



REPORT TITLE: Transport Business Case development 2023/24: M5 Junction 9/A46 (Ashchurch) transport scheme & Mass Rapid Transit transport scheme.

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| Cabinet Date | 29 March 2023 |
| Cabinet Member | Cllr David Gray, Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning |
| Key Decision | Yes/No |
| Purpose of Report | <p>To obtain approval for the delegation of authority to the Executive Director for Economy, Environment and Infrastructure under the existing Professional Services Contract to continue work towards delivering the M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport Scheme.</p> <p>To obtain approval to spend, at risk, on delivering the Outline Business Case (OBC) for M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport Scheme.</p> <p>To obtain approval for the Executive Director for Economy, Environment and Infrastructure under the existing Professional Services Contract, to continue work towards delivering the Mass Rapid Transit Strategic Outline Case (SOC), for which we already have funding.</p> |
| Recommendations | <p>That Cabinet delegates authority to the Executive Director of Economy, Environment and Infrastructure in consultation with the Cabinet member for Environment and Planning to procure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. the continuation of development work (OBC delivery) on the M5 junction 9/A46 (Ashchurch) transport scheme under our Professional Services contract, to undertake a non-statutory public consultation concerning options for transport scheme development, and to submit the SOC and OBC to the Department for Transport once complete.2. professional services, under the Professional Services Contract, to continue work towards delivering the Mass Rapid Transit Strategic Outline Case (SOC), for which we already have funding, acquired from successful application to Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF). |

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| Reasons for Recommendations | <p>Continuing to fund the work on the M5 junction 9/A46 (Ashchurch) transport scheme to deliver the OBC will enable GCC to transfer the scheme over to National Highways (NH) to progress the scheme to construction. Discussions with NH show they can take over the scheme and deliver themselves. The proviso to this is that GCC, as current scheme promoter, progresses the scheme 'at risk' to OBC submission stage.</p> <p>The work on the SOC/OBC can be delivered through our existing long-term contracts and the commissioned value for 2023/24 is likely to be approximately £5 million.</p> <p>Continuing to develop the mass rapid transit business case means work can build on the momentum already gathered in contributing to meeting a substantial amount of the Council's decarbonisation goals.</p> |
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Resource Implications

M5 junction 9 / A46

A sum of up to £5 million is required for the development of the M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport Scheme OBC in 2023/24. This paper seeks to obtain approval for up to £2million of further funding that is required if we are not successful in obtaining any other external funding.

This £2m will be funded from the existing transport planning business case revenue budget in 23-24. The £3m balance has historic funding approval from the June 2022 Cabinet paper but has yet to be drawn down.

In addition, there may be the following sources, though currently unsecured:

- Contribution from Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities funding, to support infrastructure needs around the Tewkesbury Garden Town 22-23.
- Potential OBC development funding from the DfT, subject to a successful outcome of the previously submitted Strategic Outline Business Case (the SOC).

If secured these would offset the £5m approved by Cabinet, reducing GCC's overall financial contribution to the scheme.

The development work will be determined by the available budget and, although no overspend will be incurred, the available budget will impact the speed of scheme development.

Whilst projects of this scale necessarily rely on support from many of the Council's service departments, the scale of the development work has already included back filling positions in the GCC legal department, in order to support the delivery of the substantial legal aspects delivering a successful OBC to the DfT, whilst ensuring continuity of service. This back filling will continue and be funded from the above project funding.

Mass Rapid Transit (MRT)

The progression of the Mass Rapid Transit SOC has funding available from SEDF and requires officer time and resource to ensure effective project management and engagement to meet the project deadlines.

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| Background Documents | <p>M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport Scheme – website, including updates https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/major-projects-list/m5-junction-9-and-a46-ashchurch-transport-scheme/</p> <p>M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport Scheme – FAQs https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/major-projects-list/m5-junction-9-and-a46-ashchurch-transport-scheme-faqs/</p> <p>Gloucestershire County Council ‘M5 Junction 9 A46’ Cabinet report – June 2022 https://glostext.gloucestershire.gov.uk/documents/s83068/M5J9%20Cabinet%20report%20June%202022.pdf</p> <p>Gloucestershire County Council ‘M5 Junction 9 A46’ Cabinet report – March 2021 https://glostext.gloucestershire.gov.uk/documents/s69683/M5J9%20A46%20Progress%20Report%20FINAL.pdf</p> <p>Gloucestershire adopted Local Transport Plan (LTP) (2020 – 2041) https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/transport/gloucestershires-local-transport-plan-2020-2041/</p> <p>Gloucestershire County Council Local Development Guide 2021 https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/planning-policy/gloucestershire-local-development-guide/</p> <p>Gloucestershire County Council Manual for Gloucestershire Streets July 2020 https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2099344/2020-july-mfgs.pdf</p> <p>Midlands Connect A46 Corridor Study – Phase 2 Task 1 Final report November 2020 https://www.midlandsconnect.uk/media/1756/mc-a46-corridor-study-phase-2-final-report-march-2021-with-appendix.pdf</p> |
| Statutory Authority | Highways Act 1980, Section 1(2) |
| Divisional Councillor(s) | Cllr Vernon Smith is the local councillor that covers the M5 junction 9, but all council divisions may be positively influenced in some way by the scale and scope of mass transit. |
| Officer | Name: Dr Dave Land Tel. no: 01452 425828 Email: david.land@gloucestershire.gov.uk |
| Timeline | <p>M5 junction 9/A46 (Ashchurch) transport scheme</p> <p>Cabinet approval: April 2023</p> <p>Commission work for 2023-2024: April 2023</p> <p>Non statutory consultation: Summer/Autumn 2023</p> <p>OBC approved by DfT: Early 2025</p> <p>If confirmed, official scheme handover from GCC to National Highways: Late 2025</p> <p>Mass Rapid Transit</p> |

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| | <p>Cabinet approval: April 2023</p> |
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Stage 0 - Strategic Appraisal: March 2023 (completed prior to Cabinet meeting)

Stage 0.5 - Options Appraisal Report: August 2023

Stage 1 – Strategic Outline Case: Spring 2024

Background

1 The M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport Scheme is a proposal to upgrade the M5 Junction 9 near Tewkesbury and re-route the section of the A46 which currently passes through Ashchurch to the east of the M5 (between M5 Junction 9 and Teddington Hands roundabout). This transport scheme has been identified in the adopted Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan as a highway scheme priority, and that GCC will progress the Pre-SOC, SOC and OBC for M5 J9 and A46 scheme.

2 The A46 is one of the country's most important trade routes – the Trans Midlands Trade Corridor - operating at a national, regional and local level. This corridor runs for 155 miles from Gloucestershire across to Lincolnshire. It is home to 5.5 million people and 2.9 million jobs, with an economic output of £115 billion – almost 10% of the entire English economy¹. By 2041, the economic potential will have increased by 600,000 new residents, 150,000 new jobs and 250,000 new homes. This will have dynamic and extensive impacts upon the whole of Gloucestershire; helping to unlock economic potential throughout the county.

3 Key investments will be necessary to unlock this considerable economic potential, giving the 'lift up' needed for the A46 to take on an even stronger role in national prosperity. Infrastructure investment will provide a strong opportunity to engage in the levelling up process across the nation. Making smart investment choices to deliver a viable, modern, fit for purpose, cross-country national trade route will deliver economic equality for areas outside London and the Southeast, and support the Government's levelling up agenda.

4 The A46 also provides a strategic link between the Southwest and the Midlands, via Gloucestershire, offering an important alternative to the A42/M42 for traffic travelling between the M1 and the M5. However, the section of the A46 through Ashchurch is currently acting as a key constraint on the route, with drivers experiencing significant delays, which is causing congestion, air pollution and substantial negative impacts on the economy - both locally and regionally. Alongside GCC, Midlands Connect - the sub-national transport body – are also calling for necessary improvements to be made in order to unlock economic benefits, lower congestion and remove heavy traffic from affected communities.

5 One aim of the scheme is to improve north-south connectivity for long distance traffic and Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) travelling between Gloucestershire, Wales and South-West to the West Midlands, East Midlands, Lincolnshire and up to Yorkshire and beyond. The A46 could, if it were better developed, provide direct access for business to the A1, M1 and M6 and is hence critical for supporting future economic growth through the corridor, in our region and for the whole county. As recognised by both the Western Gateway and Midlands Connect Sub National Transport Bodies. All of Gloucestershire would benefit from the increased access for businesses to other key regions and cities.

¹ <https://www.midlandsconnect.uk/key-projects/a46-corridor/>

6 A further aim of the scheme is to help solve long standing traffic issues at this key location on the A46 corridor, including improving journey times and reliability for journeys between the M5 Junction 9 and Teddington Hands roundabout.

7 Regarding safety objectives, the scheme will address mainline queueing on the approaches to M5 Junction 9 at peak periods due to congestion, which is currently a significant safety concern due to rear end shunts and connected personal injury concerns.

8. The scheme is being developed with a view to supporting the delivery of future sustainable mixed-use development which will enable at least 10,000 homes to be delivered along with 120 hectares of employment land at Ashchurch by 2041 and beyond. This will require significant investment in infrastructure in the local area. Whilst not currently in an adopted development plan, the emerging Tewkesbury Garden Town scheme is one of Homes England's designated garden towns, which was awarded Garden Town status in 2019. The Garden Town proposal will be considered as part of the emerging Joint Local Plan (JLP) for Tewkesbury, Cheltenham and Gloucester.

9 In November 2021, the DfT Transport Minister approved the scheme for continuation up to SOC stage. This approval included NH's use of additional funding to work in conjunction with GCC to produce a mutually agreed SOC.

10. NH have stated that they wish to take on the Preferred Route Announcement (PRA) stage of the project.

11. GCC is the current scheme sponsor and, through collaborative working with NH, it has been agreed that, subject to an approved OBC, NH will take the scheme on for delivery. A Ministerial PRA will be withheld until after NH's formal acceptance and adoption of the scheme to ensure that NH is fully satisfied with the decision on the preferred route, including all associated works to this point, thus reducing risks to NH and to project delivery. As a result, the scheme will be developed by GCC in accordance with NH's Project Control Framework (PCF²) for PCF Stages 0-2 to align delivery of the project with NH's processes and enable a smooth handover. PCF stage 2 is the production of the OBC.

12. The Department for Transport have confirmed that National Highways are authorised to spend up to £0.5million engaging with GCC to support the OBC for submission. This also means that DfT should refund costs associated with the development of the scheme during OBC. Whilst these costs do not reflect the entire cost of developing the OBC, it should cover the cost of the works associated with final scheme design for OBC (this would be expected to be around 40% to 50% of total expenditure) as this can be considered a capital cost against the scheme.

13. The Stages of the M5 J9 project are planned to be delivered as below, and are subject to change:

² *Project Control Framework is NH's project management delivery methodology. The purpose of following NH procedures is to ensure a smooth transition from GCC to NH.*

Cabinet approval: March 2023

Commission work for 2023-2024: March 2023

Non statutory consultation: Summer/Autumn 2023

OBC approved by DfT: Early 2025

If confirmed, official scheme handover from GCC to NH: Late 2025

Mass Rapid Transit

14. Mass Rapid Transit seeks to support the decarbonisation of the transport network in Gloucestershire by providing a powerful motivator to mode-shift from cars to public transport. 34% of all CO2 emissions are transport related (43% incl. motorways and rail). The Gloucestershire targets for emissions control are to reduce emissions from all sources by 80% by 2030 and to achieve net zero by 2045. Almost 60% of emissions are from car travel. Furthermore, trips over 20km make up around 15% of all trips, but account for 60% of emissions. This is a key metric, as it means moving car drivers to active travel is only one part of the story, and we need to provide a realistic alternative to journeys longer than those by bike – usually considered about 6-8km maximum. The purpose of the Mass Rapid Transit business case process is to explore all of the options that will allow us to support the decarbonisation targets. We believe Mass Rapid Transit is a strong contender, but the business case will allow us to find out.

15. Whatever option of Mass Rapid Transit the council chooses to adopt the council will still need to support decarbonisation across a full suite of interventions. Mass Rapid Transit is not the single solution. As represented in the diagram (figure 1).

16. Mass Rapid Transit is at an early stage of development. Pre-feasibility and feasibility studies have been undertaken, which confirm the viability from a patronage and financial perspective, of a form of rapid transit system.

17. GCC secured Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF) monies to progress the scheme. This is funding up to and including the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) which will include a new element, introduced by DfT in 2022, the strategic appraisal along with the options appraisal report (OAR) and the SOC itself. Whilst we have undertaken stakeholder engagement with District and Local Economic Partnership colleagues, we anticipate a possible need to undertake a broader consultation to support the SOC.

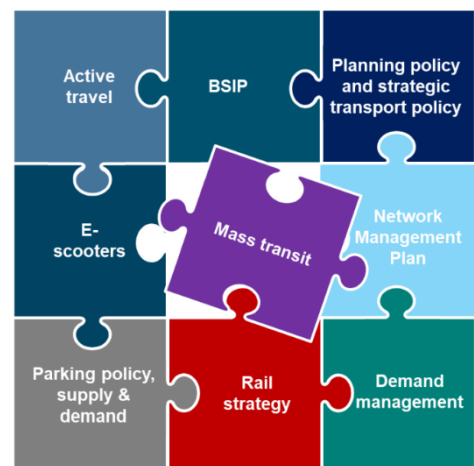


Figure 1: suite of decarbonisation measures

| Project Stage | Milestone | Estimated Date |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Pre-feasibility | Report completed | 2021 |

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|---|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| Feasibility | Report completed | 2022 |
| Stage 0 Strategic Appraisal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story of place • Confirm problems / issues • Agree Strategic Objectives and Critical Success Factors • High-level strategic options • First sift | Report completed | Spring 2023 |
| Stage 0.5 Options Appraisal Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused on PT options– layered approach, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network scope / definition • Mode / technology • Level / type of infrastructure • Identify short list | Report completed | Summer 2023 |
| Stage 1 Strategic Outline Case <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring together Stage 0 / 0.5 in the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) • High-level delivery and financial considerations • Identify 'preferred way forward' | Report completed and submitted to DfT | Spring 2024 |

Options

M5 junction 9/A46 (Ashchurch) transport scheme

18. To not delegate authority to the Executive Director and approve funding. This would result in the loss of considerable investments already made (c. £8 million), consisting of all the work that has already taken place. This is a substantial reputational risk to GCC and to other stakeholders, given the level of investment already undertaken and the strategic importance of the project. It is unlikely another suitable funding source of the magnitude required would become available in the foreseeable future, and so GCC would need to either cancel the work, or try another funding route to acquire the external funding to deliver the scheme.

19. To deliver the business case work in-house. GCC do not have the in-house expertise or the resource level to deliver this work. We would not be able to recruit the substantial numbers of specialist staff required, nor deliver the outcomes needed.

20. To delegate authority to the Executive Director and approve funding to commission the work on the OBC. This will allow the preparation of the OBC to continue, and ultimately for GCC to access the finance from DfT for development funding of a scheme. Should funding be secured and the M5 Junction 9 and A46

(Ashchurch) Transport Scheme contract be in place, GCC would then be in a position to draw down any monies expended against the M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport Scheme funding going forward.

Mass Rapid Transit

21. To delegate authority to the Executive Director to continue with the Mass Rapid Transit Business Case process. This will allow GCC to further develop the optioneering, funding strategy and consultation for mass transit, with the ultimate goal of driving forward decarbonisation.

22. To not delegate authority to Executive Director and to stop work on the Mass Rapid Transit Business Case process. This would stop all development work and may entail a contract negotiation fee.

Risks

M5 junction 9/A46 (Ashchurch) transport scheme

23. Risk that the OBC is not delivered on time. The purpose of the finance drawdown and delegation to the Executive Director is to enable the deadline for the OBC to be met.

24. Risk that the investments already made are not recoverable, because the scheme does not proceed. Without taking the scheme forward for funding in the correct manner, we will not be able to get into development stage with DfT, (post-approved SOC) and therefore will not be able to draw down against the historic costs, and hence replenish funds.

25. Risk that there are not enough resources to deliver the work. By delegating authority to the Executive Director to procure project delivery, this risk can be successfully monitored and managed.

26. Risk of Tewkesbury Garden Town not coming forward in the Joint Local Plan (JLP), and/or the JLP is delayed, so there is not an adopted plan by the time planning permission/Development Consent is required for Junction 9. We continue to work with all of the JSP authorities to support the delivery of the JSP. GCC is also a funding partner of the JLP. The JLP authorities have appointed consultants to deliver the transport options of the JLP. GCC have continued to contribute to guiding and steering this contract.

Mass Rapid Transit

27. There are currently no substantive risks with the MRT process for SOC development, as funding is secured up to and including SOC stage.

28. **There is a limited risk that there is no funding stream immediately available** to apply to following completion of the SOC. However, when funding does become available for mass transit, which is likely, then the council would need to have the business case work completed so we can access the funding.

Financial implications

M5 junction 9/A46 (Ashchurch) transport scheme

29. The services required will be procured through the existing transport scheme framework that exists between GCC and the professional services provider. This is the most appropriate route as it is the most cost effective and most timely, as work can continue with the existing provider under current terms and conditions, as allowable in the framework context. This complies with procurement regulations and the council's Contract Procedure rules. Some subsections of the SOC and OBC process have required contracts with land referencing contractors and legal advisors to be deployed. These have been procured under existing legal framework arrangements, which are compliant with procurement regulations and meet the council's Contract Procedure Rules.

30. A sum of up to £5 million is required for the development of the M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport Scheme OBC in 2023/24. This paper seeks to obtain approval for up to £2m of further funding approval that is required if we are not successful in obtaining any other external funding. £2m will be funded from the existing transport planning business case revenue budget in 23-24. The £3m balance has historic funding approval from Cabinet in June 2022 but has yet to be drawn down. In addition, there may be the following sources, though currently unsecured:

- Contribution from Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities funding, to support infrastructure needs around the Tewkesbury Garden Town 22-23.
- Potential OBC development funding from the DfT, subject to a successful outcome of the previously submitted Strategic Outline Case (the SOC).
- The development work will be determined by the available budget and, although no overspend will be incurred, the available budget will impact the speed of scheme development.

31. Whilst projects of this scale necessarily rely on support from many of the Council's service departments, the scale of the development work has already included back filling positions in the GCC legal department, in order to support the delivery of the substantial legal aspects delivering a successful OBC to the DfT, whilst ensuring continuity of service. This back filling will continue and be funded from the above project funding.

32. The latest forecast of future costs (2023/24) are in the region of £5 million which includes costs for:

- Development work of OBC, including Summer 2023 non-statutory consultation;

- National Highways costs;
- Legal advice costs;
- Land referencing costs;
- Network Rail; and
- Statutory environmental/other bodies: e.g. Natural England, Environment Agency, Active Travel England, etc.

Mass Rapid Transit

33. For MRT, as SOC funding is already secured, there are no financial implications, other than the need for officer involvement in the development of the SOC.

Climate change implications

M5 junction 9/A46 (Ashchurch) transport scheme

34. The adopted LTP 2021-2041 addresses the climate change agenda and adaptation, the digitisation of transport, all transport user needs, sustainable economic growth, and the delivery of a safe, efficient and sustainable transport system.

35. The scheme will re-route traffic away from the existing A46 through Ashchurch on to the new road, enabling delivery of an improved street environment through Ashchurch and supporting shift to sustainable modes. In 2022 the scheme gained an objective to deliver active travel improvements in the area, thus supporting mode shift and decarbonisation. By alleviating the existing A46 issues, the scheme will also support sustainable local growth plans in Gloucestershire, including the emerging Tewkesbury Garden Town.

36. Schemes such as this are a sustainable way of supporting much-needed housing and employment in the county, which means the M5 Junction 9 and A46 transport scheme is a key device in facilitating the means to make these developments feasible.

37. The climate change impacts of the scheme will be explored and considered as part of the development of the OBC, to ensure the impact of the scheme on climate change is properly understood and minimised.

38. The scheme gained approval from the Programme Board meeting in June 2022, to include the objective to “Deliver a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain in accordance with the forthcoming requirements of the Environment Act 2021 (including for any scheme amendments/updates)” as part of the Development Consent Order (DCO) process. We will continue to advance this objective, as it reflects the ongoing importance to the Council of setting clear environmental objectives for the M5 J9 and A46 Improvement Scheme.

Mass Rapid Transit

39. The major purpose of the MRT development is to support mode shift, and to make a substantial impact on delivering decarbonisation across the county. The strategic objectives for MRT are:

Strategic Objective 1 - Driving economic prosperity and clean, green growth. Enhance productivity and stimulate ambitious, sustainable, well-connected housing and jobs growth and regeneration within the Central Gloucestershire City Region and beyond.

Strategic Objective 2 - Protecting and enhancing the environment and addressing climate change. Reduce harmful environmental effects and whole life carbon impacts associated with travel within and to/from the Central Gloucestershire City Region and provide opportunity for environmental betterment and improved health and wellbeing.

Strategic Objective 3 - Supporting vibrant and inclusive local communities. Improve access to life chances and opportunities for all, creating equality and improved quality of life for people throughout the Central Gloucestershire City Region and beyond.

Equality implications

Has an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) been completed? Yes / No

Cabinet Members should read and consider the Equalities Impact Assessment in order to satisfy themselves as decision makers that due regard has been given.

43. Design: Accessible design will consider:

- The movement of people who are who are pregnant or travelling with prams and/or pushchairs;
- Accessing places of worship;
- All pedestrians, but especially those such as female pedestrians and others with protected characteristics who may feel more vulnerable, particularly when dark, through appropriate lighting of footpaths;
- Movement of people with disabilities; and
- Movement of older people.

44. Construction: There is a potential challenge of the impact of construction traffic causing barriers for older people and children to access facilities, services and other destinations, who are the more vulnerable pedestrians, which will be addressed.

45. Contractors responsible for the construction of the scheme should adhere to appropriate codes of conduct and ensure they have the correct mechanisms in place so there is no discrimination by age, disability, sex, race, gender, maternity/paternity, religion/belief, or sexual orientation of any workers.

46. Operation: Potential reduction in congestion levels and fostering positive outcomes for pedestrians - could benefit those living in the local area, including young and old,

people with disabilities, resulting in better accessibility and less barriers to local movement.

47. The EIA will be updated on an as required basis to account for any changes that we become aware of during the development process.

48. A full EIA for mass Transit will be delivered at the appropriate stage of the business case development (most likely at OBC stage).

Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) implications

49. GCC will engage with landowners, stakeholders and the public to gather feedback on the proposed route options in 2023. Views and comments received during the consultation will be considered and summarised in a public consultation report.

50. The information given by survey respondents will be treated as confidential and in accordance with UK data protection legislation. Responses received as part of the consultation will be anonymised, stored and handled in accordance with GCC's policy on General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

51. The information provided will be treated as confidential and in accordance with UK data protection legislation. GCC is the data controller for all information collected from surveys related to the M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport Scheme. The lawful basis for processing this data is for the performance of task carried out in the public interest in line with the Highways Act 1980.

52. For Mass Rapid Transit, following confirmation through the completion of the DPIA checklist we are not currently required to undertake a DPIA. We will undertake a full DPIA prior to any kind of consultation activity.

Social value implications

53. Procuring locally as much as possible, means we can deliver added value; using local businesses and/or staff that are based in the area in order to deliver the M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport Scheme as a whole; ranging from the consultants delivering the OBC to construction firms actually building the scheme.

54. We are currently engaged with our term consultants, Atkins, who are leading the work on our behalf. Social value was a required aspect assessed as part of the base framework contract awarded to Atkins.

Consultation feedback

55. A non-statutory consultation is a major contributing factor to the OBC. The non-statutory consultation is due to launch in Summer 2023.

56. Seldom Heard Groups. The GCC project team have been working to develop strategies for improving engagement with seldom heard groups around infrastructure consultation. Our consultants have developed a set of strategies which will be deployed

in support of the non-statutory consultation. Several different groups have been identified that are not often heard from during consultations, and actions we will undertake to try and engage with these groups. These are outlined below:

| Seldom Heard groups | Engagement activities |
|---|--|
| Commuters travelling through the scheme area Seasonal road users | Online information widely publicised through local businesses and media. Variable Message Signs (VMS) and A-frames |
| Time poor | Online information including recorded content available, including virtual event recordings. Online information is accessible for all screen sizes and resolutions. Postcard drops to local residents and businesses. Updates and engagement via social media. Design of the feedback survey will be concise and easy to use so people can leave feedback in a short time. |
| Those unable to access the internet | Option to request hard copy consultation materials by phone or pick up a hard copy of the brochure and survey at Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Libraries. Ability to respond to consultation by post or over the phone via the GCC customer contact centre - set up a dedicated line who can input the survey if required. Postcard drops to local residents and businesses. Posters displayed in community facilities. |
| Disabled groups | Contact representatives of local disability groups. Option to request hard copy consultation materials by phone. Ability to respond to consultation by post or over the phone via the GCC customer contact centre. Option to request documents in accessible formats. Posters displayed in community facilities. |
| Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups | Contact representatives of local community groups. Option to request hard copy consultation materials by phone. Ability to respond to consultation by post or over the phone via the GCC customer contact centre (details above). Postcard drops to local residents and businesses and poster displayed in community facilities. Updates and engagement via social media. |
| Young people | Online information including recorded content available, including virtual event recordings. Design of the feedback survey will be concise and easy to use so people can leave feedback in a short time. Updates and engagement via social media. |

57. Further to these actions to support seldom heard group engagement, we will provide the option to complete the survey over the phone on behalf of respondents, if

respondents are unable to do this themselves. There will also be the option to get in contact via letter.

58. Consultation materials will be developed for those with learning disabilities, colour blindness, visual impairments or those who do not speak English as a first language.

59. We are working towards all public-facing documents being accessible and inclusive to all; this will be a priority going forward, meaning all readers will have access to the same information despite the method chosen to digest the information. The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 are the most widely adopted standards for achieving digital accessibility and will be used as guidance for ensuring the portal, website, animation, feedback survey and all public facing documents are made accessible. Consultation materials will meet the Level AA requirements.

60. Contact details will be provided if consultees require information in a different format to those provided, or if we are unable to create accessible alternatives, for example detailed engineering design drawings, for which it is currently impossible to create alternatives.

61. These same principles will be applied to any MRT consultation that could be taken forward.

Officer recommendations

62. Officers recommend that authority is delegated to the relevant Executive Director, and the supporting finance changes are implemented as set out in the recommendation section, to facilitate the completion of the M5 J9 / A46 (Ashchurch) SOC and OBC in a timely manner, in order to access the DfT's development funding and to work towards the transfer of the scheme to National Highways.

63. Officers recommend that authority is delegated to the Executive Director for Environment, Economy and Infrastructure to continue with the development of the business case process for MRT. Together with submission to the Department for Transport once complete.

Performance management/follow-up

64. Progress is managed through regular reporting from consultants working on the OBC.

65. Oversight is achieved through regular Cabinet member meetings.

66. The programme is led by a Programme Board which meets every six weeks. It consists of senior representatives from GCC, NH, Homes England, Department for Transport and Tewkesbury Borough Council.

67. An M5 Junction 9/A46 (Ashchurch) Transport Scheme governance process will be developed as part of the OBC.

Mass Rapid Transit

68. Progress for MRT is managed through weekly reporting from consultants working on SOC.

69. MRT oversight is achieved through regular Cabinet member meetings.

70. The MRT team has met with lead Cabinet members several times through the development process.

71. A specific MRT governance process will be developed as part of the OBC.