the crossing.
- b. The Thurrock Community that will be impacted by nearly 2/3 of the scheme in the event of charging a share of the proceeds must go to those communities who suffer the ongoing harm.
- c. The Dartford Crossing has already paid for itself and local residents and businesses should receive toll free crossings.

**Lower Thames Crossing Task Force  
Work Programme  
2017/18**

Dates of Meetings: TBC (Monthly)

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Requested by Officer/Member</b>
<b>June 2018</b>		
Cabinet Update		Members
<b>July 2018</b>		
<b>August 2018</b>		
<b>September 2018</b>		
Cabinet Update		Members
<b>October 2018</b>		

---

<b>November 2018</b>		
<b>December 2018</b>		
Cabinet Update		Members
<b>January 2019</b>		
<b>February 2019</b>		
<b>March 2019</b>		
Cabinet Update		Members
<b>April 2019</b>		