

Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson - Executive Director for Place

Report to:	Executive
Date:	6 July 2021
Subject:	Re-painting and Maintenance Works to Cross Keys Swing Bridge
Decision Reference:	I022021
Key decision?	Yes

Summary:

Approval is sought to carry out re-painting of the superstructure and other maintenance works to Cross Keys Swing Bridge, carrying the A17 over the River Nene at Sutton Bridge.

Recommendation(s):

That the Executive:

- 1) approves the carrying out of a scheme of re-painting of the superstructure and other maintenance works to Cross Keys Swing Bridge.
- 2) delegates to the Executive Director for Place in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT, authority to approve the form and entering into of any contractual documentation necessary to give effect to the Scheme.

Alternatives Considered:

Do Nothing. Not to carry out these works will allow further deterioration of the bridge and therefore increase maintenance scheme costs at some later date. This bridge represents a significant risk to Lincolnshire County Council and the regional highway network, it is important that it is adequately maintained.

Reasons for Recommendation:

To keep Cross Keys Swing Bridge in a fit and safe, serviceable condition. Maintenance at this time should be viewed a critical investment in the highway network.

1. Background

Cross Keys Swing Bridge was built in 1897. It is a Grade II* Listed Building.

The bridge was built to carry a road and a railway line over the River Nene at Sutton Bridge. It is now owned and maintained by Lincolnshire County Council and carries the A17 on two carriageways.

The bridge 'swings' to open the River Nene to large shipping traffic (closing the A17 when doing so). The County Council, as owners of the bridge, is legally obliged to ensure this access to navigation traffic on demand, and this access is essential for the viability of the commercial Port of Wisbech (10km upstream).

The County Council has a planned inspection and maintenance regime for the routine servicing of the mechanical, hydraulic, and electrical operating systems of the bridge, in order to ensure it is kept serviceable so far as can be predicted (there are occasions when reactive repairs are also required, such as when a component fails without warning, but the County Council does all that is reasonable to avoid such eventualities).

Periodically, larger maintenance operations are also required in order to ensure the lifespan of the bridge is maximised. One of the operations required in this respect is the re-painting of the superstructure.

Without an adequate paint system to act as a barrier, the structural steel members from which the bridge is built would be prone to corrosion. Cross Keys Swing Bridge crosses a tidal river and is therefore subject to marine salts which act to further accelerate corrosion. Ultimately, if unchecked, corrosion would reach a stage at which the integrity of individual members, and potentially the strength and operability of the whole bridge, would be compromised. This would add significantly to the risks the bridge already poses.

Action taken now will retain and improve the protection offered against corrosion.

It should be noted that, whilst it is deteriorating, not all the existing paint system has failed. There are significant areas of the current paint system which appear to have survived in reasonable condition since the last major re-painting operation. Corrosion and failure of the paint system is most noticeable at connections between members and inaccessible parts of the structure (many of these connections being the most critical parts of the bridge in structural terms).

For this reason, we have commissioned a specialist survey into the integrity of the current system in different locations on the bridge. This will enable us to target full cleaning and repainting at only the most vulnerable locations, whilst just applying a fresh topcoat to all other areas, to add to the remaining lifespan of the paint system currently in place.

It is felt that whilst this approach does not provide a full renewal of the paint system, it offers an appropriate balance between full blast cleaning and repainting of the whole

bridge and good value for money. It is also the most sustainable approach in terms of waste and carbon footprint during the works.

Works will require extensive temporary scaffolding, and detailed consideration of how best to work whilst the bridge remains operational for both the A17 and the navigable River Nene.

Traffic flows on the A17 will be restricted to two-way temporary signal control. This will be manually controlled to give extended green times to clear backlogs of traffic by reducing unproductive 'all red' periods. There will also be advanced signing at major junctions between the A1 at Newark and the A47 at King's Lynn, advising through traffic of the potential delays and suggesting an alternative through route be taken.

Consideration of a full road closure and diversion via Wisbech has been given, but the above arrangement is favoured by local businesses, and in trials during earlier short duration maintenance operations, particularly the resurfacing in September 2019, it appeared to be reasonably successful in mitigating long delays.

It is anticipated at this stage, that a pedestrian thoroughfare over the bridge will be maintained throughout the works, but this is subject to detailed design considerations, to ensure public safety.

The works are planned to take place in 2022. Starting at the end of February and potentially lasting until the beginning of July. Winter months are not suitable for repainting, but the first few weeks of this period will be taken up with constructing temporary works for access. The intention is to complete works before the school summer holidays thus avoiding increased holiday traffic between Lincolnshire and Norfolk, and also avoiding any impact on the additional agri-food haulage experienced in and after harvest time later in the summer.

There is a risk that the works will coincide with other planned works in Wisbech. Negotiations are underway with Cambridgeshire County Council and other highway authorities to mitigate the risk by careful co-ordination. As a last resort it may be necessary to delay the works to Cross Keys Swing Bridge by a year.

Works are expected to cost in the region of £1m to £1.5m (the current estimate being £1.34m). Much of this being spent on temporary access and dealing with keeping the bridge operational for navigation traffic and open to one lane of highway traffic. Design fees will be in the region of £35,000 and site supervision in the region of £40,000. **Total scheme cost £1,075,000 to £1,575,000.** This will be funded from the 2021/22 Bridges (Highways Asset Protection) Capital Budget.

Consideration of the most efficient and cost beneficial route of procurement has been given and has been discussed and approved by the Commercial and Commissioning Board (8 April 2021).

2. Legal Issues:

Equality Act 2010

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.

Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The relevant protected characteristics are age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
- Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to tackle prejudice, and promote understanding.

Compliance with the duties in section 149 may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.

The duty cannot be delegated and must be discharged by the decision-maker. To discharge the statutory duty the decision-maker must analyse all the relevant material with the specific statutory obligations in mind. If a risk of adverse impact is identified consideration must be given to measures to avoid that impact as part of the decision-making process.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is appended to this report.

Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA) and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS)

The Council must have regard to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS) in coming to a decision.

Consideration has been given to the JSNA and the JHWS and there not considered to be significant impacts on the health and wellbeing of the people of Lincolnshire.

Crime and Disorder

Under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Council must exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment), the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area and re-offending in its area.

The works outlined above are not considered to have an impact on Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 matters.

3. Conclusion

Following Consideration of the report, the Executive is requested to consider whether to approve the approves the carrying out of a scheme of re-painting of the superstructure and other maintenance works to Cross Keys Swing Bridge and to approve delegating to the Executive Director for Place in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT, authority to approve the form and entering into of any contractual documentation necessary to give effect to the Scheme.

4. Legal Comments:

The Council has the power to pursue the Scheme proposed.

The decision is consistent with the Policy Framework and within the remit of the Executive.

5. Resource Comments:

The scheme proposed in this report is included in the programme of works funded by the Department for Transport Highways Asset Protection Grant and budgeted for in the Council's approved 2021/22 Capital Programme.

As work is planned to span the financial year-end, it will be necessary to carry-forward funding into 2022/23.
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6. Consultation

a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?

Yes

b) Has Executive Councillor Been Consulted?

Yes

c) Scrutiny Comments

The scheme will be considered by the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee on 28 June 2021, and the comments of the Committee will be reported to the Executive.

d) Risks and Impact Analysis

Yes

e) Risks and Impact Analysis

See main body of the Report.

7. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Equality Impact Analysis

8. Background Papers

No background papers within the meaning of section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this Report.

This report was written by Richard Waters, who can be contacted on 01522 552937 or richard.waters@lincolnshire.gov.uk.