

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Growth and Infrastructure Update
Meeting/Date: Cabinet – 22nd March 2018
Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Housing and Planning
Report by: Planning Service Manager (Growth)
Wards affected: All

Executive Summary:

This quarterly report provides an update on growth and infrastructure delivery. It highlights progress with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan – specifically with Part 3 - Infrastructure Prioritisation, Funding and Programme Management.

The report also identifies progress on the key strategic transport issues and an outline of the ongoing proactive partnership work to identify infrastructure funding and opportunities to invest CIL income.

Recommendation:

That the Cabinet endorses that officers continue the positive partnership working to identify infrastructure funding and opportunities to invest CIL income in 2018/2019 and opportunities to leverage other funding.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides an update of growth and infrastructure matters and seeks affirmation of progress made.
- 1.2 The main purpose of the report is to:
- Advise of progress with Part 3 of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) - Infrastructure Prioritisation, Funding and Programme Management
 - Highlight progress on the key strategic transport issues
 - Provide an update on partnership working with other bodies to invest in infrastructure and the expectation of agreement of key projects within the Growth & Infrastructure Group in June

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the Cabinet meeting on 19 November 2015 it was resolved that quarterly reports on progress with infrastructure planning were necessary to ensure the delivery of the Local Plan objectives.

3. PARTNERSHIP WORKING TO FUND INFRASTRUCTURE

- 3.1 Members previously agreed (December 2015) to revise the Terms of Reference for the Growth & Infrastructure Group along with the governance structure to approve Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) expenditure. The membership of the group was strengthened to enable more direct input from elected Members of both the District and County councils and clarifying the membership, including Town/Parish representation, statutory infrastructure partners such as the Environment Agency and NHS, and also the Combined Authority.
- 3.2 The Growth and Infrastructure Group has now formally met in this new format, with the inception meeting taking place on 5 February 2018. The group will have a pivotal role to support co-ordination and delivery of strategic growth and infrastructure. A wide range of partners will be involved to identify and support key infrastructure delivery for the district, including investment of CIL income. The Group will also act as a Project Board to support projects that enable delivery of strategic sites and ensure the project schedules within the IDP are updated and adapted to account for emerging infrastructure needs.
- 3.3 Work is now progressing with partners to identify their infrastructure priorities for the coming financial years and an initial Project Pro forma has been circulated for completion and submission by partners. Partners are required to demonstrate how a project has been arrived at, a project plan, estimated costs and a project timeline for delivery. The group will make recommendations on CIL spend to Cabinet via the Overview and Scrutiny process. For a project to be recommended and successfully attract funding, it will need to demonstrate a clear purpose and ideally also how other sources of funding might be leveraged or match funded. Overall the objective is to further enable new growth or homes, employment and infrastructure as identified in the Local Plan. The Council is also represented at officer level at the Cambridgeshire Strategic Infrastructure Group. The terms of reference for this group identify a need to support a comprehensive county-wide infrastructure plan ensuring that joint key infrastructure issues can be worked on together with the support of the Combined Authority, which is now also represented on the group. The full terms of reference attached to the Cabinet report December 2015 can be found here:

<http://applications.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=256&MId=5683&Ver=4>

- 3.4 A 'meaningful proportion' of between 15% and 25% of CIL received is transferred under legislative requirements to the local Parish or Town Council where the development has commenced. A programme of meetings with Town and Parish Councils has commenced to promote alignment of CIL income on future infrastructure development. The legislation requires that a 'meaningful proportion' of the CIL received is passed to the Parish or Town Council - 15% of CIL income received has to be transferred to Town/Parish Councils. Currently HDC transfers sums every six months and in the case of settlements with a Neighbourhood Plan, the proportion is 25%. Decisions of expenditure on CIL receipts are at the discretion of the Town/parish Council but the Council is encouraging agreement on investment to best meet the growth aims of the Parish and wider area. To date, meetings have been held with St Neots, St Ives, Ramsey and Brampton with a meeting scheduled for Huntingdon. A local council, including Parish Councils must use CIL receipts to support development of the local council's area by funding (a) the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or (b) anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area. There is an obligation on Town and Parish Councils to report annually on the spend of monies either by publishing a report on their own website or on the website of the charging authority for an area if the local council does not have their own website. Ideally, the use of CIL should be deployed on common purposes identified through the IDP.
- 3.5 Engagement and joint working has also been progressed with external partners including the County Council, Health, Education and Fire authorities to understand the future infrastructure needs of these bodies.

4. GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND DELIVERY PLAN

- 4.1 Further to the publication of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (parts 1 and 2) as part of the Local Plan 2036 evidence base, work is ongoing on part 3 of this suite of infrastructure documents – the Infrastructure Prioritisation, Funding and Programme Management Plan. The purpose of the Part 3 document is to provide a programme management tool to assist the Council and its partners in delivering the necessary infrastructure to support growth in the District. The report is due for completion in March 2018. It will replace the Infrastructure Business Plan 2013/14 and be available to view on the CIL pages of the Council website, as is the current Infrastructure Business Plan.

5. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS UPDATE

- 5.1 Progress on key projects is outlined below:

A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement

Discharge of Conditions on individual sections and development design for Section 6, Huntingdon Town centre

The A14 Strategic Stakeholder Board has been reviewed and been re-established as two groups, namely the Construction Impact Board which will discuss the issues arising out of the construction programme (road marking, closures etc.) and the Strategic Advisory Board, which will discuss the opportunities and legacy arising out of the A14 project at the strategic level.

Physical works continue to timetable:

- Phase 1 – Section 1 A1 widening between Alconbury and Brampton Hut– from December 2016 to summer 2018
- Phase 1 – Section 2 Brampton Hut to East Coast Main Line (ECML) – from December 2016 to autumn 2019
- Phase 2 – Section 3 ECML to Swavesey – from early 2017 to summer 2019
- Phase 3 – Section 4 Swavesey to Girton – from early 2017 to summer 2019
- Phase 4 – Section 5 Girton to Milton – from Summer 2018to autumn2019

A428: Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Improvement:

Highways England/Jacobs are progressing to the Preferred Route announcement stage, carrying out technical assessments and surveys

The implications of the A1 East of England Strategic Study on the project are being considered. This is being considered by Highways England and an updated position on the preferred route is expected early in the new year. No specific dates have yet been provided.

Proposed timetable is:

- Autumn 2017 - Formal consultation on Preferred scheme
- Summer 2018 - Submission of DCO application
- Winter 2019 - Secretary of State decision
- Spring 2020 - Commencement of Works

Oxford to Cambridge Expressway

Jacobs are now appointed to work with Highways England to take forward the next stage of the Oxford-Cambridge project work (funding for this work was identified in 2016 Autumn Statement – this is for the Stage 1 Corridor and Route Option Identification and Selection only, up to 2019 when route options shortlisted for consultation)

Proposed timetable for whole route (M4 to M11) is:

- Summer 2018 -Decision on Expressway corridor choice
- Autumn 2019 -Identification of route options within corridor choice
- Autumn 2020 -Preferred route announcement Road Investment Strategy (RIS) 2 covering 2020-2025 -commence construction
- Road Investment Strategy (RIS) 3 covering 2025-2030- completion

East Coast Main Line

The East Coast Main Line (ECML) Route Study Report for long term growth and investment was published in December 2017 with a three month consultation period. The aim is to have an open collaborative approach to planning for the future of the network and present choices to investors and funders. The report sets out the need to enable capacity growth and speed improvements throughout the network as well as the implications that High Speed Line 2 may have on the network when completed beyond 2030. Level crossing closures are proposed to increase safety and better use of technology can increase track capacity.

The report includes the Huntingdon to Woodwalton four tracking project as a growth option, within the medium cost category (£20m-£200m). The main work is scheduled from summer 2018 to Autumn 2020 and opening in Winter 2020. Reference is also made to a rail-enabled housing development (namely Alconbury Weald) and the viability of a

new mainline station there to offer a major boost to housing values and shape investment.

Deadline for responses to the consultation is 16.3.18. The Council will submit a response but the timescales for responding to this consultation do not allow for referral to Cabinet. The consultation response will therefore be endorsed by the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning in consultation with the Head of Development prior to submission.

East-West Rail

Network Rail is continuing to work with stakeholders and the ECML Route Study Report (highlighted above) identifies there may be provision for a passenger interchange with the East Coast Main Line (ECML) at Sandy. HDC will need to consider the scope to lobby the route and station provisions to be closer to St Neots in order to support the growth potential and economic success of the District, connectivity to Cambridge and beyond, and to ensure inward investment within the district.

6. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

- 6.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economy and Growth) received the Growth and Infrastructure Planning Update.
- 6.2 A concern was raised that the Council could agree to work with a partner who won't have the resources to identify and then secure the necessary infrastructure. The example given was the Bearscroft development in Godmanchester where the NHS has now confirmed that a medical centre is not required on site, with the Town Council being told that this due to the NHS lacking the resources to adequately staff it.
- 6.3 A Member raised a concern regarding the closure of level crossings. It was explained that Network Rail's plan is to close the level crossings and replace them with bridges which means communities will remain connected. In addition, the Panel was informed that the Council are making representations to Network Rail about this project and will continue to do so.
- 6.4 Reassurance was sought by a Member that the Council is lobbying for the new East-West Rail route and station to be closer to St Neots. The Portfolio Holder assured the Panel that the Council was doing this and would continue to do so.

7. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND / OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

- 7.1 The work on growth and infrastructure relates to the strategic priority of Delivering Sustainable Growth and specifically two associated strategic objectives.
- 7.2 The first objective under the strategic priority is as follows:
"To improve the supply of new and affordable housing, jobs and community facilities to meet future need."

Our work programme includes:

- *"ensuring an adequate supply of housing to meet objectively assessed needs;*
- *planning and delivering the provision of decent market and affordable housing for current and future needs;*

- *ensuring that there are the right community facilities to accommodate the housing growth.*

The relevant key actions are:

- *prepare the Local Plan;*
- *facilitate delivery of new housing on the large strategic sites at:*
 - *St Neots*
 - *Alconbury Weald*

- 7.3 The second related objective under the strategic priority is as follows:
“To remove infrastructure barriers to growth”

Our work programme includes:

- *influencing the development of the Highways and Transport Infrastructure Strategy; and*
- *facilitating the delivery of infrastructure to support housing growth.*

8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no specific additional resource implications.

9 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 9.1 To update Members on progress of work regarding growth and infrastructure delivery across the district. To gain Members endorsement that officers continue the positive partnership working to identify infrastructure funding and opportunities to invest CIL income in 2018/2019.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Cabinet report December 2015 –

<http://applications.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?Clid=256&MId=5683&Ver=4>

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