

10 July 2019		ITEM: 10 Decision: 110511
Cabinet		
Lower Thames Crossing Task Force Update Report		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Councillor Gerard Rice, Chair of the LTC Task Force		
Accountable Assistant Director: Anna Eastgate, Assistant Director - Lower Thames Crossing		
Accountable Director: Andy Millard, Interim 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 Task Force.

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 12 December 2018.

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 long-held concern regarding obtaining responses and key information continues to hamper the Council's ability to properly assess and scrutinise the scheme.

2.3 Highways England has conducted statutory consultation on the scheme which ended on 20 December 2018. Details of the Task Force's discussions following 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 Full minutes of the meetings are also available on the website. Below is a summary of the discussions at each meeting:

December

The December meeting of the Task Force considered the Council's response to Highways England's statutory consultation, which ran from 10 October 2018 to 20 December 2018.

The response was in two parts: a Local Authority response and a Land Owner response.

The Council's response fell into three categories: an 'in-principle opposition'; the inadequacy of consultation; and the substantial changes which would be required to go some way to mitigate the scheme.

The discussions focused around the Local Authority response, in particular:

- The Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and the effect toxins have on COPD rates
- The ongoing work to progress the Health Impact Assessment
- The proximity to existing communities with the scheme being with 500 yards of Chadwell St Mary, Orsett and Stifford Clays
- The Tilbury Link Road
- The location of the Rest and Service Area
- The number of construction vehicles and the impact on air quality
- Spoil caused by construction
- The impact on the Gammon Fields Traveller Site
- Value for money of the scheme

This response was agreed at an extraordinary meeting of Full Council on 11 December.

The Task Force also reviewed progress against the Priorities List, including responses which had been received from Highways England. The Task Force also requested that a traffic modelling paper be brought to the next meeting.

January

The substantive item for the January meeting was a summary note from Thurrock Council's technical experts, Peter Brett Associated (Santec), on traffic modelling. The note set out a review of the documents Highways England had made available at the time, where the gaps in the information exist and where additional modelling or support is required.

The report set out the findings of those available assessments, how they had contributed to the design changes made between November 2017 and Statutory Consultation (i.e. the removal of the Tilbury Link Road) and listed

the requests made of Highways England to provide the Council with more information.

The discussion around this document focused on:

- The impact of an incident at the Dartford Crossing
- The A1089 and 'Asda' roundabout
- Options and models for the Tilbury Link Road
- The Cordoned Model
- The level of information shared with affected parties
- The impact of an incident on local roads

The Task Force also received verbal updates on the next steps of the Development Consent Order process including design changes, influencing the scheme and means by which there could be a judicial review.

February

The meeting began with a verbal update from Highways England on progress made since their last attendance at the Task Force. They informed the meeting that they were working through the 28,000 responses to the statutory consultation and the main concerns and themes emerging were:

- the A13 connectivity
- The proposed Rest and Service Area
- The lack of the Tilbury Link Road
- The vertical alignment of the road, particularly on the Mardyke Valley and Tilbury and Ockendon loop lines
- The health impact of the road
- Air and noise pollution

Highways England also informed the Task Force that it remained their intention to submit the Development Consent Order by the end of 2019, but this was dependent on changes arising from the statutory consultation.

Members of the Task Force asked specific questions of Highways England on subjects including:

- Agricultural Surveys
- Health impacts and COPD
- 'Cut and Cover'
- The level of mitigation for residents living close to the scheme
- The delays in information being provided to the Council from Highways England

3.3 Meetings in March and April were cancelled due to Highways England going into a period of consultation feedback review and the Council agreeing the terms of a data sharing agreement in order to get access to the cordoned traffic model so that appropriate interrogation of the data could take place.

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: **Jonathon Wilson**
Assistant Director – Finance

There are no specific financial implications arising from the report and the work is funded from within existing budgets.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Tim Hallam**
Deputy Head of Law (Regeneration)

There are no legal implications arising from this report

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
Strategic Lead, Communities and Libraries

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:

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Assistant Director – Lower Thames Crossing

Place