

CABINET MEMBER UPDATE REPORT

Councillor	Portfolio	Period of Report
Cllr Fairclough	Cabinet Member for Locality Services	March 2018

Strategic Transport

Port Access

- The programme of multi-modal interventions is continuing including rail infrastructure requirements, promotion of coastal and inland shipping, short term highway improvement measures and options for long term major highway improvement. Work on the doubling of the rail line into the Port is expected to start later this year.
- The announcement by DfT of the preferred route option for the major highway improvement to the Port was made on 1st September. The Council's request for a judicial review of the options consultation process has been accepted by the Court and the review is expected to take place later this year.
- Highways England is continuing with the design and assessment of their preferred option and submitted a request to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) for a scoping opinion on the Environmental Impact Assessment. A detailed response on the EIA scoping report was prepared and sent to PINS.

LTP & Growth Plan

- Sefton is continuing to work with Merseytravel and the other Merseyside authorities on the delivery of the transport capital programme.
- The development of the M58 Junction 1 scheme continues. The Compulsory Purchase Order was made and notice published in January along with the Side Roads Order. In the meantime, negotiations are still progressing with the landowners and offers have been made with the aim that agreement can be reached shortly. Enabling works including vegetation clearance started in February 2018 as planned and the main works are scheduled to start in April 2018, subject to completion of the land acquisition. Highways England have approved all of the necessary departures and the Safety Audit Work has been undertaken.
- The CPO and Side Road Orders for the North Liverpool Key Corridor scheme were confirmed in December 2017 and the necessary land will be vested in the respective Councils. Heads of Terms have been agreed with one of the land owners, WJ Leech and the land should shortly be secured. Works have been completed on the Leeds Street junction (within Liverpool) and are progressing northwards on the A565. Works within the Sefton section of Derby Road are slightly delayed because of the delay in acquiring the land, but are expected to start before the summer. Some site clearance work has already been completed. The details of the scope of the works along Regent Road will be confirmed by Liverpool CC in March, which will allow the Regent Road works, including the resurfacing of the length, to progress soon afterwards. The works are programmed for completion in 2019.
- Network Rail is continuing construction of Maghull North station and there has been substantial ongoing dialogue with local residents. The Council is monitoring activities in support of residents, particularly noise levels. Opening to passengers is scheduled to coincide with the start of the Summer 2018 timetable in May 2018.
- Work continues on the sustainable transport intervention proposals for Years 3-6 as part of the City Region programme. Sefton has three schemes approved as part of the programme, amounting to almost £3m of allocated funding. This consists of three phases of improvements on the A565, in Seaforth, Waterloo and Thornton, as well as a cycle route between Maghull and

Kirkby and East-West cycle improvements in Southport. The first phase of the A565 improvements in Seaforth has been completed and the next year's projects (A565 Thornton and Southport East West cycle improvements) are being developed.

- The project development work on the Southport Eastern Access and the Maritime Corridor projects is continuing as planned. City Region funding is being used for option development and testing and development of a strategic outline case for Southport Eastern Access and for traffic modelling and option testing for the Maritime Corridor.
- The business case for the Local Growth Fund schemes on the Key Route Network is being considered for approval by the CA on the 9th March. The programme includes proposals for a major junction improvement at the Dover Road junction on the A59 Northway.

Local Transport Schemes

- Delivery of the Transportation Capital Programme for 2017/18 is continuing and an outline programme for 2018/19 is being developed and will be discussed with Cabinet Member.

Sustainable Transport

- Proposals for a new, inland pedestrian and cycle route at Crosby Coastal Park, which will avoid the issue of wind-blown sand on the promenade and proposals for a major upgrade of the Coastal Road cycle route have been included in the Combined Authority bid for the European Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) fund. The bid was submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in February 2018.
- The Council has been allocated some additional funding to extend the project funded through the DfT Cycling and Walking to Work Fund to September 2018, which provides support for cycling through the existing community hubs, particularly aimed at jobseekers.

Highway Development and Design

Planning Applications

- Since the beginning of December 2017 the team has processed 201 planning applications. This includes applications for sites identified in the Council's adopted Local Plan. This has involved liaising closely with case officers from the planning department. The team are currently assessing a number of applications including some of the local plan sites such as:
 - Land east of Maghull
 - Land North of Brackenway in Formby
 - Land east of Waddicar Lane

Section 38 Highways Act 1980 legal agreements

- There has been a considerable increase in submissions and the subsequent processing of these at times, lengthy applications, particularly following the approval of planning applications for Local Plan sites.

The report is as follows: -

- No of live s38 and current developments subject to a s38 application - 20
- No of stalled or no activity (on the part of a developer) – 10
- Number of development sites adopted within the last 6 months (July 2017 to February 2018) – 5
- No of submissions awaiting technical approval – 3
- Number of new and recent submissions awaiting administrative set up – 2 (Andrews Lane and Turnbridge Lane)

Section 278 Highways Act 1980 legal agreements

- There has been a considerable increase in the numbers of these at times, lengthy applications, particularly following the approval of planning applications for Local Plan sites.

- The team are currently managing 48 live s278 HA 1980 highway works schemes in various stages of development on behalf of the Council. The successful delivery of these schemes is dependent on close liaison with the Legal Department.

Public Rights Of Way (PROW)

- Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) 2 – Completion of consultation period, review of the comments received and the updating of the draft plan. Approval by LCR Combined Authority was received in January for the new ROWIP 2018-2028. Publication is scheduled for April.
- English Coastal Path – On site route feasibility reviews commenced with Natural England
- Advising on the preparation of two Schedule 14 Applications for up to nine additional PROW.

Strategic Highways Development and Future Planning

- The team has taken a lead in managing the transportation issues involved with the Land East of Maghull and is working closely with the Planning Department, and the Developers involved ensuring the success of this project. Notwithstanding this, there are a number strategic sites and pre-applications which require a considerable involvement in order to ensure a seamless transition between the local plan allocations and subsequent planning application submission.
- The team is working closely with the Planning Department on new initiatives to ensure a 'One Council' strategic approach to development to ensure that the necessary new transport infrastructure is in place to support new developments coming forward in future years.

Street Lighting

- The Council's new Street Lighting contractor commenced work on the 29th January and inherited a backlog of circa 1700 faults that had accumulated from the previous in-house service and the transitional period over Christmas. To date they have successfully repaired almost 1000 faults and are continuing to work through the backlog.
- It's encouraging that new faults are still being received daily from the public which continue to be recorded and processed accordingly. This will assist the Council in the absence of the 'Night Scouting' service. Until the backlog is cleared the Council will be unable to provide its usual service standard of fault repairs within five working days. It is anticipated that the backlog will be clear by late March.
- All emergency and urgent faults continue to be attended to within 2 hours of their report.

Traffic Signals

- The LCR joint Traffic Signal maintenance Contract is in the final stages of Contract award and is due to commence on the 1st April 2018. Our current Contractor Siemens have been successful so this will simplify the transition between Contracts for Sefton.
- Discussions are continuing on beginning to migrate some of the traffic signal communication circuits from analogue to digital technology. This work will need to be developed and delivered over the next few years as the current analogue circuits provided by BT are to be withdrawn after March 2020. Without the communication circuits the Council will be unable to monitor and coordinate the traffic signals remotely. A business case for Combined Authority funding has been submitted and is awaiting approval.

Highway Maintenance

- All programmed works for 2017/18 are now generally completed with the exception of a few schemes.
- There are currently some remedial works ongoing within the Borough in relation to some defective surface treatments that were laid in 2017.
- This year's highway weed spray programme will commence in March (subject to the weather). An alternative chemical is being used for the first spray to try and retard some of the early weed growth.

- Grass cutting of the highway verges will recommence in April.

Winter Service

- We have so far gritted our carriageway routes 66 times and our footway routes 16 times. At the time of this report more snow is forecast over the coming days and nights. Officers monitor the weather 24 hours a day throughout the season and we continue to have sufficient stockpiles of salt for our needs.

FCERM

- **Planning**

We are currently reviewing how the team reviews planning applications and gives pre application advice. After 12 months of monitoring our resources we feel our priorities and focus of risk management for development should be more heavily weighted towards major planning applications and re allocating resources from minors to majors and also inspecting all major development on site when being constructed to ensure what is designed and approved is being built.

- **Crosby**

Coastal defences at the northern end of Crosby are under review. There are three separate defences that require intervention; the Alt training bank, the informal rubble defences and the timber faced coastal defences. These stretch approximately 1km north and 1km south of the Coastguard station at Hall Road. We are currently in the process of developing an outline business case to secure funding to undertake the scheme in 2 phases during summer 2020 and summer 2021.

- **Winter storms**

Winter 2018 saw Storm Eleanor hit the UK on 2 and 3 January 2018 and brought gusts of up to 90mph across the country. For Sefton the strongest winds were during the night of the 2nd January into the early hours of 3rd January 2018 when the wind was blowing in a westerly direction and coincided with a storm surge and high spring tide of 4.97mAOD. At Crosby, the car park at hall road was inundated with sea water and the cliff edge north of Hall Road was eroded by 2m. The sand dunes around Formby Point were eroded by up to 10m during this storm.

Reviewing Sefton's Local Flood Risk Strategy

- We are currently reviewing our Local Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy first written to cover the period of 2015-2018. We will be reviewing risk; aligning the strategy to the Sefton2030 vision and ensuring all the latest strategic plans and policies are considered and supported in our strategy going forward.

Highway Tree Maintenance.

Chapel Lane, Formby

- Tree works were intended to commence in Chapel Lane, Formby in January. These works included the removal of 5 mature Horse Chestnut trees. Due to the extent of public interest, and the onsite protest, the decision was made to stop the works. Formby Parish Council commissioned an independent arborist report. This report differed from the views of the council's tree experts and a discussion then followed between a council officer and the author of the report. The report recommended a variety of works which would require a variety of changes in the highway management of the area, such as larger tree pits, use of different de-icing salt, a change in weed killing and creation of a retaining area to allow mulch to be placed around the tree, the report also recommends treating the trees with mycorrhizae. The Parish Council has been made aware that the council is not in a position to fund works such as this and would not want to set a precedent in treating this highway differently that other areas around the borough.
- A short term solution has been found where by works can commence next week to mitigate any Health and Safety risks. The works which will be undertaken next week will see one tree being removed, essential health and safety work undertaken on two others and all will be re-inspected in spring. This gives time for any discussions to take place with regards to the long term future of each tree, and the responsibility for funding of any ongoing maintenance and the associated health and safety liability should these trees continue to present a risk.

- The council will not be implementing any of the wider report recommendations as this falls outside the Council's current policy.

Procurement of Machinery and equipment for Green Sefton Service.

- Capital investment funding was approved for the Green Infrastructure Service in June 2017. A tender exercise has been completed via the YPO framework for the supply of horticultural/landscape machinery and equipment. The Tender was divided into lots for supply of smaller handheld and pedestrian machinery; and supply and contract maintenance for the larger items, e.g. ride on grass cutting machinery, tractors, utility vehicles and excavators. The tender documentation included options to reduce the quantities indicated and reversed the right 'not to buy'.
- The Contract is for an initial 3 year supply contract with additional option for 2 x +1 year extensions (based upon performance).
- Tender evaluations were completed on the 20th October 2017. The successful bidder was Sharrocks, based upon price and quality factors, including additional benefits beyond the required specification.
- The successful bid of £815,298.50 can be accommodated out of the Capital Investment funding secured via the SKIG meeting in June 2017. The intention will be to phase purchasing over a 12-18 month period in order to ensure the procurement matches the needs of the evolving Green Sefton Service. (Currently undergoing restructure consultation as part of the PSR7 Pride in Sefton project)
- During the winter 2017/18 a detailed ordering matrix and delivery schedule has been developed with Sharrocks in order to drawdown in phases based around the seasonal requirements of the operation.
- The first order being for the supply of the large tractors required primarily for grass cutting and beach cleansing operations
- The second order is in development for the supply of the majority of the kit, which will include, ride on grass cutting machinery, golf maintenance equipment and general pedestrian and handheld machinery for grass cutting and cleansing operations.