

Minutes of the Meeting of the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force held on 13 December 2021 at 7.38 pm

- Present:** Councillors Fraser Massey (Chair), Gary Byrne and Sara Muldowney
- Apologies:** Councillors John Kent (Vice-Chair), Adam Carter, Daniel Chukwu and Sue Sammons
Laura Blake, Thames Crossing Action Group Representative
Peter Ward, Business Representative
- In attendance:** Colin Black, Interim Assistant Director Regeneration and Place Delivery
Lucy Tricker, Senior Democratic Services Officer
- Chris Stratford, Senior Consultant Stantec, engaged by Thurrock Council
Darren Wisher, Global Director Urban Solutions at Hatch
- Robert Quick, Resident Representative
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Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting was being recorded, with the recording to be made available on the Council's website.

40. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors John Kent (Vice-Chair), Daniel Chukwu, Adam Carter, and Sue Sammons. Apologies were also received from Laura Blake, Thames Crossing Action Group, and Peter Ward, Business Representative.

41. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

42. Declaration of Interests

There were no interests declared.

43. Hatch Report Update (to follow)

The Senior Consultant Stantec introduced the report and stated nineteen fortnightly meetings had now been held between the Council and National Highways (NH). He stated that the team had had some measure of success in agreeing some of the mitigation measures, and the Hatch report would contribute to the Statement of Common Ground. He commented that NH had started an 'issues log' which had recently been re-evaluated and now

incorporated all of the comments made by Thurrock Council in previous consultations and on most technical documents. He explained that the issues log had been grouped into three sections, the first including duplications, statements and issues which had been superseded or were of no consequence anymore. The Senior Consultant explained that 1100 issues were included in this section and Thurrock Council would be likely to agree to about 90% of them. He stated that the second section included technical matters, which was made up of 1,500 issues, the majority of which were still under discussion and needed review. He stated that the third section was made up of 400-500 significant issues between NH and Thurrock Council that needed further detailed discussions or agree to disagree. He explained that these would be discussed in the New Year, although Thurrock will try to identify a summary of 20-30 important issues, and possibly 5-6 critical issues.

The Senior Consultant stated that the Hatch report update was colour coded. He commented that there were 5 purple measures, which meant NH had declined these and considered that these should not be challenged as they largely fell under the remit of the Department for Transport. He explained that there were 17 red measures which were currently unresolved issues, which had not yet been resolved even after numerous meetings. He felt that NH were happy to make minor amendments to these measures, but would not make any amendments that would result in a significant change for the scheme or programme. He explained that there were 20 amber measures, which were close to agreement. He stated that therefore 37 out of the 58 issues, approximately 70%, were rated as either purple, red, or amber. He summarised and stated that the measures marked as green in the report had not been formally agreed yet, but were technically acceptable. He added that although there had been progress on the Hatch report, this was mainly at a lower significance level.

The Chair asked for clarification regarding the purple measures. The Senior Consultant stated the purple measures were: smart speed limits as NH would only consider these on a regional level; revised proposals for the A13 junction; a fixed proportion of tolls for hypothecation (as this was the remit of the Department for Transport); the provision of legacy worker accommodation; and a low emissions target and financial penalties payable to Thurrock Council if these were missed, which would require Department for Transport approval. The Interim Assistant Director Regeneration and Place Delivery added that these purple measures were being discussed with both NH and would be raised directly with the Department of Transport. The Senior Consultant replied NH, including the Executive Director, had declined these purple measures, such as legacy worker accommodation. He stated that the team were concerned that 400 on-site worker units and 80 hyperbaric units would not be enough to accommodate all workers, and this would place additional stress on the local rental market or local road networks due to increased commuter numbers.

Councillor Muldowney questioned measure M4 relating to air quality sensors along the route during construction, and asked if these would remain during route operation. The Senior Consultant replied that NH were proposing to

install air quality monitors at certain agreed locations along the route, but Thurrock were pushing for these air quality monitors to remain during operation, as the Council would then be able to compare current baseline air quality data and could agree any exceedances with NH. He explained that NH did not want air quality monitoring during route operation, as their models told them that emissions would be negligible so there would be no need to monitor. He added that legislation had recently changed which meant mitigation for nitrogen dioxide needed to be accommodated, so Thurrock would be pushing for monitoring during this operation. Councillor Muldowney questioned the measure M5 and asked what the core hours of operation would be, and if any progress had been made on this measure. The Senior Consultant replied that the Code of Construction Practice outlined core hours at 7am to 6pm with an hour before and after for mobilisation and demobilisation. He stated that Thurrock had been pushing for a reduction in using extended hours until 10pm during long summer months for earthworks where the route passed close to houses, and NH had undertaken GIS mapping to identify areas where properties came within 300 metres of the centre line of the route, and had agreed to only work during core hours in these areas. He stated that this would mostly benefit communities in Linford and Chadwell St Mary, but highlighted that some areas of the route construction, such as all tunnel works or utility works/bridge installation, would need to be 24 hours for safety reasons.

The Resident Representative stated that the majority of noise emissions would be from HGV movements, and NH were predicting approximately 400-500 HGV movements per day. He asked if these had been included in noise calculations, and asked if these HGV movements would be following pre-planned routes. The Senior Consultant responded that noise mitigation measures may not include HGV movements, but these would be limited to core working hours and would be outlined in the DCOv2 submission. He stated that the construction model revised HGV movement routes, but Thurrock Council were working to restrict HGV movements around the borough, which would necessitate NH increasing use of the river, ports and surrounding haul roads and the LTC 'trace'. The Chair asked why the measure regarding noise mitigation was red. The Senior Consultant replied it was because no noise data had been received yet, so Thurrock were unable to make comment or propose specific mitigation measures.

Councillor Muldowney highlighted measure M7 and queried what carbon neutral would mean in terms of the scheme. The Senior Consultant replied that it did not necessarily mean electric vehicles, but meant no petrol or diesel vehicles in certain circumstances. He explained that this could mean hydrogen vehicles, or the use of other new carbon neutral vehicle technology that was currently being developed. Councillor Muldowney questioned measure M13 and asked if low noise road surfacing would include the A1089. The Senior Consultant replied that the A1089 would not be included as it did not form part of the LTC scheme, and some parts of the local road network could not use low noise road surfacing due to safety issues, for example some roads which were curved required anti-skid road surfacing to reduce the number of accidents. Councillor Muldowney asked for officers to push for low

noise road surfacing on the A1089 as the LTC would increase traffic on this road due to the ports. The Interim Assistant Director Regeneration and Place Delivery stated that the team could push for this as part of RIS3 consultation, but it was outside the remit of the LTC scheme. He asked residents who wished for low noise road surfacing on the A1089 to lobby their local Councillors, MPs and the Department for Transport as this would have an impact when the Council came to make representations as part of RIS3.

Councillor Muldowney questioned the use of carbon hubs and measure L23 and asked how much money this would bring into the Council. The Interim Assistant Director Regeneration and Place Delivery stated that NH were currently looking at ways to establish local businesses to invest in low carbon technologies, which would form part of the carbon hubs. He stated that there was currently no clear definition for a carbon hub, but it recognised NH need to reduce the carbon impact of the route. He stated that Thurrock Council were currently in negotiation regarding L23 with NH, as NH would be saving money by using the local road network such as the A13 to connect to the LTC, rather than developing a whole new interchange. He stated that the Council were therefore asking for this saving by NH to be recognised and monies supplied to Thurrock for this. He stated that there was no estimated cost at this stage, and no clear response from NH or the Department for Transport had yet been received.

The Resident Representative asked for an update on measure L18. The Senior Consultant replied that Thurrock officers were currently preparing a technical paper on the East Tilbury landfill site, which would contain all the necessary information regarding ecology, history, contamination and ownership. He stated that the paper highlighted that invertebrates of national importance were likely to be located on the site, and Natural England maybe considering categorising the area as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). He added that the team were unsure of what was under the site as no boreholes had been carried out due to safety concerns. The Chair stated that a large area of the London Resort had been designated as an SSSI and asked how this had impacted that scheme. The Senior Consultant replied that not much work had been undertaken on the scheme since this designation.

44. Work Programme

The Senior Consultant asked for a verbal update on the Health Impact Assessment be added to every upcoming Task Force meeting. The Chair and the Task Force agreed.

The meeting finished at 8.24 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**