

<b>12 December 2018</b>		<b>ITEM: 10</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>		
<b>Lower Thames Crossing Task Force Update Report</b>		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non Key	
<b>Report of:</b> Cllr Peter Smith, Chair of the LTC Task Force		
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> Anna Eastgate, Assistant Director for Lower Thames Crossing		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Steve Cox, Corporate Director of Place		
<b>This report is</b> 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 on a monthly basis since September 2017. Cabinet received a previous update on 13 June 2018 including the thematic areas the previous meetings had covered – areas of influence, visual impact and health impacts.

2.2 The Council remains opposed in principle to any new crossing in Thurrock and the Task Force 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 with such significant local impacts.

2.3 Highways England are currently consulting on the scheme and this consultation will end on 20 December 2018. Details of the Task Force's discussions around the consultation to date are detailed below.

### **3. Task Force meetings**

- 3.1 All Task Force meetings are audio recorded and available on the Thurrock Council website.
- 3.2 Task Force meetings in March and April saw limited progress made with Highways England, therefore the decision was taken to take stock over the summer and evaluate how best to influence the scheme ahead of Statutory Consultation.
- 3.3 During that time, members of the Task Force received training on the Statutory Consultation and Development Consent Order processes and how best to challenge Highways England.

#### **September**

The Task Force discussed the engagement with Highways England and received updates on the consultation, the Statement of Community Consultation, Health Impact Assessment, Planning Performance Agreement, correspondence between Thurrock Council and Highways England and the Mitigation Schedule.

The Meeting heard that the Council had responded to the Statement of Community Consultation and included a detailed schedule of comments to ensure the consultation would be fair and accessible for all local residents; a letter from the Directors of Public Health for Thurrock, Essex, Kent and Southend-On-Sea to Highways England setting out the scope of work expected in the Health Impact Assessment and; negotiations relating to Planning Performance Agreement between the Council and Highways England were ongoing.

The Task Force identified the need to keep reviewing the Mitigation Schedule as well as the questions asked of Highways England at previous meetings to ensure they remain relevant as the scheme develops.

#### **October**

As well as receiving updates on A13/A1089 traffic movements and the 'east-facing slips' at the A13/A126, Highways England presented to the Task Force the proposed scheme at Statutory Consultation stage, where they outlined that there had been six major changes since the November 2017 design which were: three lanes in each direction; changes to the route height; removal of the Tilbury link road; a new rest area/ service station at Tilbury; changes to the alignment of the route at Tilbury; and "optimisation of the A13".

Members of the Task Force made clear their dissatisfaction with the scheme as presented including:

- The removal of the Tilbury link road and the impact this would have on future business growth in the area as well as traffic movements required due to the redesigned A1089/A13/LTC junctions and

additional pressure put on the A13/A1014 Manorway junction

- The design as currently presented risks creating an 'east-facing slips' issue in years to come by not addressing future demand now at the A13 interface with LTC
- The light and air pollution caused by the rest area at East Tilbury affecting local residents
- Concern around how the 1.5million cubic metres of spoil which will be created from the tunneling under the River Thames will be used
- Lack of 'cut and cover' along the route to mitigate the health and air pollution impacts of the motorway
- Impacts from noise as the route passes through the borough where there is not an existing smart motorway

## **November**

Highways England presented an update on consultation. They outlined a response rate of around 500 responses per day and the main themes so far were:

- Concern with the location of the proposed route, although residents recognised the need to relieve traffic at the Dartford Crossing and A13.
- Concern with the A13 junction and the lack of West facing slip roads.
- Discussion of the height of the road and how this could have visual impacts and impact on air quality.
- The lack of the Tilbury link road and how this may affect businesses within the area.
- How the LTC will bring benefits and help businesses within Thurrock.
- The change to 3 lanes and how this may increase traffic noise and air pollution.
- The impact of the removal of spoil and construction traffic on the local road network as building work will be happening on site for 6 years.
- Local issues such as the realignment of Rectory Road.
- The proposed rest/service area and the impact this could have on residents of East Tilbury.

Concerns were also raised about reports that Highways England has separately taken a view that it would object to any new development that resulted in any additional traffic on Junction 30 of the M25. The HE representative agreed to look into this and report back.

The Task Force also received a report back from the Thurrock Business Board Representative, who explained that the scheme as currently proposed highlights a number of potential issues – notably the lack of a Tilbury link road and the 'west-facing slips' issue.

Members of the Task Force also raised concerns about the compensation for land owners within the red line boundary and representatives from Essex County Council and South East Local Enterprise Partnership were asked to be invited to attend the next meeting.

#### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

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

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

5.1 Lower Thames Crossing Task Force

#### **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: **Benita Edwards**  
**Interim Deputy Head of Legal (Regeneration)**

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:**

Anna Eastgate

Assistant Director – Lower Thames Crossing

Place