

Cabinet Member Report to County Council

8 December 2016

Cabinet Member:	James Finch Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport
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1. Lake Lothing Project Update

Work is progressing on developing a programme that meets the 2019/ 2020 construction start. A full time project manager, Jon Barnard, has been recruited and is now in place. To date, focus has been given to key stakeholder engagement including ABP and Network rail to make them aware of the proposals and timescales and to get their early input.

A large amount of work over the next period will be carried out to develop the approach to consultation, plan events for councillors, prepare consultee lists and materials required for the statutory consultation on the scheme, planned for 2017. Technical work is progressing. The procurement route for specialist input and contractor has been identified and is now being progressed. Ground investigation work is likely to commence early in the new year. This work is critical to inform the design of the bridge, the construction methodology and the environmental assessment for the application for development consent and future examination by the Planning Inspectorate.

The first quarterly newsletter has been published and distributed and are readily available on our new project website www.suffolk.gov.uk/lakelothing3rdcrossing. The lead county councillor on the project is Councillor Guy McGregor.

For further information please contact: Dave Watson; Email: dave.watson@suffolk.gov.uk, Telephone: 01473 264822

2. The Upper Orwell Crossings Project Update

The consultation report detailing the engagement and outcomes of the informal consultation in July and August this year has now been published. The consultation included 19 public exhibitions at three locations in addition to online presentation material with graphic visualisations of the proposals. 8,489 people visited the project website and 1,807 people attended the public consultation event. 743

survey responses were received. There was strong support for the objectives of the project.

The Royal Institute of British Architects is leading an international competition which invites world renowned architects to join the design team. Five internationally renowned architectural teams have been shortlisted

The teams have visited Ipswich and each will now prepare its case for appointment. The winning team will be announced in January 2017.

Several investigations have been undertaken including environmental and topographic surveys. Ground investigations, including work in the river, will take place in 2017. These investigations will inform the design of the crossings.

For further information please contact: Suzanne Buck; Email: Suzanne.buck@suffolk.gov.uk, Telephone: 01473 260443

3. Beccles Relief Road

I am delighted to report that, following a local public inquiry held in August 2016, the Secretary of State for Transport has confirmed the compulsory purchase and side roads orders necessary to proceed with the Beccles southern relief road.

Work is now being taken forward to complete the detailed design of the scheme and to procure its construction. It is expected that construction of the new road will begin early in 2017. The project is estimated to cost £7 million with just under £5 million provided from the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership's growth deal with Government and £2 million from the County Council's capital resources.

For further information please contact: Dave Watson Email: Dave.watson@suffolk.gov.uk, Telephone: 01473 264822

4. Rail Issues

I am pleased to report the new East Anglia Rail Franchise commenced on 16 October 2016 with Abellio winning the competition to run our passenger services. The new Greater Anglia franchise comes with significant investment including renewing the entire fleet of trains. By 2021, 32,000 more seats and 1,144 additional services will be provided across the East Anglia network, including an hourly Ipswich to Peterborough passenger rail service, along with introducing new ticket options from 2017 (smart ticketing by 2019); and providing free Wi-Fi on all trains and in stations. The start of the franchise marks the culmination of much lobbying work by the council and its partners to get such a good outcome for Suffolk. We must now make sure that pressure is kept up to make sure that the commitments are delivered and that the enabling infrastructure is delivered by Network Rail in good time.

Closely following the franchise launch came the annual Suffolk Rail Conference on 24 October 2016. I chaired the conference along with Councillor Guy McGregor. Once again we had high calibre speakers with Jo Churchill MP providing the

keynote speech. The conference also heard from the Department for Transport, Network Rail and Greater Anglia. Mark Pendlington, Chairman of the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership also provided the business voice stressing the importance of rail to the region's success. The key messages coming from the day were that there was still lots still to do, but with collaboration and understanding of each other's perspectives, aspirations and issues we can get an even better outcome for Suffolk during the franchise period.

*For further information please contact: Kerry Allen; Email: kerry.allen@suffolk.gov.uk
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5. Freight Network Study Consultation Document

Suffolk County Council has responded to Network Rail's consultation on the Freight Network Study. The response welcomes the need to invest in providing additional capacity on the Felixstowe to Nuneaton rail route. This includes, additional track on the Felixstowe Branch Line, Haughley Junction, doubling the line between Chippenham Junction (outskirts of Newmarket), improving headways at Bury St Edmunds, signalling and full electrification. However, the council has expressed concern about the timeframes for delivery and the need for early delivery to support the passenger rail improvements promised by the new 9 year Greater Anglia Rail Franchise.

The draft Freight Network Study, sets out expected freight growth and rail infrastructure investment. The consultation closed on the 9 November 2016. A copy of the consultation document is available from the Network Rail website: <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/long-term-planning-process/Freight-Network-Study/>

For further information please contact: Kerry Allen; Email: Kerry.Allen@suffolk.gov.uk, Telephone: 01473 264429.

6. Department of Transport Visit

On 14 October 2016 the Council hosted a meeting with the Department for Transport Permanent Secretary Phillip Rutnam and his team, with New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and key regional business and transport stakeholders. The purpose of the meeting was to give an understanding of the strategic priorities in Suffolk and to explore cross cutting agendas such as Jobs, Skills and Apprenticeships and Technology /Innovation in Transport. It was an opportunity for us to explain the economic importance of the Upper Orwell Crossings in Ipswich, Third River Crossing in Lowestoft and highlight our research in partnership with Essex County Council on Total Transport that is investigating the value of technology to help increase the visibility and use of rural transport including Connecting Communities. The team from the Department of Transport also went on a guided tour of the improvements made to the traffic network following the recently completed investment in the Travel Ipswich major scheme.

For further information please contact: Aidan Dunn; Email: Aidan.Dunn@[suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Aidan.dunn@suffolk.gov.uk), Telephone: 01473 264394

7. Connecting Communities

We are now four months into the 'Connecting Communities' transport service and our five lead operators have managed the changes extremely well. Work has commenced on further improvements to the customer experience through the development of better links to buses and trains. These will be in line with demand and in partnership with bus operators. Help with publicising the existence of the community transport services is still needed so please encourage your parishes, community groups, schools, health centres and local residents to get the name of their local operator by looking at SuffolkOnBoard <http://communities.suffolkonboard.com/>.

Connecting Communities services operate with both paid and volunteer drivers. More volunteers will support more journeys so there is now a new recruitment webpage also available on SuffolkOnBoard.

<http://communities.suffolkonboard.com/volunteer/>. This has already generated enquiries and we hope these will grow with distribution and sharing via email so please do pass it on.

For further information please contact: Aidan Dunn; Email: Aidan.dunn@suffolk.gov.uk Telephone: 01473 264394.

8. BikeLife Suffolk Project

Suffolk County Council received a second place award at the national sustainable travel awards in Sheffield on the 3 November 2016 for the Bikelife Suffolk project.

The BikeLife Suffolk project was designed to develop a sustainable cycling culture at 8 primary schools in Bury St Edmunds. Aimed at encouraging pupils, teachers and parents to cycle to school more often. These schools are part of the third tranche of Schools Organisational Review, which will see pupil number increase substantially in the immediate future. There is limited opportunity or desire to be able to accommodate school run traffic, and so an innovative solution was required.

The Project was delivered by Outspoken Training and targeted at Key Stage 2 pupils and their families. A variety of cycling activities was delivered, designed to enthuse both children and adults about cycling in an enjoyable and creative way. Starting and finishing with a whole school activity day, including Try Out bikes & pedal powered discos reaching over 850 people. Bikeability level 1 and 2 was delivered alongside to complement the project. This was new for all the schools taking part.

The most visible part of the project was the enormous variety of cycling activities offered for the KS2 pupils, teachers and parents. The activities were split into two

groups, core and non-core, giving schools the flexibility to choose the activities most suited to them. This included 148 hours of bike maintenance, checking over 930 bikes. Learn to Ride sessions, creating new cyclists, enabled 119 children to learn to ride their bike independently for the first time.

The overall target was to increase those cycling to school at least once per week to 15% of KS2 children. The percentage of children cycling to school at least once a week by the end of the project increased from a baseline average of 7% to 21%.



For further information please contact: Sharon Payne Email: Sharon.Payne@suffolk.gov.uk, Telephone: 01473 265090.

9. Sudbury Bus Station

It is proposed to move the bus station from its current location in Hamilton Road to the Girling Street car park, on land owned by Babergh District Council. This would provide a modern facility that has capacity for current and future public transport needs and would open up the current Hamilton Road site for regeneration by the land owner, Babergh District Council. A consultation prior to the submission of a planning application for the proposed new bus station was carried out during October 2016. This included two public exhibitions in the town, attended by 200 people, online information and a survey. The exhibitions and website provided details of the proposed bus station layout and toilet building design. The survey responses will now be considered prior to submission of a planning application later in November 2016.

For further information please contact: Dave Watson; Email: dave.watson@suffolk.gov.uk, Telephone: 01473 2642822.

10. Bury St Edmunds

Bury Local Links

The Bury Local Links project has been promoting sustainable travel to Bury St Edmunds businesses and organisations since the launch of the scheme in February this year. In the last quarter, Bury Local Links has engaged with over 900 people at various local businesses including: Greene King, West Suffolk Hospital, West Suffolk College, Menta and the Job Centre. The message the project delivers includes just how active travel brings a number of benefits to businesses, employees, communities and the town in general.

There have been a variety of events delivered by the project, from Active Travel Events at various workplaces to pre-walk walks, led cycle rides and cycle safety checks. The scheme has had much local support particularly from local cycling shops, Bury Chamber of Commerce and from the Bury St Edmunds Business Improvement District.

Local Links aims to encourage the more active commute in order to counteract the impact of future population growth, and also to support local residences to make use of the infrastructure measures already implements and those planned. The project team will continue to support businesses to encourage their staff to travel more actively and will also assist with business travel planning, and personalised travel planning for staff members.

For further information please contact: Andrea Cahillane; Email: Andrea.Cahillane@suffolk.gov.uk, Telephone: 01473 264213.

Bury St Edmunds Eastern Relief Road

I am delighted to report that excellent progress is being made in delivery of the relief road. The western section of the road has been completed and opened to traffic on Friday 11 November 2016 to allow access to the new Sybil Andrews Academy. Work to improve the slip roads to the A14 Junction 45 commenced in September 2016. Sow Lane is now closed until after Christmas to allow construction of new highway links to the Relief Road from the A14. The scheme is on target for contract completion in September 2017.

For further information please contact: Clive Wilkinson; Email: clive.wilkinson@suffolk.gov.uk, Telephone: 01473 264213.

11. Highways Transformation Programme

The Highways Transformation Programme continues to make good progress against the overall objective of meeting the Council's aspiration to 'Maintain roads and develop Suffolk's infrastructure' in the most cost-effective, value for money

way. The Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Plan was the subject of public consultation over the summer and the Highway Maintenance Operational Plan (HMOP) has been subject to public consultation over the last month. Both documents will be finalised to ensure that the timescales are met for the Council to provide a robust self-assessment questionnaire submission to the Department for Transport to achieve Band 3 status (the highest available) for future Incentive Funding. This funding allocation ensures that the Council can continue to receive the maximum amount of capital allocation from central government for highways maintenance.

The implementation of the draft HMOP as already produced significant results. For example, the percentage of carriageway potholes that are filled on a temporary basis only has fallen from 21% in April 2016 to just 3% in September 2016. In tandem with this increase in permanent, 'right first-time' repairs, there has been a far more consistent approach in dealing with all highway defects. This builds on the positive impact of completing nearly 2.5 million square metres of surface dressing in Suffolk between April and August 2016. Work is well advanced on delivering a potential 3 million square metres of surface dressing over the same period in 2017. In furtherance of the desire for highway maintenance work to be more transparent, future works programmes are increasingly appearing on the Suffolk Highways webpages. The grass cutting and weed spraying schedules for 2017 are already on the Council's website.

Since 1 November 2016, the team dealing with Local Highway Budget schemes has been allocated additional resource to allow the faster, more effective delivery of locally generated projects. The team has already made a significant impact in terms of bringing pending schemes to fruition through a more pragmatic approach, driving out contractual bureaucracy and delay although the team is constrained by the legal processes associated with the progression of traffic regulation orders – an issue that requires further consideration. In addition, a new integrated drainage team has been fully resourced since 1 November 2016 and is dealing with the locations where internal flooding of property is caused.

The focus over the coming months is to progress the full integration of County Council and Kier resources into a more unified Suffolk Highways. Whilst the target date originally set for the completion of the Highways Transformation Programme was 31 March 2017, considerable effort is now being deployed to bring as much of that forward in time as is possible.

For further information please contact: Mark Stevens; Email: mark.stevens@suffolk.gov.uk, Telephone: 01473 264994.

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