

## **COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 11 DECEMBER 2020**

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

### **HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT**

#### **Passenger Transport**

##### **Public Transport Services**

Operators were reporting encouraging increases in passenger number during September but announcements of increasing Covid-19 infection rates and the subsequent national lockdown have seen passenger numbers plummet again.

Government continue to support local bus operations through a dedicated Covid-19 Bus Service Support Grant (CBSSG), with payments being issued directly to operators for commercial services and through the local authority for tendered services.

##### **Department For Transport (DfT) Supported Bus Funding**

Our statement of intent has been reviewed by the DfT and we have received the full one off grant award of £834,731. The intent is to use the funding to bolster service levels on a number of routes. The first, route 301/2 between Stamford, The Deepings and Spalding, was launched in October but the remaining spend is now likely to be in 2021/22 due to the current depressed demand for bus use.

##### **Electronic Ticket Machines**

The lease scheme is now live and being rolled out to the first tranche of operators. Added benefits also include contactless payments now being accepted on most CallConnect services.

QR Codes providing links to the latest timetable information has been a useful addition at on-street bus stops where timetables are changing frequently due to Covid-19.

A targeted Facebook campaign for the Poacher Line (Nottingham-Skegness) resulted in 14 new station adopters at Boston station and 3 at Bottesford. Also, project proposals for improvements at Sleaford and Thorpe Culvert Stations have been submitted to the train operator EMR for consideration.

##### **Projects**

Work as part of the Access Lincoln project will see upgrading of a South Hykeham bridleway for better pedestrian/cycle access completed by the end of the year. Work on a cycleway connectivity scheme for Saxilby should commence next year.

LCC received £105k from the Tranche 1 Emergency Active Travel Fund (EATF) bid to the DfT. The pop up cycling/walking route projects include improved carriageway delineation for cycling and cycle parking stands.

LCC has received £799,900 (95% of the indicative award) for EATF Tranche 2. Although the DfT have said focus was shifting towards permanent measures no caveats have been put on LCC's original bid bar a request for further consultation and engagement on projects/schemes. LCC intends to use high quality 'temporary' material such as planters that can as easily be removed as remain in-situ.

The outline of a County Cycling Strategy was shared at the October Highways and Transport Scrutiny meeting. Locality based Cycling & Walking Network Plans (aligned to the Transport Strategy Areas) that will sit below this strategy are also being progressed and are at various stages of development. Reporting of bus stop and shelter issues via Fix My Streets went live on 17 November 2020.

Replacement software to replace the outdated SEATS and Contracts & Tendering packages is just about to enter the User Acceptance Testing stage, with a planned go-live date in January 2021.

A Corporate review of passenger transport services is being initiated with consultancy support.

### **Client Services**

The impact of the Covid-19 virus created significant additional time and resource pressures during the summer peak. This was in part due to late guidance from government and a significant number of late applications. Government steer is still for scholars to be transported on dedicated school services in preference to public bus services. The group continue to work closely with the Children's Services Commissioning Team to facilitate this and where possible to increase the opportunities for scholars to social distance on transport with the help of a DfT Dedicated Bus Services Grant. 7 tender batches are currently being evaluated for services commencing in the New Year.

A new online Max Respect incident reporting procedure has been launched through JADU.

### **Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership (LRSP)**

Fatal Figures per year 1<sup>st</sup> January - 30<sup>th</sup> October:

<b>Year</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Fatalities</b>	44	43	39	39	50

Following the suspension of all National Driver Offender Retraining Scheme classroom courses due to Covid-19 (March 20th) as an interim measure Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership launched online courses. To date Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership have delivered online road safety education courses to over 12,000 road users that committed road traffic violations. Classroom courses are unlikely to return before spring 2021.

All School Crossing Patrol sites that were operational prior to the March lockdown have resumed duty; operating under Covid safe practices.

Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership has successfully (and safely) delivered two Bike Safe courses and will re-commence delivery in the New Year following a usual break over the winter period.

Plans have been completed and communication with schools is imminent regarding bookings for 2fast2soon (adapted for Covid-19 safe delivery).

Adapted educational deliveries have commenced with schools, adhering with Covid-19 safe requirements. Online content has been finalised and will soon be communicated with schools.

Good progress is being made with Lincolnshire's Department for Transport Safer Road Fund. A right turn lane has just been completed on the A18 at the Barton Street (Pond House) junction, and resurfacing works are underway on the A631, on the stretch between Market Rasen and North Willingham.

Community Speed Watch activity has resumed following its suspension due to Covid-19.

The A52 Haltoft End average system is now operational.

## **Major Projects/Advanced Design Block**

### **Lincoln Eastern Bypass**

The works are nearing completion with the road expected to be open by the end of this year. Final completion of landscaping and other ancillary works will progress in to January and February 2021. The final works in advance of road opening consist of:

- An extensive programme of final surfacing, including all the roundabouts
- Completion of drainage outfall connections
- Completion of the River Witham Bridge
- Completion of the Market Rasen Bridge Wingwalls
- Removal of the temporary bridge across the River Witham
- Final surfacing on all footways/cycleways
- Signage installation
- Carriageway markings





## **Grantham Southern Relief Road**

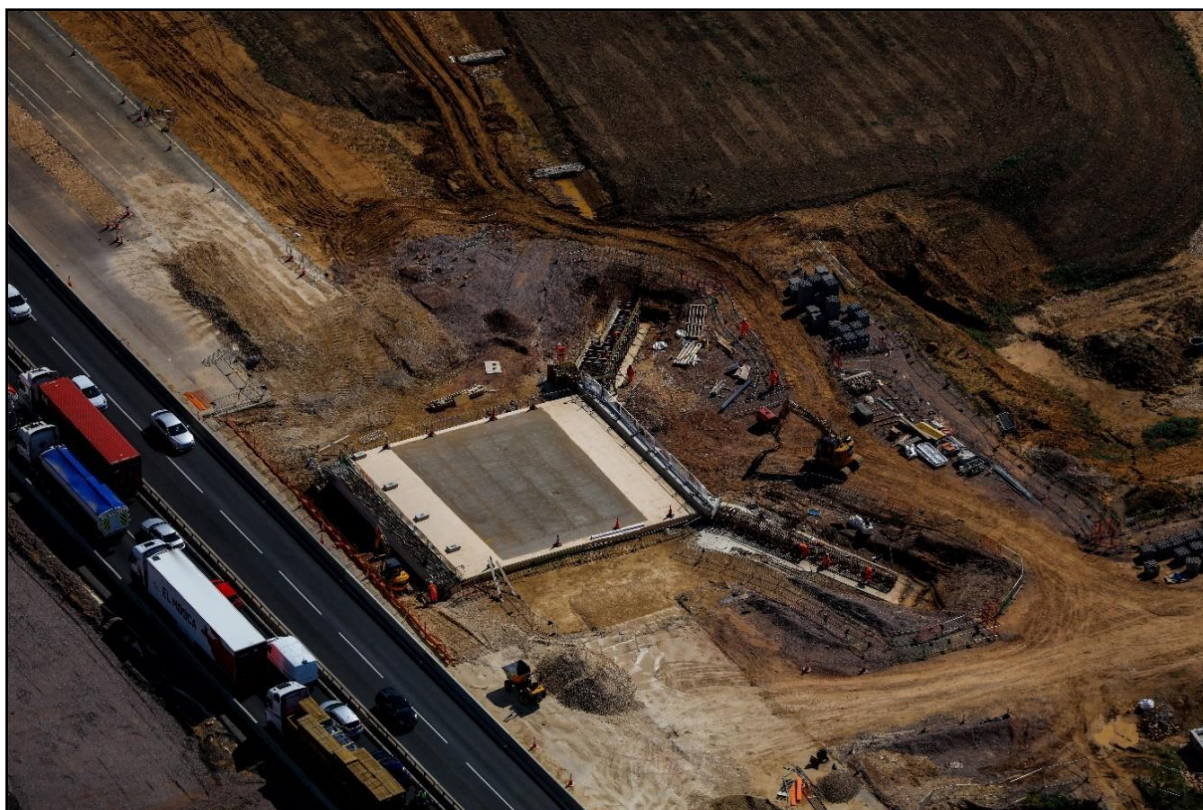
Phase 1 from the B1174 running towards the A1 is already complete.

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. The main works commenced in September 2019 being constructed by Galliford Try. The project is now past the half way stage with the A1 traffic now running on the new western half of the bridge while works have commenced in excavating and then installing piles on the eastern side. In addition, earthworks and drainage connections continue to progress on the eastern and western slip lane and roundabouts.

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. Land has been secured and the planning permission has been enacted. Early works have commenced, which includes vegetation clearance, ecological works, archaeological works, fencing, compound establishment, utility diversions and a haul road construction. Work is ongoing with the contractor and designers to further develop the Value Engineering options to either decrease the price or mitigate further risk. The final target cost is expected December 2020.







### **North Hykeham Relief Road**

We were extremely pleased to receive notification last week of Programme Entry having been awarded for the scheme by DfT. This secures a grant of £110m from DfT towards the scheme costs estimated at £155m when the outline business case was submitted. However, based on past experience with managing projects like the Lincoln Eastern Bypass and the unexpected issues that can arise, it's possible that the cost estimate of the road will go up before we break ground. Work will now be undertaken to develop the final business case and ensure that the scheme still represents value for money and is deliverable within the budget envelope available. This award recognises the good track record we have in delivering major projects and the confidence that DfT and treasury have in LCC.

### **Spalding Western Relief Road**

Section 5 (Northern Connection) – In February 2018 South Holland District Council in collaboration with LCC were successful in securing £12m from the Homes and Communities Agency for delivering this section of the Relief Road. Since then a further £8.13m has been sourced from the Homes and Communities Agency. Enabling works have commenced on site, which includes archaeology investigations, some vegetation clearance, utility diversion preparation and property demolition. Detailed design for Section 5A is complete, including agreement of Departures from Standards and Stage 2 Road Safety Audit.

A Value Engineering exercise is continuing with a view to this being completed in December 2020 in advance of the detailed designs of Section 5B being completed in early 2021. This includes a re-design of the bridge and embankment to reduce costs following input from the contractor.

Land acquisition is nearing completion as is securing a signed bridge agreement with Network Rail. Works planned to start in early 2021 following these agreements being in place.

The demolition of two properties (167/169 Spalding Road) commenced on 16 September for a period of 3 to 4 weeks





Allen Archaeology were appointed to undertake archaeological works in advance of the main works, this commenced on 16 July 2020 with a 16 week programme.



#### **A46 Dunholme/Welton Roundabout Improvement**

The A46 Dunholme/Welton roundabout improvement consists of constructing a roundabout and improving visibility at an existing 'T' junction. LCC was successful against the NPIF Tranche 2 bid for £2m.

The project started on site on 20 July with progress to date being excellent. The following work is taking place between 1 October and early December:

- Finishing the remaining construction to the North of the field to tie into the Lincoln Road closure works
- Anglian Water diversion will be underway
- British Telecom diversion will be underway
- Finish the installation of street lighting ducting, chambers and sockets
- Finish topsoiling
- More Kerbing
- Combined Kerb Drainage units to the roundabout
- Numerous manholes and Gullies to be constructed







## **A46 Lincoln Northern Roundabout Improvements**

The A46/A158 Riseholme Road Roundabout project on Lincoln's Northern Bypass attracted Single Local Growth Fund to a value of £2.4m. The project is complete and working well. The work entailed enlarging the size of the roundabout and increasing the number of lanes both entering and exiting each leg of the roundabouts. This will reduce congestion at this pinch point and improve journey time reliability.

Works completed since the last update included:

- Anglian Water completed their works and the testing all passed.
- The pond in the south west corner continues to be excavated.
- The surfacing of the roundabout itself is complete.
- Hardstanding for maintenance purposes (off Riseholme Road) is yet to be built.
- Some filter drain works are yet to be finished.
- Final surfacing and white lining.



### **Rugby Club Junction, Sleaford**

The will ease congestion at the Sleaford Rugby Club junction, increase road capacity and improve traffic flow in all directions. The scheme will implement traffic lights at this junction to improve turning movements and reduce congestion on the slip lane. A right turn ban will be implemented from the A153 to the A17 to improve the traffic light phasing. The offset against this an additional lane will be constructed under the bypass to facilitate the additional traffic that will turn around at the roundabout and access the A17 from the south.

These works were completed in October and is operating well with reduced congestion.







### **Holdingham Roundabout, Sleaford**

This scheme will ease congestion at Holdingham roundabout, increase capacity and improve traffic flow in all directions. The project entails construction additional lanes at each approach, widening the circulatory on the roundabout and installing traffic lights to control the flow.

This project was originally to follow on from the Rugby Club, but this will put the earthworks into the autumn and winter months which present too great a risk of delays and financial costs. The decision has been made to postpone the start of work until the middle of February 2021.

Formal Target Cost received September 2020. Programme is showing a 12-month duration. LCC are currently reviewing this as it's felt this is too long and an alternative construction methodology could be explored.

### **Corringham Road Junction, Gainsborough**

The Corringham Road/Thorndike Way junction improvement scheme will increase safety and improve traffic flow via the addition of traffic signals at all of the junction's approaches. The project also includes some localised widening of the carriageway and the future proofing of a signalised access into what is currently a farming access but will become a housing development site.

Works commenced in September 2020 with British Telecom utility diversions being the first activity. Main construction works commenced w/c 21 September with focus being on carriageway widening activities. Traffic management has been implemented, including contra-flow and left/right turn bans at Corringham Road.









### **Roman Bank, Skegness**

The Skegness Roman Bank Improvement scheme will see the full reconstruction of a 550-metre section of carriageway and footway between the Burgh Road/Castleton Boulevard junction to just past Elmhurst Avenue. The works include new road lining, half a mile of new drainage facilities, refurbishing the pedestrian crossing near the junction of Roman Bank and Sea View Road and rebuilding the footways on both sides of the carriageway.

Work started on site as planned on Monday 7 September. Road is closed and work is being done as per programme. The first section is well underway with the carriageway excavated and kerbs are being installed. Drainage has also progressed well with this section of the underlying ground being stronger than feared.



### **Lincolnshire Coastal Highway**

Following the announcement of a Coastal Highway Budget allocation a programme of works are being developed over a number of years. Approximately £6.5m has been allocated to date, towards various improvements along and around the Lincolnshire Coastal Highway. This includes carriageway reconstruction, carriageway resurfacing, guard rail replacement, white lining and new/improved pedestrian facilities.

### **Highways 2020 Implementation**

#### **Mobilisation Update**

All contracts have now been completely mobilised and are fully operational.

Depot improvements at the 5 key strategic sites are complete. There have been significant improvements on site including bringing the welfare facilities up to a reasonable standard including adding drying rooms and improving the meeting spaces to include visual management resources which allow detailed staff briefings each morning.

Facilities to allow much improved co-location between LCC and contractor staff are in place as the service begins to operate within the Council's smarter working initiative.

### **Next steps**

- The service is working through a roadmap of future improvements and is implementing them in partnership with the new providers. Social value initiatives, member engagement applications, introduction of innovative technology and recycling initiatives are being progressed in line with normal service provision.
- The new performance regime is now in place and the service as a whole is working hard to make sure the new contracts deliver the improvement in performance set out in these new contracts. There are some challenges and a much detailed process review is underway to ensure that operation of the service is as stream-lined as possible. Improvement plans are in place for all elements of the service to ensure maximum value is achieved for the people of Lincolnshire.
- New innovative technology is being implemented such as a trial of a cutting edge 3d camera which, when coupled with the new mobile devices used by highways officers, allows very accurate location and measurement of a pothole. This will further improve efficiency and programming with more faults repaired and improved use of materials.
- Operations are all continuing despite the current Covid working restrictions, with all parties working hard to minimise the impact whilst maintaining Covid secure environments.
- As the winter season begins, the service has successfully carried out the first few gritting runs, testing the preparations and identifying where further improvements are required.

## **IT**

### **Lincolnshire Broadband Programme**

The Lincolnshire Broadband Programme has now upgraded 172,363 premises under Contracts 1 & 2. Both contracts are now fully completed.

Contract 3 with Quickline Communications was signed in late September and this contract will utilise £3.085M to provide ultrafast broadband to at least 8K premises. Ultrafast broadband is defined as download speeds in excess of 100Mb/s. This deployment will complete by the end of 2022 in the north and east of the county and in rural areas only. Discussions are still on-going with BDUK (Building Digital UK) regarding starting a second element of Contract 3 in the south of the county.

Additionally, further talks are on-going with BDUK regarding the possibility of utilising an enhanced fixed wireless technology in Contract 3 that is based upon a 5G technology.

We are working with BDUK on their 'Outside-In' programme where they will look to utilise £5Bn of government funding to provide faster broadband to the rural premises that are currently deemed not to be commercially viable for investment by existing providers. The structure of this project is still being defined and it is anticipated that the first deployments will commence in Autumn 2021 and run to 2025. We do not believe the use of Fibre To The Premises (FTTP) alone will provide the solution. It is hoped that as a part of our involvement with this project, we can have some influence in decisions around deployment methodology.

We are talking to an organisation that has been tasked with expanding the coverage capabilities of a number of mobile operators in areas of the county. They wish to utilise street lighting to progress this matter and we are awaiting details of where they wish to deploy etc. In theory, this will be welcome, subject to compliance with LCC policy.

Dialogue continues with potential private investors in full fibre connectivity across the county and discussions are moving positively. We hope to have more news towards the end of this calendar year. At this point, we are still subject to non-disclosure agreements.

### **IMT Services**

Due to a number of technical issues, in combination with working from home, both Serco and internal IMT services have seen increased work of a reactive nature in the last quarter. However, they have been successful in minimising the business impacts. Despite the current position, we have in excess of 4,000 staff connecting from home and other remote locations to maintain service.

A number of issue root causes and remediation methods have now been developed to enable key projects to continue in the coming weeks once these configuration changes have been completed on all our user notebooks and PCs.

In addition, some internal team resource has been released to work within the Corporate Transformation Programme and the service design has been reviewed to ensure we have a resource plan to be an effective delivery partner as well as a stakeholder in that work. Despite these pressures the following work has also been progressed in the last quarter.

### **Schools Management Service**

The service supported the Schools Music Service to transition to a new management platform and integrate it with the corporate online payments systems to allow parents to pay for services online.

### **Gainsborough Old Hall**

The service supported the Heritage Team to ensure the smooth transition of the Hall to English Heritage ensuring domain names and any technical equipment were either transferred or removed as required.



### **LCC Intranet**

The internal IMT team have now created the first Intranet areas for HR, Corporate Intranet and Transformation. Stakeholders have reported favourably on the initial look, feel and capabilities as their requirements are being delivered. This work has confirmed that Microsoft Sharepoint is suitable for our needs, leveraging our existing licencing. The first phase will concentrate on being a functional replacement for our current intranet, George, albeit with a more advanced search capability using the latest search services available. Content is currently being uploaded by the business teams.

### **Remote working technology**

The service, and most especially Serco, have undertaken considerable work and have continued with extensive testing of an improved configuration to remediate persistent connectivity issues affecting a significant minority of staff connections and affecting our ability to progress the Office 365 and related device management changes whilst staff are based off network. A significant trial group is now working well and Serco are planning how to finish this change with minimum disruption to the rest of our users.

### **Server Hardening**

A Serco developed proposal to harden our older servers to remain compliant with the security regime is now underway, reducing the cost and time pressure to upgrade these services. Server hardening improves security to reduce vulnerabilities and potential for successful malware/cyber attacks.

### **Power resilience**

The service worked with Property Service colleagues and multiple partners to support electrical power resilience testing across various sites for business continuity purposes (County Offices Campus and Blue Light Campus/County Emergency Centre).

### **Schools Home to Schools Transport software solutions**

The service has been supporting LCC Transport Services and DDS Solutions to develop and improve the reliability and efficiency of the schools transport software solution.

### **Service Desk**

The Lincoln IT Service Desk operated by Serco continues to take an elevated level of calls and Microland continue in their Covid-19 role to assist the Lincoln Service Desk to free up agents so they can tackle the backlog and assure the service to LCC. We are optimistic that the increased demand and resultant extended average fix times will improve once root cause changes are successfully deployed. Planning is underway to manage the anticipated increase in demand during the Office 365 programme roll-out period.

### **SAP Pensions Data**

A difficult and challenging business and technical problem is nearing resolution. During the Business World On migration, data relating to pensions was left on the legacy platform SAP which was at risk of imminent failure and was expensive to

keep running. SAP was not owned by LCC and contained other organisations' data which prevented privileged access to the platform.

This data was critical to the operation of the Pensions service. LCC was obliged to ensure its availability and was subject to Pensions Authority enforcement. We have overcome several blockers involving support from our Legal Service in negotiating with Kier to obtain access to the pensions data, Cap Gemini to extract the data and Serco to develop a royalty free interface to present the data for the foreseeable future and providing overall project management.

Data extraction is practically complete with the exception of a minor set of corrupted data (that can be inferred by existing data) and Serco solution is about to go live finally releasing the SAP platform for decommission.

### **Council Chamber**

The Audio Visual system in the Council chamber has been replaced and is ready for use. Training and final handover have been deferred due to Covid-19 restrictions until nearer the time the Chamber is put back into operation. Modest extensions create the option to add the capability of hybrid remote attendance meetings to reflect the uncertainty of future requirements. This would allow attendance at meetings to be undertaken in person in the Council Chamber, at the same time as other attendees joining the meeting virtually.

### **O365 project progress**

The work to bring LFR into the corporate Office 365 world continues with significant technical hurdles being worked through with LFR in a systematic way. This piece of work will involve significant business change for the service.

Mailbox (email) migration is now complete for LCC after a huge exercise to copy these into Office 365. User Accounts are now being verified to ensure licenses are effectively used and then the Web applications will be available to our users to extend the capabilities of Microsoft Teams.

The way in which our laptops and computers are managed is being reviewed, to ensure that we are able to more effectively manage them irrespective of where they are being used. Device management trials are underway and a number of technical migration challenges, in part due to working from home, are being analysed and sequenced. This work became a requirement when we moved to a home working position.

When this stage is complete we can finally update the remaining office software components installed on our PCs and laptops.

It remains our goal to then complete the LFR migration shortly afterwards.

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