



Strategic Transport Forum

12th July 2019

Agenda Item 8: Business Unit Update

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Forum:

- a) Notes progress with a number of key work streams**
- b) Approves the draft EEH response to the public consultation on A428**

1. England's Economic Heartland Third Regional Conference

- 1.1. The third regional conference for EEH takes place at the University of Hertfordshire in Hatfield on Tuesday 16th July 2019.
- 1.2. The programme for the day includes a wide range of speakers, including Cllr Martin Tett, Mayor Dave Hodgson, Cllr David Renard and Daniel Ziecher MP. Representatives from the National Infrastructure Commission, the Campaign for Better Transport and the Freight Transport Association will provide invaluable insight in to their aspirations and expectations for connectivity in the Heartland area.
- 1.3. In addition the conference will hear from Sir Michael Lyons Senior Vice President of CBRE Group, non-executive chairman of the English Cities Fund and strategic advisor to Government and Kerrigan Procter Chief Executive Officer, Legal & General Capital, and a member of Legal & General's Group Board as well as its Executive Committee.
- 1.4. The conference focus is on the publication of the Outline Transport Strategy and the start of a period of engagement that runs through to 31st October 2019.

2. Consultation - A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet

- 2.1. The Strategic Transport Forum will recall that in February 2019, Highways England announced the preferred route for the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet improvement scheme – a significant scheme for the EEH region.
- 2.2. On Monday 3rd June, Highways England began the next stage in the development of the scheme: a public consultation on the scheme. The consultation closes at 11.59pm on Sunday 28th July 2019.
- 2.3. The public consultation is a key milestone for the scheme and gives reassurance that the scheme is progressing towards delivery. Given the earlier delays, it is essential that progress and momentum is now maintained.
- 2.4. Highways England is encouraging partners to respond to the consultation.
- 2.5. A draft response on the consultation has been prepared for approval by the Strategic Transport Forum (see Annex A). As the Sub-national Transport Body the response addresses issues of a strategic nature. Individual members of EEH may wish to make their own more detailed responses as part of the consultation.
- 2.6. The primary focus for the EEH response is to ensure that the scheme is developed with due consideration to the wider connectivity requirements of the region. The scheme itself has consistently been identified by the Forum as a regional priority.

2.7. Highways England's Programme Leader for the scheme will attend the next Strategic Transport Forum on 27th September 2019 to provide a briefing on the next stages with the scheme following the consultation.

3. Heathrow Expansion

- 3.1. Forum Members will be aware that, in June 2019, Heathrow Airport launched its consultation into the Heathrow Airport Expansion proposals. The consultation runs until 13th September 2019.
- 3.2. The consultation is seeking views on the future layout of an expanded Heathrow airport, including the new runway and other airport infrastructure such as terminals and road access. The consultation will also consider plans to manage the environmental impacts of expansion, including a proposed Heathrow Ultra Low Emissions Zone, Heathrow Vehicle Access Charge and a proposed 6.5-hour ban on scheduled night flights.
- 3.3. Given the significant links between Heathrow airport and the EEH area, members will want to ensure that the views of England's Economic Heartland, as the Sub national transport body for the area is carefully considered. In addition, individual partner authorities are encouraged to prepare their own responses to the consultation.
- 3.4. As the Sub National Transport Body, the Forum should respond to the consultation. The EEH Business Unit, working with partners, will prepare a draft response. The draft response will be made available to Heathrow Airport in advance of the required deadline (13th September 2019) stating it is subject to final ratification by the Strategic Transport Forum later that month.

4. EEH Capacity and Capability Project

- 4.1. Forum members will recall previous discussions about the EEH Capacity and Capability Project.
- 4.2. The first phase of work reviewed issues relating to the capability and capacity that exists within partners to oversee the development and delivery of major infrastructure projects. Working with partners, and taking on board the views of the Transport Officers Group, that phase of work identified that there would be added value in establishing a shared function, at pan-regional level that will address those issues.
- 4.3. The second phase of the project is underway, again working with officer representatives from Forum members. The purpose of this second phase is to develop a detailed proposition that can form the basis of a discussion with the Department for Transport in the autumn.
- 4.4. The project demonstrates the added value realised through collaboration at the regional level and as such is an area of activity that the DfT supports in principle. In the context of investment programmes, the availability of a shared resource available to local partners will support the development and delivery of the MRN/Large Local Major programme.
- 4.5. The project development phase is due to complete in September 2019. The Strategic Transport Forum will receive a full update on the conclusions of the work during the meeting on 27th September 2019.

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July 2019