

10 November 2021		ITEM: 10
Decision: 110588		
Cabinet		
Lower Thames Crossing Task Force Update Report		
Wards and communities affected:	Key Decision:	
All	Key	
Report of: Councillor Fraser Massey, Chair of the Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) Task Force		
Accountable Assistant Director: Colin Black, Interim Assistant Director – Regeneration and Place Delivery		
Accountable Director: Sean Clark, Corporate Director of Resources and Place Delivery		
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 in June 2021.

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. A new team at Highways England has meant that in recent months there has been a greater level of information sharing and improved collaboration between the parties.

2.3 Highways England conducted a statutory consultation on the scheme which ended on 20 December 2018, two subsequent consultations (Supplementary and Design Refinements) in 2020 and then a Community Impacts Consultation in July-September 2021. Details of the Task Force's discussions following the consultations to date are detailed below.

2.4 Highways England submitted its Development Consent Order (DCO)

application in October and the Council submitted an adequacy of consultation (AoC) response at the request of the Planning Inspectorate and submitted a joint AoC with Gravesham Borough Council and the London Borough of Havering, which were instrumental in the subsequent actions of the Planning Inspectorate and in Highways England's decision. As a consequence of these issues raised with the application and consultation, Highways England took the decision to withdraw its application in November 2020.

- 2.5 Since that time, Highways England has been amending its proposals, adding further mitigation, preparing new documentation, liaising with stakeholders (including Thurrock Council), involving many technical meetings.

3. Task Force meetings

- 3.1 All Task Force meetings are audio recorded and available on the Thurrock Council website. Since the impacts of Covid-19 the meetings have been held as either hybrid or virtual meetings on Teams, but recently meetings have been held in-person and via Teams.

- 3.2 Full minutes of the meetings are also available on the website. Below is a summary of the discussions at each meeting:

April – May

- 3.3 No meetings were held just prior to and following local elections.

June

- 3.4 There were nominations and voting for the Chair and Vice Chair. A report on current progress on the Hatch Report measures was discussed and a review of the Work Programme was undertaken.

July

- 3.5 Highways England officers gave a presentation and answered questions on the forthcoming Community Impacts Consultation. A Technical Paper on progress with the Health Impact Assessment (HEqIA) was presented and technical questions answered and a review of the Work Programme was undertaken.

August

- 3.6 Highways England officers gave a presentation and answered questions on progress with the Community Impacts Consultation and progress with the Hatch Report measures and a review of the Work Programme was undertaken.

September

- 3.7 The draft Community Impact Consultation response from Thurrock Council

was presented and discussed, prior to consideration by Full Council and all recommendations were approved unanimously.

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: **Jonathan 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: **Ian Hunt**

**Assistant Director Law and Governance, and
Monitoring Officer**

This is an update report from the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force and there are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Becky Lee**

**Team Manager - Community Development and
Equalities**

There are no diversity implications arising from this report.

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

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:

Dr. Colin Black

Interim Assistant Director – Regeneration and Place Delivery