

24 November 2020		ITEM: 10
Standards and Audit Committee		
A13 Widening Project		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A	
Report of: Anna Eastgate, Assistant Director for LTC & Transport Infrastructure Projects		
Accountable Assistant Director: Anna Eastgate, Assistant Director for LTC & Transport Infrastructure Projects		
Accountable Director: Andy Millard, Director of Place		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report is provided at the Committee's request to have a quarterly update on the A13 project. This report and future reports will focus on the latest progress in delivery of the scheme, any changes in the agreed programme and any changes in the out turn forecast.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 That the Standards and Audit Committee notes and comments on the report content.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 This project involves widening the A13 Stanford le Hope by-pass from 2 to 3 lanes in both directions, from the junction with the A128 (Orsett Cock roundabout) in the west to the A1014 (The Manorway) in the east and replacing four bridges. Once the project is completed, there will be a continuous three-lane carriageway from the M25 to Stanford le Hope, reducing congestion and resultant pollution, improving journey times and supporting further economic growth not only in Thurrock but across the whole south Essex corridor.

2.2 There have been a number of issues with the project which has resulted in delays in the delivery and an increase in costs, the detail of which has been discussed and considered in previous reports to both this Committee and PTR O&S.

- 2.3 This report and future reports to this committee will focus on progress in delivery and provide an update on out turn forecast and programme.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

Progress

- 3.1 In recent weeks, the concrete bridge decks at Orsett East and West and Saffron Bridge have been poured with additional work completed to pour the parapets and diaphragms at Orsett also. Drainage work is progressing well, with the installation of the vortex separator chambers at the pond, continued installation of filter drain, carrier drain and cross-carriageway drainage and the ongoing removal of the old, redundant drainage system. A major milestone was reached in late October, with the commencement of the road surfacing with more to follow in the coming months.
- 3.2 More than £8.2 million has been invested locally, by using regional suppliers and businesses based within 10 miles of the project – supporting the local economy at a time when this is needed more than ever.
- 3.3 The project has employed a student engineer, who is currently studying towards a Civil Engineering degree. She is completing a ‘year out’ placement as part of her studies. Three additional individuals continue their studies in the construction management and commercial management areas, as part of their Kier Apprenticeship Degrees.
- 3.4 The site continues to operate in accordance with the industry guidelines for working safely in COVID-19, with only one positive case recorded (occurring during a period of annual leave) across the project since the start of the pandemic. The individual followed self-isolation instructions and has now recovered fully and is back at work.
- 3.5 Alongside the plastic screens which had previously been installed, a policy has been introduced to ensure that face coverings are worn whilst walking around the office. In addition, a thermal scanner is available to enable staff to check their own temperature on arrival and the site has been registered with the NHS Covid test and trace app, and all visitors are asked to scan the barcode.

Programme

- 3.6 The current accepted programme has an anticipated planned completion date within the currently published period of Autumn/Winter 2021.
- 3.7 The team continues to challenge the construction programme to look at efficiencies to see if completion can be brought forward.

3.8 Under the terms of the NEC 3 contract in place, there are four limited provisions which would enable the Council to reject changes to the programme. In rejecting the contractors programme, the Council has to give the justification and reasons why.

3.9 The four provisions are:

- The Contractors plans are not practicable
- It does not show information required by the contract
- It does not represent the Contractors plans realistically
- It does not comply with the works information.

Budget

3.10 With the project entering the last 12 months of construction activity, the team is undertaking a full review of the anticipated remaining costs on the project.

3.11 Additional costs are expected due to ongoing financial pressures with the scheme which have already been reported. Significant issues still exist with utilities diversions and clash detection impacting on cost and programme as well as drainage. Covid 19 pandemic costs are also a budget pressure which are being closely monitored.

3.12 A revised out turn forecast will be reported to this committee at the earliest opportunity once the work is completed.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 To respond to the Committee's request for quarterly updates on the A13 project.

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

5.1 A communication plan has been prepared and agreed.

5.2 Member briefing sessions are held periodically at the A13 Site Offices and provide an opportunity for Members to receive a presentation from the contractor and raise issues on behalf of local residents.

5.3 Meet the team sessions are held monthly at the A13 Site Office and are a popular way for residents and road users to find out more about the works and ask any questions, although as a result of Covid-19 these (and the Member briefing sessions) are currently postponed

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

6.1 The A13 Widening scheme supports the corporate priorities by encouraging and promoting economic prosperity.

- 6.2 The A13 Widening scheme also supports the Thurrock Transport Strategy (2013 – 2026) and in particular policy TTS18: Strategic road network improvements by creating additional capacity to reduce congestion, improve journey times, facilitate growth and improve access to key strategic economic hubs.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Jonathan Wilson**
Assistant Director - Finance

The forecast position on the project remains under review as set out in sections 3.10 to 3.12.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Tim Hallam**
Deputy Head of Law and Deputy Monitoring Officer

This is an update report and there are no specific direct legal implications arising.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Becky Lee**
Team Manager - Community Development and Equalities, Adults, Housing and Health Directorate

There are no implications arising from this update report.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, or Impact on Looked After Children)

The contractor is required to risk assess all aspects of this project and put in place appropriate procedures and measures to safeguard lives as well as the environment.

The contractor is also required to prepare a sustainability plan that reduces carbon emissions and reduces the project's carbon footprint.

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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Place