

## **ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 13 MAY 2022**

### **CUTTING CONGESTION PROGRAMME**

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#### **Summary**

1. The Panel will receive an update on schemes that have been delivered or are in feasibility, design or construction stages, to help reduce Congestion across the County.
2. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways and Transport and the Strategic Director for Economy and Infrastructure have been invited to the meeting.

#### **Background**

3. At its meeting on 8 May 2019, the Panel received a report about Progress with Reducing Congestion and how to Improve Getting Around Worcestershire. At this time, £5m from the 2017/18 budget had been added to by the successful securing of National Productivity Investment Funding (NPIF) of £6.7m from April 2018 for works in Worcester City and Bromsgrove Town.
4. In February 2019, following further investigation into the 4 sites named for improvement by the Council (A38/A4104 Upton-upon-Severn, Hoobrook – Kidderminster, Port Street, Evesham and Parkside, Bromsgrove), an additional budget of £5m was allocated to the above schemes, to create a specific Worcestershire County Council £10m funding stream (plus the NPIF funding).
5. The congestion schemes outlined at Paragraph 4 are derived from Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4), adopted in 2017 following public consultation, which sets the policy direction for investment in transport in the County, including both strategic corridors and specific junction schemes. It informs priorities for the development of the business case for the individual schemes, alongside Infrastructure Delivery Plans which form part of district Local Plans, which identify the mitigation required to offset the impact of development. For these schemes developer contributions (Section 106) funding will be sought from the relevant developments.

#### **Worcester City NPIF Schemes**

6. Since the report in May 2019, the Council has successfully delivered the three main scheme improvements across the City, as well as the completion of the A44 signal corridor enhancement, through a combination of the original £5m Congestion and £3.2m NPIF funding. These are detailed in Appendix 1 – Section 1.

## **Bromsgrove NPIF Schemes**

7. The two year £3.428m NPIF funded programme of works for Bromsgrove Town reported on in May 2019, has now been successfully completed.

8. Following the initial investigations into route audits of the main nine cycle and walking links across the Town, the Council was able to prioritise dropped crossings, enhanced street lighting, carriageway patching, footway widening and route signing needed as part of these improvements.

9. Alongside these important improvements to the walking and cycling networks, there were three further larger improvements to carry out around the Town centre. These are detailed in Appendix 1 – Section 2.

## **Original Cutting Congestion Funded Schemes**

10. Other works across the County, funded by the original £5m Congestion funding from April 2017 are detailed in Appendix 1 – Section 3.

## **Specific £10m Cutting Congestion Funded Schemes**

11. As detailed above, when the additional £5m Budget was agreed back in February 2019, there were 4 specific locations detailed, progress on these schemes is set out below.

12. A38/A4104 Upton on Severn – the project to install a 4-arm roundabout gained planning consent in February 2021. Construction is well underway and the project is on schedule to complete later this year.

13. A449/A442 Hoobrook, Kidderminster – following the introduction of the A4420 Hoobrook link road, and further local changes to the dual carriageway north of the roundabout in May 2018, a project to reduce congestion at the roundabout was completed earlier this year. The scheme, which involved enlarging of the roundabout along with signalisation of the three A class approaches to manage the heavy and varying flows of the A449 and A442, has been widely received and welcomed as a success by the public who use it.

14. Port Street, Evesham – this 3-armed signalised junction south of the town and river consisted of dated signal infrastructure, substandard lane widths, uncontrolled crossings and poor efficiency. With the introduction of upgraded technology, widened traffic lanes from the west, a new two-phase integrated signal-controlled crossing (and the associated public realm works carried out in conjunction with these works), the junction now functions more efficiently in this constrained site, with the aesthetic of the public realm works encouraging more active pedestrian usage.

15. A448 Parkside, Bromsgrove – this busy town centre signalised junction is constrained by a listed wall, large mature trees and buildings to two corners, making substantial change difficult to achieve. However, with this fund and Section 106 monies, the Council will be carrying out works to make the junction more efficient for motorised and pedestrian users through the use of modern signal technology. The scheme is scheduled to commence in Summer 2022.

## **Future Congestion schemes**

16. A456/B4195 Stourport Road, Bewdley – A scheme to improve the A456 Bewdley By-pass junction is due to commence in Autumn 2022.

## **S106 funding opportunities**

17. Section 106 funding opportunities, to mitigate the impacts of new development, have been identified which will enable the Council to bring forward proposals for certain known locations. Subsequent to finding the right solutions, additional funding would then be sought to construct and complete the schemes. Examples of these are detailed in Appendix 1 – Section 4.

18. Whilst not an exhaustive list, this highlights some of the key schemes which are being developed to offset the impact of development and deliver significant highway benefits. These schemes align with the aspirations of Local Transport Plan 4.

## **Purpose of the Meeting**

19. The Panel is asked to:

- note the progress of the schemes detailed above
- consider and comment on the information provided
- determine whether any further information or scrutiny is required at this stage and agree any comments to highlight to the Cabinet Member.

## **Supporting Information**

Appendix 1 – Summary of Schemes/Projects (to follow)

## **Specific Contact Points for this report**

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## **Background Papers**

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda and Minutes of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel – May 2019 [Agenda and Minutes](#)

Worcestershire County Council Local Transport Plan - [Local Transport Plan \(LTP\) | Worcestershire County Council](#)

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)