

Environment Scrutiny Committee

17th July 2019

Director's Report, Communities & Infrastructure

This report summarises key areas likely to lead to decisions over the next 6 months, including updates on areas previously reported.

1.0 Decisions

1.1 Relevant forthcoming decisions, by date due:

- [Tender and Award of Transport Contracts under the Dynamic Purchasing System for Transport](#) (24 July Cabinet)
- [A38 Bridges and Canal Improvements: Construction of two Highway Bridges, a towpath and a section of the Canal – Authority to receive funds and proceed to contract procurement](#) (24 July Cabinet)
- [Establishing a Dynamic Purchasing System for the Procurement of Transport contracts](#) (24 July Cabinet)
- [Delivery of Structural Maintenance Works 2020-2022](#) (24 July Cabinet)
- [Adoption of a Waste Tipping Away Policy](#) (9 October Cabinet)

1.2 For consideration at the Cabinet CoMT Meeting 23 September 2019:

- Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan Review (10 September 2019)

2.0 Highways update

2.1 Highways Contracts

- The new highway contracts (Ringway (maintenance) and Atkins (professional services)) are bedding in well. The Structural Maintenance contract (currently delivered by Tarmac) will be retendered later this year as this was awarded for a 2 year period. Street lighting (Skanska) and traffic signals (Telent) contracts are also in place.

2.2 £150m Highways Improvement Programme

- Programmed works for year 2 (of 4) continue to be delivered on schedule. 4 lengthsmen teams were operational during May and June. These have now been stood down to test whether it is possible to integrate their work into the maintenance gang programme.

2.3 A40 West Cheltenham Transport Improvement Schemes/ Cyber Business Park

- Project remains on track with the business case development ongoing for Phase 1 and 2 (Arle Court/Golden Valley A40). Public share events took place on the 18th and 20th June 2019. The business cases are scheduled for considered by the LEP board in Autumn 2019. Subject to approval the proposed start date on Phase 1 is February 2020 and Phase 2 Spring 2020.
- The acquisition of 2 properties on Hatherley Lane required for lane width design standards for Phase 1 is progress positively with Legal and AMPS.

2.4 A419 junction improvements (Stonehouse)

- Project remains on track with works at Chipmans Platt roundabout programmed for completion during the Summer. Highway works will then move to Old Ends and finally Horse Trough roundabouts later in the year. Works are expected to be completed in early 2020.

2.5 A38 Cross Keys roundabout (Hardwicke)

- Project remains on track with works starting on site in May 2019 and is currently on programme to be completed in the Autumn 2019.

2.6 A35 Cycle Scheme (Cheltenham to Bishop's Cleeve)

- The Design Team is currently pricing the new foot/cycle bridge across GWSR tracks at Cheltenham Racecourse station and will be arranging meetings with GWSR and Cheltenham Racecourse shortly. Additional funding will be necessary to undertake the majority of construction works and an Expression of Interest has been submitted to the Gloucestershire Economic Growth: Capital Investment Pipeline.

3.0 Strategic Infrastructure Update

3.1 A417 Missing Link

- Highways England (HE) has commenced the planning permission process for the A417 Missing Link scheme. The first formal stage has been a consultation by the planning inspectorate (PINS) regarding the Environmental Statement scoping, which GCC has responded to.
- The HE statutory public consultation on the A417 Missing Link will commence on Tuesday 10 September and will last 6 weeks.
- It appears that the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) may be delayed. Road Investment Strategy (RIS) announcements usually take place alongside the CSR, and it is the RIS that needs to announce construction funding for the Missing Link scheme. If there is a delay to the RIS announcement there could be a delay with the scheme delivery. However, the HE Chief Executive, Jim O'Sullivan, has stressed the need for an Autumn RIS announcement, outside of the CSR process.

3.2 M5 Junction 10 – Housing Infrastructure Fund Bid

- The J10 business case assessment has commenced, with clarification questions expected to be received by GCC w/b 24 June. A site visit and assessment meeting is scheduled to take place with Homes England and their assessment team on 11 July.
Clarification questions from Homes England will continue to be issued throughout the summer with a funding decision expected in October 2019.
- Meanwhile work continues on environmental surveys and the preparation of a planning application for the scheme.
- If the bid is successful, the J10 improvements scheme is scheduled to be completed by 2024.

3.3 M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch)

- The Western Gateway Sub National Transport Body has prioritised the M5 J9/A46 scheme as a Large Local Major scheme regional priority. This scheme has been promoted by GCC.
- A pre- strategic outline business case (pre-SOBC) is being produced by GCC and will be submitted through the Western Gateway STB in July 2019 to the Department for Transport (DfT).
- A Strategic Outline Business Case will be produced by GCC and submitted to the DfT in December 2019.
- If successful, the scheme will begin construction before 2025.

3.4 Chepstow Bypass

- GCC continues to engage at both an officer and member level to support the process of identifying a robust transport solution for Chepstow. GCC and Monmouthshire County Council jointly funded the Stage 1 WeITAG report which appraised transport options for the town. Due to other business case development priorities (A417 Missing Link, M5 Junction 10 and M5 Junction 9); GCC is unable to financially contribute towards the costs of the stage 2 study at this stage.
- GCC promoted the Chepstow Bypass to the Western Gateway Sub-national Transport Body with the aim of the scheme being funded through the Department for Transport's Large Local Majors delivery programme. However, the Western Gateway STB considered the scheme proposal not sufficiently developed to provide assurance of a construction start date before 2025 (a requirement of the funding stream). The STB recognised the complexity of the scheme in terms of achieving planning permission within the funding window and securing a joint funding package with Transport for Wales. Despite not being prioritised there is now recognition of the scheme at a Sub-national level and the bypass scheme has now been identified within a future pipeline of schemes for funding consideration post 2025.

3.5 Improved rail connectivity

- A new Countywide Rail Investment Strategy is being scoped to inform the Local Transport Plan review and demonstrate the importance of rail especially in providing an alternative to the M5 between Bristol and Birmingham.
- On the 2nd July a meeting took place with Network Rail's Western Route Director and Great Western Railway to discuss a number of strategic matters including aspirations for service improvements from Gloucester within the new Great Western Franchise.
- The Western Gateway Sub-national Transport Body (STB) agreed at its June Board meeting to develop an area wide rail strategy. It will be essential for GCC officers to feed into this process to prioritise Gloucestershire's rail ambitions at a sub-national context. A meeting between STBs and Network Rail to discuss their new Strategic Planning Process is scheduled for 22nd July.

3.6 Strategic cycle network

- Highways England (HE) is promoting a £3.6M cycle improvements scheme between Gloucester and Cheltenham, which will be constructed along the B4063. Officers will continue to engage with HE, providing expertise around Member engagement, stakeholder management and design support. Other cycle improvements will be promoted and delivered as funding opportunities arise.

3.7 Local Plan making

- Separate Transport Strategy working groups have been established to support the emerging JCS Review and Stroud Local Plan review. They include officers from the District authorities, GCC and Highways England, and will work to produce a transport strategy for the emerging strategic development sites.

3.8 Minerals and Waste Planning

- The Minerals Local Plan (MLP) Hearing took place on 11-12th June 2019. The sessions were positive and the Inspector's report is now awaited.

3.9 Lead Local Flood Authority

- Key flood alleviation projects continue. These include (not restricted to):
 - Property Flood Resilience in Churchdown
 - Natural Flood Management on the Churn and Daglingworth north of Cirencester
 - Podsmead Flood Alleviation Scheme (FAS)
- District led and LLFA schemes completed, including Newent FAS
- Key local flood action groups initiated and maintained, e.g Frampton flood resilience technical working group
- Environment Agency National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management strategy consultation responded to as LLFA
- Consultation underway on flood risk impacts of the A417 'missing link'
- Staff changes:
 - David Graham has retired as Strategic Flood Risk Management Officer. Recruitment is underway for a successor
 - Julia Hall has been recruited to the vacant Flood Risk Management Officer post.

4.0 Community Infrastructure Update

4.1 Cheltenham Transport Plan

- Following the first 6 months of consultation and traffic monitoring, Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) agreed, in January, to extend the trial to allow mitigation measures to address the broad themes of the objections received to the end of 2018. The amended Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETROs) came into effect on 3rd June. The amended ETROs allow unrestricted access to Clarence Street and Clarence Parade, and make them both two-way, simplifying the bus gate and restrictions and additional disabled parking spaces in Winchcombe Street. A new formal representation period on the amended

ETROs commenced on 3rd of June and the scheme will be considered at TRO committee later this year

4.2 Public and Community Transport

- Work has begun on the next version of the Dynamic Purchasing System used to procure and award all transport contracts. Consultation with operators is underway as is officers revise terms and conditions to ensure that matters such as GDPR compliance and tighter emissions standards are addressed. Subject to a decision by Cabinet this summer the new DPS will go live in March 2020.
- Work with our taxi and small vehicle operators to devise an appropriate CCTV continues, a forum was held in early June which was well received. New contract specifications have been issued and all forms of transport should have the required CCTV specification shortly.
- Alan Bently (ITU Manager) departs for a new role in Public Rights of Way on 5 July, work is in progress to find an interim replacement for Alan.
- The changes at Arle Court Park and Ride have now been operational for two months and in general have been very well received. There is now capacity at Arle Court to accommodate visitors to Cheltenham arriving at any time of the day and use of the park and ride is growing again. Before this scheme was implemented visitors were being turned away as the car park was full by 10am.

4.3 Parking

- A set of parking reviews have been programmed for the next two years. These evaluations will aim to effectively manage parking countywide by significantly contributing to reducing congestion, enabling access for residents, businesses and visitors whilst also aligning with District and Borough councils' off street parking strategies. The reviews will consider new parking zones and light touch improvements at the following locations:
 - Tewkesbury
 - Stroud
 - Cheltenham Zone 3 and All Saints
 - Gloucester permit zone
 - Stow on the Wold
 - Moreton in Marsh
 - Cheltenham St Lukes, Tivoli and Cheltenham Connect and the St Philip and St James' Area Residents' Association (SPJARA).

4.4 Climate Change Summit

- A successful Climate Change Summit with Gfirst Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) was held on 21st May, to which around 120 people attended from a range of public, private and community organisations. Presentations and a write up of the event have been published on the [Council's website](#). The outcomes from this event have been used to develop a revised Climate Change Strategy for the Council, which is an agenda item for this Scrutiny Committee meeting. The draft Strategy is planned to be published for public consultation in the summer, and to go on to Cabinet in November 2019.

4.5 Highways Development Management

- A Members Seminar was held after the last Committee meeting to introduce new staff and explain team changes in the pipeline. This highlighted the role of HDM in delivering economic growth and as a consultee in the planning process.

Copies of the presentation were sent to attendees and are available to others on request.

- Recruitment to fill vacant posts is underway with interviews later this summer. This will include additional capacity in the current financial year following a strategic review of the recruitment, retention and delivery pressures facing HDM, Highways and Strategic Planning. This capacity will enable the council to better support the delivery of new development and infrastructure to support Gloucestershire's economic growth agenda. In recent weeks HDM interims have also been attending planning committees and working on strengthening relations with district planning authorities.

4.6 Air Quality

- On 14th May Health and Wellbeing Board approved the Gloucestershire Air Quality and Health Strategy which includes key strategic areas for delivery. Board members were asked to consider how their organisation can make specific commitments to support its implementation.

5.0 Waste Update

5.1 Joint Waste Committee

- Authorisation has been received from Cabinet to terminate the existing Food Waste Collection and Delivery Agreements in place with district councils and to renegotiate terms over the next 12 months. This is with a view to reduce expenditure, whilst continuing to support food waste recycling and providing a payment that is fair to all.
- Preparations are being finalised to ensure waste transfer is in place prior to commissioning of Javelin Park.
- The Joint Waste Team continues to support Cotswold District Council in the design and preparations for the new kerbside collection service. Communications funding and advice has been secured from WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme).
- Authorization has been obtained from Cabinet to procure a new garden waste composting contract. The new contract will commence in February 2020.
- Options for a future waste partnership are being considered ahead of the termination of the Gloucestershire Joint Waste Committee in December 2019. A report with recommendations has been provided by Local Partnerships. The Joint Waste Team will develop future objectives and governance proposals in consultation with each Gloucestershire local authority.

5.2 Residual Waste Project

- Waste deliveries started on 30th June 2019 from the HRCs, Gloucester City and Stroud District Councils and the remaining councils commencing waste deliveries on 8th July 2019.

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