

7 July 2021		ITEM: 10 Decision: 110566
Cabinet		
Lower Thames Crossing Task Force Update Report		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Councillor Fraser Massey, Chair of the LTC Task Force		
Accountable Assistant Director: Dr Colin Black, Interim Assistant Director Regeneration and Place Delivery		
Accountable Director: Sean Clark, Corporate Director Resources and Place Delivery		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

In line with the Terms of Reference, the LTC Task Force is required to report to Cabinet on its work.

1. Recommendation(s):

1.1 That Cabinet notes the work of the Task Force.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 The Lower Thames Crossing Task Force has met on a monthly basis since September 2017. Cabinet received a previous update on 11 November 2020.

2.2 The Council remains opposed in principle to any new crossing in Thurrock and the task force has consistently sought to hold Highways England to account. A new team at Highways England has meant that in recent months there has been a greater level of information sharing and improved collaboration between the parties

2.3 Highways England conducted a statutory consultation on the scheme which ended on 20 December 2018 and two subsequent consultations in 2020. Details of the Task Force's discussions following the consultations to date are detailed below.

2.4 Highways England submitted its Development Consent Order (DCO) application in October and the Council submitted an adequacy of consultation (AoC) response at the request of the Planning Inspectorate and submitted a joint AoC with Gravesham Borough Council and the London Borough of Havering, which were instrumental in the subsequent

actions of the Planning Inspectorate and in Highways England's decision. As a consequence of these issues raised with the application and consultation, Highways England took the decision to withdraw its application in November 2020.

- 2.5 Since that time, Highways England has been amending its proposals, adding further mitigation, preparing new documentation, liaising openly with stakeholders (including Thurrock Council) in a far-more transparent and accommodating manner, involving many technical meetings.

3. Task Force meetings

- 3.1 All Task Force meetings are audio recorded and available on the Thurrock Council website. Since the impacts of Covid-19 the meetings have been held as either hybrid or virtual meetings on Microsoft Teams.
- 3.2 Full minutes of the meetings are also available on the website. Below is a summary of the discussions at each meeting:

February

- 3.3 Highways England officers gave a presentation and answered questions on landscape design, green infrastructure and walkers', cyclists' and horse-riders' (WCH) proposals.
- 3.4 A Summary Paper of the Energy White Paper was presented and questions were answered. Finally, a verbal summary was given of progress with the Mitigation/Legacy Benefits (the Hatch Report) and questions were answered and a review of the work programme undertaken.

March

- 3.5 Three Technical Papers were presented – an Environmental Impacts Assessment Update, Health Impacts Update and CO2 Emissions and many technical questions were answered. Finally, a verbal summary was given of progress with the Mitigation/Legacy Benefits (the Hatch Report) and questions were answered

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 In line with the Terms of Reference the LTC Task Force will update Cabinet.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 Lower Thames Crossing Task Force.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 None

7. Implications

- 7.1 **Financial**

Implications verified by: **Laura Last**
Senior Management Accountant

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

7.2 **Legal**

Implications verified by: **Tim Hallam**
Deputy Head of Legal & Deputy Monitoring Officer

This is an update report from the Lower Thames Crossing Task Force and there are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**
Community Engagement and Project Monitoring Officer

There are no diversity implications arising from this report.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, and Impact on Looked After Children)

None

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- None

9. **Appendices to the report**

- None

Report Author:

Dr Colin Black

Interim Assistant Director Regeneration and Place Delivery