

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Cabinet

**DATE:** 19<sup>th</sup> September 2016

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**WARD(S):** All

**PORTFOLIO:** Cllr Matloob –  
Commissioner for Transport and Highways

### **PART I** **NON-KEY DECISION**

#### **REFERENCES FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY – HOLLOW HILL LANE EXPERIMENTAL SCHEME**

##### **1. Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to ask Cabinet to consider the recommendations of the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel (8<sup>th</sup> September 2016).

##### **2. Matters for resolution from Cabinet**

The Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel has referred the matter of the decision to close Hollow Hill Lane at Chequers Bridge under an experimental traffic order. The wording of the resolution is as follows:

- The Panel recommend that Cabinet review the experimental scheme as soon as possible, with a view to terminating the closure of Hollow Hill Lane after 3 months (2<sup>nd</sup> November 2016) provided that Slough Borough Council have compiled sufficient information by this date to make an informed decision on the matter.

##### **3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

###### **3a. Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy (SJWS) Priorities**

Priorities:

- Health: Providing transport facilities that ensure residents can access the health services they need.
- Economy and Skills – Continue to provide residents with access to essential services by improving connections and journey times between work, home, leisure, school and making alternatives to the car more attractive.
- Regeneration and Environment; Improving facilities and access to bus services to increase the use of sustainable forms of transport.
- Housing: Improved public transport links to the area, with quicker journey times for the bus routes serving the area and giving greater choices for residents as to where they can live and access work and facilities.

- Safer Communities: Reduced traffic congestion at the location to improve the environment for residents at the location. This should make a place where people feel safe to live and visit.

Cross-Cutting themes:

**Civic responsibility:** By ensuring that residents are able to express their views and participate in the identification of mitigating measures that will benefit the transport in Slough for everyone.

**Improving the image of the town:** By enhancing the sustainable transport links to Heathrow Airport, London and beyond, improving access and reducing journey times of local bus services and general commuter traffic.

### 3b. Five Year Plan Outcomes

The scheme will deliver the following key actions of the Five Year Outcomes that are also represented in the Transport and Highways Service Plan 2016/17.

- 1.2 *Ensure a fit for business transport infrastructure* by ensuring that the impacts of a road closure are understood and considered for future schemes.
- 1.5 *Agree a coordinated plan to maximise the benefits of Cross Rail and Western Rail Link to Heathrow* by ensuring informed remedial and mitigation proposals are put forward.
- 3.1 *Define and establish the Centre of the Town as a destination* by providing a sound and reliable multi modal transport system and managing the road network.
- 4.1 *Build on success in making Slough safer* by incorporating road safety schemes into all engineering schemes delivered across the council.
- 5.4 *Ensure children and young people are emotionally and physically healthy* by improving air quality through delivering schemes that reduce congestion at key locations.

## 4 Other Implications

### (a) Financial

The council have undertaken the experiment in order to determine the impact on the road network if a permanent closure comes into effect. From the planned major schemes for the area, it has been indicated that a permanent closure could be a real possibility. Closing the road under an experimental order enables the council to determine the effects of the closure, thus opening negotiations for mitigating measures with the major scheme sponsors.

There are currently no quantifiable financial implications from the recommendations or proposed actions of the report

### (b) Risk Management

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
None	None	There are no risks, threats or opportunities arising from the report.

### (c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no legal or Human Rights Act implications relating to the content of this report.

### (d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no identified need for the completion of EIA relating to this report.

## 5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 The experimental scheme arose from the ongoing discussions with HS2 Limited, the company responsible for planning the new national high speed rail network. During these discussions, it has become apparent that the planned work for this development will have an impact on residents and businesses in the Langley area.
- 5.2 In particular, this work and the planned relocation of the Heathrow Express depot to Langley will necessitate work in the vicinity of the Hollow Hill Lane railway bridge. Given this, Slough Borough Council (SBC) was unwilling to await the imposition of a likely closure of the bridge without prior knowledge as to the impact such a closure would have on the local community. The information gathered during an experimental scheme involving the closure of the bridge would also allow SBC to be specific in the proposed mitigation it could put forward to partners, allowing for appropriate funding to be found to make the necessary adjustments to the local road network.
- 5.3 The Panel were concerned over the 18 month time frame mentioned in the experimental scheme. To allay some of these concerns, they were informed that the first 6 months of this referred to the imposition of the scheme itself, and the subsequent 12 months to the period in which the impact of the scheme could be assessed and proposals made. Whilst this was appreciated by members of the Panel, their concerns remained that the level of inconvenience caused to local residents and businesses was too great to justify any extension of the scheme beyond that which was absolutely necessary.
- 5.4 Given this, the Panel requested that the bridge closure itself should be terminated at the end of 3 months. As the scheme started on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2016, this would mean that the closure would end on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2016. Whilst the Panel accepted that public consultation may continue beyond this date, they considered that the raw data on traffic flows, and the public experiences which would feed into such consultation, would be sufficiently clear after 3 months for further implementation of the closure to be unnecessary.
- 5.5 In particular, whilst the month of August may be unusually quiet in terms of traffic flow, by the beginning of November 2016 all schools and colleges will be back in session and holiday leave amongst workers back to low levels. As a result, SBC should have enough information to adjudicate accurately the impact of any future closure of the bridge during times of peak demand amongst car users. Given this, the Panel were keen for the closure to be terminated as soon as possible; whilst the final decision on the long term future of the bridge may have to be made further into the future, it would not be made any clearer than by the information gathered prior to 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2016.

6 **Conclusion**

- 6.1 The Cabinet is requested to decide upon recommendations outlined in section 2 and discussed in sections 5.1 – 5.5 of this report.

7 **Appendices**

None

8 **Background Papers**

- '1' - Agenda papers, Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel (8<sup>th</sup> September 2016)