

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 13 SEPTEMBER 2019

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

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT

Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership (LRSP)

As of 25 July the expansion of the Community Speed Watch scheme now means that 285 communities are involved (including 43 that have applied and/or are awaiting signs). In addition, the number of trained locally-based volunteers has increased to 447, undertaking high visibility operations to raise awareness of speeding and educate drivers. So far, 4,087 warning letters have been sent to drivers observed exceeding the speed limit by community volunteers and an additional 16 drivers have been visited by a Neighbourhood Policing Team officer having been detected on three or more occasions.

A18 / A1084 / A631 (Middle Rasen to Bishop Bridge) The Department for Transport (DfT) Safer Roads Fund works starting this summer with 50mph speed restrictions initially, with other various engineering methods to follow.

A new package of resources and activity sheets has been created for primary school pupils and will launch in September 2019. The aim is to achieve a road safety input to every school in Lincolnshire.

Major Projects/Advanced Design Block

Lincoln Eastern Bypass (LEB)

This is our largest highway scheme with a budget of £124m, which includes a DfT grant of £49.95m.

Following the liquidation of Carillion, Galliford Try were awarded the construction works package. The main works on site are currently focussed on continuing the bulk earthworks excavation and removing the material toward Greetwell Road and filling the adjacent quarry. This has been enabled by the newly completed Lincoln to Spalding Rail line under bridge, the completed Lincoln to Market Rasen rail line over bridge and the completed temporary bridge over the River Witham.

Heighington Road continues to be closed and shall remain so until the end of 2019 to allow a 16m deep excavation for the LEB and then constructing the 33m long overbridge to maintain the Heighington Road route. The bridge beams have been delivered and installed on site.

The roundabout on Lincoln Road is being constructed in July/August 2019 and preparation works are taking place to construct Sleaford Road roundabout and complete Greetwell Road roundabout before the end of 2019.

Hawthorn Road footbridge is being constructed next to Hawthorn Road and the Lincoln Road underpass and culvert has commenced installation.

The River Witham bridge's foundations, abutments and piers are being constructed with the steelwork being fabricated off site ready for installation later this year.

Grantham Southern Relief Road

This scheme is a 3.5km road with a five span viaduct carrying the road over the East Coast Mainline railway and has a budget of circa £100m and consists of three phases. The works will be funded from Single Local Growth Fund (SLGF) grant from the LEP, Homes England grant and developer contributions with LCC forward funding this.

Phase 1 from the B1174 running towards the A1 is already complete.

Phase 2 consists of tunnelling underneath the A1 while keeping the running lanes live to create a new grade separated junction with the A1 south west of Grantham. Mobilisation commenced towards the end of May, which included vegetation clearance, some site clearance and compound erection. It also allowed Galliford Try to commence more detailed discussions with Highway England regarding road space booking on the A1, utility diversion co-ordination and commencement of Galliford Try's supply chain preparations.

Phase 3 will be the final phase of the project and is the largest and most complex to deliver. It consists of a five span viaduct carrying the road over the East Coast mainline railway and the river Witham. The viaduct will be in excess of 10m above the river Witham. The phase is programmed to commence in early 2020 and will take approximately three years to complete.

We have now qualified for the next stage of a bid to HCA for a forward funding Housing Infrastructure Grant.

Spalding Western Relief Road (SWRR)

Section 1 (Southern Connection) – LCC and the developer have reached an 'in principle' financial agreement for funding Section 1. This agreement is in the process of being legally drawn up. Detailed design is planned to start late 2019.

Sections 2, 3 and 4 – These sections of the SWRR are having options developed as part of the SWRR delivery strategy.

Section 5 (Northern Connection) – In February 2018 South Holland District Council, in collaboration with LCC, were successful in securing £12m from the HCA for delivering this section of the SWRR. Detailed design has commenced and subject to a successful planning application, construction may begin spring 2020. Work is ongoing with securing land, establishing whether highway legal orders are required, acquiring Network Rail permission to construct a bridge over the rail line and developing a procurement strategy.

Planning applications for both Section's 1 and 5 (South and North) were recommended to be granted permission by LCC's Planning Committee in July 2019 but the applications are subject to a holding direction by Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government which requires sign off before permission can be granted

North Hykeham Relief Road

A number of community engagement events were held in June 2018 for updating key stakeholders on progress and ensuring compliance with the DfT funding bid process. A paper was submitted to Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee and full Executive Committee, where all the recommendations were approved, which included a bid basis of requesting 70% funding from the DfT and basing the road as a dual carriageway standard. This road will be a key link in the Lincolnshire Coastal Highway from the A1 through to Skegness as well as completing the circulatory around Lincoln.

The outline business case for the project was completed and the bid document was submitted to Midlands Connect in February 2019. This bid has been prioritised by Midlands Connect and it has been confirmed that it has scored highly and was submitted to the DfT at the end of July 2019. There is an expectation that the result of the funding bid will be known by the end of the 2019.

A46 Dunholme/Welton Roundabout Improvement

The A46 Dunholme/Welton roundabout improvement has an estimated cost £5.6m and consists of constructing a roundabout and improving visibility at an existing 'T' junction. We were successful against the National Productivity Investment Fund tranche 2 bid for £2m. Planning approval was granted in February 2018 and work has been progressing on detailed design and land acquisition in parallel with the legal orders process. The legal orders were published in May 2019 and the project has received two statutory and three non-statutory objections. The DfT has confirmed the need for a public inquiry which will take place towards the end of 2019. If the public inquiry is successful then it is expected that works will commence in late 2020.

A46 Lincoln Northern Roundabout Improvements

The A46/A15 Nettleham and A46/A158 Riseholme Road roundabout projects on Lincoln's Northern Bypass attracted SLGF to a value of £2.5m. The project entails enlarging the size of both roundabouts and increasing the number of lanes both entering and exiting each leg of both roundabouts. This will reduce congestion at these pinch points and improve journey time reliability. Detailed design is progressing with a focus on acquiring the required land through agreement. It's expected that work will commence in 2020.

Holdingham Roundabout and Rugby Club Junction, Sleaford

North Kesteven District Council and LCC have secured £1.5m of funding for the Greater Lincolnshire LEP towards the development of Holdingham roundabout and

the A17/A153 junction (known as the Rugby Club Junction). In addition, a £2.5m S106 contribution has been agreed for investing into these projects. Holdingham roundabout currently suffers congestion that is predicted to become worse with significant levels of future development in the town.

An options study was completed and partial signalisation was agreed as the most economical option when balancing the required improvements and cost. Detailed design work has commenced with a planned construction in 2020.

The improvements at the Rugby Club junction are also expected to commence in 2020 with a co-ordinated approach to both the design and construction to limit the disruption to the highway network.

Lincoln Transport Strategy

Work has commenced on the development of a new Lincoln Transport Strategy to support the economic and spatial development of the Lincoln urban area. The vision of the strategy is nearing completion and a project sifting exercise of potential capital schemes has commenced. It is likely that the strategy will have a greater focus on future mobility and sustainable transport modes than previous strategies, which reflects the need of Lincoln and the general opinions from the engagement process. The vision and initial project sifting will be presented to Scrutiny in October 2019, with the intention that further engagement/public exhibition will follow in November. If there are no significant issues or changes required then the strategy will be complete by the end of 2019.

Highways 2020

The Highways 2020 project continues on schedule. This is a strategic commissioning exercise to replace the existing three Highways Alliance Contracts which will have reached their full term at the end of March 2020.

Completed bids have been submitted from interested parties and the evaluation process for the initial phase is nearing completion. The quality and price evaluations have been carried out separately with approximately 30 staff engaged in the process. Consensus scoring sessions have been completed and the write up of these meetings is now complete.

The final award decision is due to be taken at the Executive on 1 October 2019 to enable an adequate mobilisation period for a new contract start on 1 April 2020.

IT

Governance

The Information Management Technology (IMT) service has now been moved under the Executive Director - Commercial, James Drury. Initial work to consider the current staffing structure and capabilities of the retained and contracted service is being undertaken and this is being done in the context of our present and future technical challenges and requirements.

The IMT Board has continued to operate and is delivering good oversight of the service priorities and the performance of both IMT and Serco operations. The portfolio of projects is reported, and new proposals reviewed. The Board also ensures a strategic business view is applied to IMT's work plan to balance priorities and the allocation of resources and is supporting the drive towards IMT achieving a better grip on IMT activity across the Council.

Support Services

Serco support desk continues to be busy with a recent increase in demand due to the number of projects being delivered. This volume of activity is expected to remain high in the short to medium term as further changes and improvements are delivered.

Serco and LCC now have a mature Service Improvement process which has delivered a number of initiatives and has a pipeline of planned improvements. IMT and Serco's working relationship has developed and matured and is now highly collaborative and constructive.

Projects

As expected during 2019, the IMT Service continues to operate a demanding workload with a number of key strategic projects in their build and trial phases at the same time. We have grouped a lot of this activity together into a 'Fixing the Basics' programme, which will make significant progress regarding increased system stability and improved performance by the end of this year. Work will continue into Quarter 1 2020 and some highlights are below:

- The migration of 32TB of documents to a new "Cloud Based" Document Management System "IMP" has been achieved, with minimal disruption to the business.
- The Registrars service has gone live with Card payments, people will no longer have to visit cash machines to pay for legal registrations.
- Windows 10 has now been deployed across the Council's social care work force and the program continues to deploy to the remaining staff with completion due by the New Year.
- The first phase of refresh of the Lincoln Infrastructure is complete and the work to migrate several terabytes of email back from the London Data Centres is underway which will alleviate significant technical issues which have affected Members and staff email. (It also allows the onward migration to Office 365 Email to commence).
- Internet capacity at the network edge has been increased and the work on the last remaining bottlenecks is now being designed.
- The new website project remains on target with go live expected early Dec with a significant level of content.

Other large projects in build:

- The upgrade of the Lincoln Campus network including Wifi
- Final Phase “retained” non-network infrastructure
- The corporate wide deployment of Microsoft Office 365
- The software upgrade of the corporate telephone systems

Information Management

The goal for 2019/20 remains unchanged - to return the service to an assured status through the mitigation of what now remains as our highest remaining risk. A return to an assured status requires the removal of legacy servers with an unsupported operating system running old but required applications.

As the portfolio of projects has addressed other higher risks, resources and energy are now being diverted to this program to accelerate the migration of the required applications to new server operating systems.

However, this work will take many months and is fraught with significant business and technical challenges.

Lincolnshire Broadband Programme

The Lincolnshire Broadband Programme has to date upgraded 170,017 premises. Under the current Contract 2 there are still 5,500 premises still to be upgraded by 31 March 2020. Performance indicators strongly suggest that we will hit this target and we expect all of these remaining premises to be supplied by Fibre to The Premises.

Current levels of customer take up remain very positive and well above projected. At this point, take up is sitting at 63% of all premises enabled under this programme. In financial terms, this will realise clawback from BT of circa £11.6M, although it should be mentioned that we have previously received £4.65M in order to increase the size of Contract 2. We will continue to try to drive take up higher because the greater the take up, the greater the levels of clawback coming back to the programme and the more we can increase coverage.

Contract 3 is on-going in terms of preparing the invitation to tender and it is hoped that this invitation to tender will be released in September 2019. We are putting a further £11m funding into this contract with an aspiration to significantly increase coverage well beyond 97%. At this stage, we are not aware of any further funding being released by Government to increase this amount.

However, there are a number of Government 'voucher' schemes currently on-going and we have been corresponding with and meeting parish councils/communities to discuss how they might best benefit from these schemes. Whilst the schemes sit outside the parameters of the Lincolnshire Broadband Programme, we are nevertheless doing all that we can to assist and advise parishes and communities with regard to these schemes.