

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

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| Decision Maker: | Executive Member for Environment and Transport |
| Date: | 13 March 2018 |
| Title: | Basingstoke Transport Update – Strategy and Issues |
| Report From: | Director of Economy, Transport and Environment |

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1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Executive Member for Environment and Transport gives approval to carry out further engagement and wider consultation to develop a draft Transport Strategy for Basingstoke.
- 1.2 That the Executive Member for Environment and Transport gives approval to carry out engagement and consultation on proposed improvement plans for the A30 South West Corridor, including Brighton Hill Roundabout.
- 1.3 That the Executive Member for Environment and Transport approves the ‘in-principle’ list of proposals and transport solutions as detailed in paragraph 3.7 of this report as the basis of options to be further examined as part of the Transport Strategy development process.

2 Executive Summary

- 2.1 The purpose of this paper is to update the Executive Member for Environment and Transport on the ongoing and joined up work taking place on the future of transport in Basingstoke. It seeks agreement to engage and consult on developing a Transport Strategy in the summer and on improvement proposals for the A30 South West Corridor in the spring.
- 2.2 Basingstoke is expected to grow at a rate of 850 houses per annum (as allocated in its current Local Plan 2011-2029). This figure may be increased through national changes to planning targets.
- 2.3 The current Local Plan extends to 2029. The evidence base for the Local Plan included an assessment that showed the transport network as coping but also very full by the end of the plan period. This modelling included the recently built, committed or planned major highway schemes such as Black Dam and the recent improvements to the A33. These investments are significant and total in excess of £50million. The modelling shows that even with this investment, Basingstoke will still need significantly more investment and/or a different transport strategy approach beyond 2029.

- 2.4 It is now very timely to develop a new Transport Strategy. Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (“the Borough Council”) has embarked upon a significant public consultation exercise titled ‘Horizon 2050’ whereby it is seeking to set a vision for the future of the Town and Borough in the long term. It is anticipated that this will set out a few very clear outcomes. It will be these outcomes that the County Council will seek to structure a Transport Strategy around. It is also expected that on the back of this work the Borough Council will seek to review their Local Plan. This presents an opportunity to fully integrate transport and land use planning around a focused vision.
- 2.5 Hampshire County Council is also supporting the Borough Council and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) sponsored programme, looking at future major development options such as the “Garden Town” initiative. Hampshire County Council has been undertaking the transport assessment work needed to understand the future transport impacts, and infrastructure and strategy options. The work is still in progress with initial draft outputs expected in the Spring of 2018. The outputs from this will help inform the transport strategy and future land use planning of the town.
- 2.6 The major scheme team in Hampshire County Council is also developing a new major scheme focussing on the A30 South West Corridor. This is a key movement corridor to connect the South West Basingstoke growth area with the town centre. The funding for this is indicatively secured but still requires a full business case assessment. For this to happen, design works need to progress, and this means the need to engage and consult on these proposals.
- 2.7 Further work is also currently underway looking at Basingstoke town centre, and is focused around improving access to and through the Town Centre, the station, and Enterprise Zone.

3 Contextual information

- 3.1 **The Transport Strategy:** The Local Plan transport evidence base and other forecast traffic modelling has revealed that post 2029, the current highway system will not be able to provide the capacity required for long term growth. A ‘step change’ in transport provision will be required to complement the infrastructure already in place and optimise use of the highway network. Consequently the need for a new Transport Strategy has arisen to provide some strategic guidance for the future.
- 3.2 Alongside the need for the Transport Strategy, the Borough Council has embarked on the early stages of engagement relating to seeking ideas from its communities about priorities relating to where and how they want to live in the future. The intention is to use the feedback from engagement to set a clear vision and framework for making good decisions about what is important and right for the future of the Borough over the next 50 years - ‘Horizon 2050’. As well as transport, this includes things such as work opportunities and lifestyle, well-being, the environment, housing and education.
- 3.3 There has been political agreement between Hampshire County Council as Highway Authority and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council as planning authority to closely align the two pieces of work given the interdependencies between the future development of the town and the transport infrastructure needed to support the vision of Basingstoke. So far the Borough Council has

carried out various levels of stakeholder engagement, and the next task is for Hampshire County Council to consider the initial views relating to transport within the scope of the Transport Strategy, and from thereon align further engagement and consultation tasks

- 3.4 The Transport Strategy will need to cover the main urban area (the largest urban area in North Hampshire) and radial routes (A33, A339, A340), and identify key major infrastructure improvements. It will only cover individual schemes of a strategic nature. Rural transport issues are not individual to Basingstoke and will be the subject of future strategy work on a wider basis.
- 3.5 There are a number of purposes to the Transport Strategy and these are outlined below:
- Review and update the approach to transport in light of the local plan evidence base and other recent ongoing strategies and plans (Horizon 2050, Smart Basingstoke, Town Centre Strategy, Basing View Masterplan etc.);
 - An opportunity to consolidate relevant study work;
 - Plan for the future – a coherent and integrated approach to guide future investment decisions and land use allocations and increase the likelihood of being able to attract funding for specific projects. Gain the support of key stakeholders and delivery bodies; and
 - Meet the 2029 Local Plan requirements.
- 3.6 No decisions have been made about the future yet or the main components of the Transport Strategy. Officers are seeking to engage with the community and stakeholders to help shape that future. In order to do this meaningfully the development phase of the strategy will mean a range of ideas and concepts will need to be tested. During this phase such ideas will not have the status of proposals, and will not form the basis of any plan. To become part of the plan they will need to be tested formally, consulted on and then adopted as part of the formal Transport Strategy, which will be the subject of a future Executive Member decision.
- 3.7 The following is an illustrative and ‘in principle’ list of proposals that gives an indication of the type and scale of the solutions the County Council is seeking to identify and test:
- Work with Highways England to identify any new or refined junction arrangements for the M3 junctions 7 and 8 in conjunction with how they are accessed from Hampshire’s roads;
 - New roads, including by-pass options to the West, North and East;
 - A33, A340 and A339 corridor improvements looking at the relative costs and benefits of rail and road enhancements, including the potential for dual carriageways;
 - New access arrangement for Basing View, allowing changes to be made to Eastrop Roundabout, which remains one of the most congested junctions in Basingstoke;
 - A step change in the public transport offer, including rapid transit proposals, major city centre interchange enhancements, and possible new rail stations;

- New approaches to parking, considering park and ride facilities, new car parks, or other;
- Changing the way the one way system works in the town centre;
- Improvements to the pedestrian environment and central area, making it a higher quality and more attractive place to do business but also easier to move through on foot or by cycle and bus; and
- Options regarding the most suitable places to locate new employment or housing to support the transport strategy, working in close cooperation with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.

- 3.8 The list of schemes for testing has so far been informed through an initial informal workshop with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council and Hampshire County Council Members in June 2017. Members were asked to identify strategic level transport problems and issues for Basingstoke. This resulted in some priority issues emerging. In October 2017, Officers also met with Basingstoke MPs, where they also discussed strategic priorities.
- 3.9 The Transport Strategy will be a fairly short and highly strategic document that links closely to the Horizon 2050 Vision. It will have two main appendices, which will be a short term action plan covering the next three years of planning and scheme activity, and a long term indicative action plan i.e. the things that will need to be studied or delivered as growth takes place. It will have multiple supporting documents, including a robust evidence base, the core of which will be a strategic transport model.
- 3.10 In referring to the priorities that have emerged so far in the initial engagement, the role and function of the radial corridors has been raised (A33, A339, A340). Liaison with cross border transport colleagues has shown some interest in looking at multimodal corridor studies to identify future major schemes in the context of inter-urban movements between the town, Newbury, Reading and Aldermaston. There are a number of shared interests in these routes and inter-relationships between planned or future strategic development sites that they serve.
- 3.11 **Rapid Transit:** Some work has already been carried out assessing the concept of a rapid transit scheme. The concept is to provide a fast, high quality public transport network, which will move people to and from the town centre and across town on an efficient and prioritised network. An expression of interest for development funding was prepared by Hampshire County Council on behalf of the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership (EM3 LEP) in July 2017, and was submitted to the Department for Transport's Large Local Major scheme fund. Feedback received was that further initial development work would be needed, but that it was a close contender for funding. As part of the transport strategy, work the County Council proposes to undertake that further development work.
- 3.12 **The Regional Context:** There are various developments at the regional level which will frame or set a context for the transport strategy and funding opportunities. These can be summarised as:
- the M25 South West Quadrant study led by Highways England. This will look at alternatives to widening the M25, and may consider strategic corridor improvements as alternative routes for travel between the M3 and

M4. As such the A34, A33 and Reading to Woking corridor are likely to be investigated;

- Transport for the South East (TfSE) has recently commissioned a connectivity study to look at key transport corridors that may need to be improved in the future to support economic growth and housing. In the context of Basingstoke it can be expected that the A33, A34 and A339 corridors will be considered as part of this work; and
- The Government is currently consulting on proposals for a Major Road Network. This would potentially see local authority roads (the most important and highest flow A roads) being able to access funding from a National Roads Fund, where a good economic case can be made.

- 3.13 **A30 South West Corridor:** Feasibility work has already been commissioned on the A30 South West Corridor to determine the most appropriate improvements that should be made to Brighton Hill, Kempshott and Hatch Warren roundabouts. A total funding package of £18.6 million has been provisionally agreed by the EM3 LEP, with £13million from the Local Growth Fund and a £5.6million local contribution. It is proposed that a public consultation is undertaken on the preferred options for major schemes in the late spring, once the feasibility work is complete.
- 3.14 **Town Centre Study:** A Town Centre Transport Study is required now because of the significant change likely to take place in the town centre as a result of planned development. It is currently being carried out and will consider opportunities for new accesses into the Basing View Enterprise Zone, improving the bus/rail interchange, changing the one-way system and linkages to the leisure park.
- 3.15 **Supporting the planning authority:** The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is funding work to assess infrastructure requirements of growth as a result of the “Garden Town” designation announced last year. A draft report is expected by Spring 2018.
- 3.16 The data and forecast traffic modelling undertaken will be used to help to inform the future infrastructure requirements, and will be integrated into the Transport Strategy.
- 3.17 There may be a requirement to undergo further detailed assessment of certain pieces of transport infrastructure relating to the Garden Town, again in partnership with EM3 LEP and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, if instructed by MHCLG. This will help the Borough Council guide future growth options when the time comes to formally review its current Local Plan 2029.

4 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1 The report seeks authority to carry out consultation for the proposals under consideration, and the recommendations have been assessed for impacts upon people with protected characteristics. The proposals will have no or low impact upon groups with protected characteristics. The proposals are seeking authority to pursue further work to identify how to provide a more accessible and integrated town.

5 Finance

- 5.1 The current level of study activity is significant, but is covered from existing resources, Government grant funding, EM3 LEP advanced revenue funding, and by Borough Council resources. Approvals to do this work are already in place.
- 5.2 Each of the work streams as detailed in Section 3 could result in the need for further study work. At this moment in time the cost of this work is an unknown quantity. To date the funding needs have largely been covered by external funding (DCLG and EM3 LEP) and the demands on the feasibility fund for major schemes have been relatively small. In the future the County Council will seek to continue with this approach. However, it can be expected that the County Council will still need to match fund. At this stage, approval is being sought in principle to carry on with the current work programme with an awareness that it will probably generate a demand for further expenditure, which remains unquantified at this time

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Strategic Plan**

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| Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity: | YES |
| People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives: | no |
| People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment: | no |
| People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities: | no |

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equality Duty

1.1 The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

1.2 Equalities Impact Assessment:

The recommendations of this report will not have a disproportionate impact upon people with protected characteristics. The proposals may ultimately lead to schemes and proposals that will require separate assessment, and this will be conducted at the appropriate time.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1. There is no impact on crime and disorder.

3. Climate Change:

a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

The proposals from this report have no direct impact on the County Council's carbon footprint or energy consumption.

b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

Should further work, as a result of this report, identify a more sustainable travel system for Basingstoke then the impacts could have a positive impact on climate change, particularly levels of carbon emissions.