

13 June 2018		ITEM: 11 Decision 110470
Cabinet		
Lower Thames Crossing Task Force Update Report		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Cllr Peter Smith, Chair of the LTC Task Force		
Accountable Assistant Director: John Lamb, Interim Assistant Director – Lower Thames Crossing		
Accountable Director: Steve Cox, Corporate Director of Place		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

In line with the Terms of Reference, the LTC Task Force is required to report to Cabinet on its work.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 That Cabinet notes the work of the Taskforce.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 The Lower Thames Crossing Task Force has met monthly since September 2017 with the exception of May 2018 as a consequence of elections. Cabinet received a previous update on the 10 January 2018 including Thurrock Council's response to the 'Scoping Report' on what will eventually be included in Highways England's 'Environmental Impact Assessment'.

2.2 The Council remains opposed to any new Crossing in Thurrock and the Taskforce has consistently sought to hold Highways England to account. The previously noted concern of obtaining responses and key information has continued. In part this is a reflection of a major scheme that continues to evolve. Highways England has been informed that more would be expected of them leading a project on this scale.

2.3 The Taskforce has been advised that the next stage in the process will be Highways England undertaking Statutory Consultation. This is now unlikely to occur until late summer. Highways England must produce a draft Statement of Community Consultation (SOCC) setting out how it intends to consult. As a local authority consultee, the Council will have an opportunity to comment on the SOCC ahead of public consultation. Once received, the draft SOCC will be considered by the task force.

3. Themes of Taskforce meetings

- 3.1 All task force sessions are audio recorded and available on the Thurrock Council website.
- 3.2 The substantive discussion points have included:

January

Highways England set out the nature upon which Thurrock might be able to shape proposals. Highways England stated that there were certain 'project led decisions' which were non movable however Highways England said that some aspects could be open for detailed input. The task force expressed concern about limiting when and where they and residents were able to influence such a major project.

The Taskforce agreed their high priority areas. The Taskforce agreed that Officers would use these priorities as the basis of more detailed discussions at weekly technical meetings with Highways England regarding the scheme impacts and potential mitigation measures.

February

Highways England were due to present the visual impacts and as this did not occur the meeting was largely devoted to the ongoing concerns that their views were not being listened to and that key detail was not being brought into the public domain for appropriate consideration and comment.

The Taskforce also considered the resources and requirements that Thurrock Council needs as a direct result of this planning application.

March

Highways England presented a brief video clip. It was during this presentation that Highways England advised the closure of Heath Road. There had been no prior notification to the task force or Officers and the task force expressed concern about the quality of the visual details, the accuracy of the material and requested that this be brought back for further consultation and engagement.

April

Highways England announced that they had reversed the decision on closure of Heath Road.

The substantive item on health impacts included presentations from the Thurrock Director of Public Health followed by a presentation from Highways England on how they plan to tackle health impacts. This followed the request by four Directors of Public Health to Highways England to undertake a full health impact assessment.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 In line with the terms of reference the LTC Taskforce will update Cabinet.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

5.1 Lower Thames Crossing Taskforce

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

6.1 None

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Carl Tomlinson**
Finance Manager - Management
Accounting

There are no financial implications arising from this report

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **David M G Lawson, Solicitor**
Monitoring Officer

There are no legal implications arising from this report

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
Community Development & Equalities Manager

There are no diversity implications arising from this report

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

None

8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- None

9. Appendices to the report

- None

Report Author:

John Lamb

Interim Assistant Director – Lower Thames Crossing

Place