

## **COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING: 18 SEPTEMBER 2015**

**Statement from: Councillor R G Davies, Executive Councillor for  
Highways, Transport, IT**

### **LINCOLN EASTERN BYPASS**

The Public Inquiry into the Orders for the Scheme has now concluded and a decision is awaited from the Secretary of State. It is not possible to give a date for this decision as there are no statutory timescales for a response. However, the Secretary of State has been made fully aware of the need for an early decision on the Orders.

The scheme is being progressed as a single carriageway under the current funding arrangements.

### **LINCOLN EAST WEST LINK**

The contractor has re-programmed works after reviewing current constraints and is planning to complete the Highway and Heritage building works earlier than the original proposed completion date. However, this depends on satisfactory progress with utility diversions.

Following the demolition of the property on the corner of High Street and Tentercroft Street, contractors have worked to reduce site levels to accommodate the new left turn lane from Tentercroft Street. In the course of this work, significant archaeological finds were made which are now being removed or preserved in order to enable engineering and replacement building construction to continue.

Additional funding for the East West link has been secured from the government Growth Deal, and this will enable the installation of utility services within the road thereby permitting new development on plots of land fronting the highway.

The scheme is having minimal impact on traffic movement in the city. Relations with the public is excellent with virtually no issues or concerns.

### **HIGH STREET FOOTBRIDGE**

Network Rail has submitted a revised planning application for the full demolition (as opposed to partial demolition) of 179 High Street. This has resulted in a minor delay and the expected completion date for the footbridge is now March 2016.

## **SKEGNESS COUNTRYSIDE BUSINESS PARK**

There has been some delay to the project whilst the utility and drainage requirements of the developer of the first 12 acre plot of land on the park have been ascertained. This information has now been received allowing design work to be recommenced.

Construction works are now expected to commence in spring 2016, and will be managed so as to avoid significant impact on tourist traffic using the A52.

## **HOLBEACH PEPPERMINT JUNCTION**

Growth Deal funding has been secured to implement a residential and commercial development project at the junction of A151/A17 at Holbeach which will include significant highway improvements. Activities to prepare planning applications have commenced.

Lincolnshire County Council will be consulting with the public on proposals to construct new roundabouts on the A17 and A151 - this included a Public Exhibition in Holbeach on 17 September. The consultation will also include a further aspiration to construct a section of dual carriageway on the A17 between the proposed new roundabout and the Boston Road roundabout. Whilst no funding stream has been secured as yet for this dual carriageway, the roundabouts are designed to cater for this addition at a later date.

## **GRANTHAM - SOUTHERN QUADRANT LINK ROAD (SQLR)**

The S.73 change to planning application has been submitted to SKDC, and they have validated and started the 16 week consultation period. The determination is expected by November 2015.

Last month Larkfleet Homes appealed to the High Court to overrule a previous decision and quash the planning permission. The appeal was based on the fact the developer felt SKDC did not take into account the environmental impact of a proposal for a nearby housing development. The challenge was rejected by three Appeal Court Judges.

## **GRANTHAM - KING31 INCLUDING A1 CONNECTION**

Tenders for Phase 1 of the King31 have been received, a preferred bidder secured, and consultation with local businesses has been carried out. Subject to completion of Heads of Terms legal agreement, a start on site is imminent.

## **SPALDING WESTERN RELIEF ROAD**

In addition to the formal public consultation in November, work has started on draft Memorandum of Understanding to facilitate the delivery of Phase 1 (Holland Park).

## **WINTER MAINTENANCE**

The County Council will enter the winter of 2015/16 with 14,000 tonnes of salt within our eight highway depots. NGS Ltd have confirmed that the county strategic salt supply of 20,000 tonnes will be stored on Immingham Docks this winter.

## **LINCOLNSHIRE ROAD SAFETY PARTNERSHIP**

Provisional figures indicate that there have been 153 killed or serious injury (KSI) casualties to the end of June 2015, compared to 202 for the corresponding period last year. Regrettably, the number of fatal casualties now stands at 25 - eight higher than for the corresponding period last year.

The three year annual average trend for KSI casualties and all user groups remains down, and on track to better the target set for 2015. Figures from the Department for Transport show there has been a 5% increase nationally in the number of people killed or seriously injured between 2013 and 2014. Lincolnshire saw a 3.9% decrease over that period. Overall casualties also increased by 6% nationally, but in Lincolnshire they reduced by 2.2% and were the lowest recorded in the county since 1985 - all very positive news.

Works to install an average speed camera system on the A15 at Metheringham is nearing completion. In addition, LCC Accident Investigation and Prevention engineers (based within LRSP) have also identified that a high number of KSI collisions occurring on the A16 Crowland bypass are likely to be prevented by the installation of an average camera system. The LRSP Strategic Board consider such a camera system is the most appropriate intervention to reduce the number of casualties that are occurring on that road. I will keep you informed of progress on this matter.

At the last meeting of the Strategic Board, members approved the publication of a new 10 year strategy for the Road Safety Partnership. The strategy will shortly be available to view on the website.

## **ENGAGEMENT WITH COUNCILLORS AND PUBLIC**

Since becoming a Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport, I have been keen to improve the way we inform elected members and members of the public of what we do.

I recognise that a lot happens on our roads and not all of it is us! The utility companies have their own works. I have asked officers to consider how we might achieve better information dissemination. Councillors will probably have noticed that

they are now getting copies of correspondence between the MPs and the highways department. We shall also be providing more information on works.

I do not want to create an industry, and I do want to minimise cost. Nevertheless, we need to do this better and I will update you as new systems are put in place.

## **INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY**

IMT Services being delivered by Serco are improving, following a difficult start during the first quarter of 2015.

### **User Experience**

There has been significant effort, and a partnership approach developed with Serco, which is improving services and bringing them to the contracted levels. User surveys during July showed that 80% of users rated the service received as either 'good' (17%) or 'excellent' (67%) in relation to resolving IT issues.

### **Project Delivery**

Challenges remain in the day to day small project arena, and many projects which should take a few days to action are taking considerably more time as Serco establish resources and processes. Some projects have been delayed due to commercial clarifications, where the IMT team has taken a firm stance in ensuring that a precedent is set that will ensure future savings, rather than compromise to meet a short term need. This has had a negative impact on some Service Areas within the Council and has caused operational difficulties in isolated incidents. Serco believe that the backlog will be cleared by the end of October, with a waiting time of no more than six weeks from commissioning to closing project requests of this type.

### **Transformation Technology**

Remedial activities remain underway for Transformation Projects which were due for delivery at the commencement of the Contract. Focus on resolving Agresso issues has led to delays. However, there is now a plan and indicative timescales for this work to be completed.

Unfortunately, the delay in establishing the foundation technologies has meant that a number of initiatives to help create efficiencies within service areas, via new technology and working practices, have been delayed.

The current portfolio of activity includes:

- the review of identity management to improve data security
- changes to telephony systems to reduce cost and provide enhanced 'remote' functionality to staff
- improved systems to share information and systems with third parties to enable partnership working
- rationalisation and efficiencies in the provision and usage of spatial data
- an improved approach to the management/deployment of corporate information rationalisation of associated systems.

### **Data Centre Relocation**

Finalisations of plans for the transfer of systems to the resilient cloud-based data centres are nearing completion. This probably represents the most complex and challenging project undertaken for some time, and provides an opportunity to rationalise systems and review our network to ensure it is designed to meet the needs of the organisation in the future. This will transform the organisations ability to cater for disaster recovery scenarios and also enable greater opportunities to procure services from 'the cloud' where it is advantageous to do so.

### **Staff Self Service**

IMT are now looking to extend the benefits of user self-service by an extension of the functionality available via the 'MyPortal' functionality. This will enable a greater range of requests to be generated electronically, access to a 'self help' knowledge base and the ability to access information relating to their queries and personal information quickly without needing to access different systems.

### **Citizen Self-Service**

Improvements to the working practices and technology available to the Council's Customer Service Centre continue and the number of new self-service channels available is increasing with new functionality being delivered.

### **Website**

IMT has commissioned work to deliver a new web presence for the Council and District partners that will integrate citizen self-service and information portal functionality. A number of initiatives for the Customer Service Centre will be incorporated into its design to include a web chat service, co-browsing and improved 'my location' information. Improvements in citizen identity management and federated search will allow visitors to be signposted to the correct information, even if this is not a service provided by the Council, significantly improving user experience.

### **Agresso**

The poor implementation of Agresso has caused the Council, schools, staff and suppliers many difficulties. Serco are continuing to work through identifying the cause of the problems and resolving these with the support of Unit 4. Serco have assured the Council that the majority of issues should be resolved by the end of September.

### **Broadband**

The Lincolnshire Broadband Programme is progressing to plan and delivering faster broadband to over 112,000 premises to date. The total Intervention Area for the project sits at 156,667 premises which equates to roughly half of the total premises within Lincolnshire.

We are currently working within Phases 6 and 7 of the 8 phases in total and remain on course to deliver the contracted levels of Superfast coverage (89.1%) by 31 March 2016. Before the project commenced, it was anticipated that the total Superfast broadband coverage in the Intervention Area would hit 76.1% and when added to existing commercial Superfast coverage provided by both BT and Virgin Media, we would arrive at 90% Superfast coverage overall. At this point in time,

Superfast coverage in the Intervention Area sits at 83.9%, so a significant improvement over the projected figure.

In addition, the project is currently underspent against budget and the team are looking at how any potential underspend at project end, can be most effectively used to further improve on county-wide coverage.

Close working relations between BT, Highways, Districts and Planners are prominent in facilitating the timely delivery of the programme.

We have now signed a contract with BT for the delivery of a second contract that will look to push overall Superfast coverage towards 95% across the county. BT is quoting an anticipated end result of circa 93%, but it is anticipated that with the emerging technologies now coming into operation, we will improve upon this figure. The programme team are working through the proposed coverage areas and are due to meet with BT shortly to finalise the coverage areas.