

Time Commenced – 6:00 pm
Time Finished – 7.20 pm

Regeneration and Housing Scrutiny Review Board

16 March 2021

Present: Councillor Evans (Chair)
Councillors McCristal, Pearce, Russell and West

In Attendance: Verna Bayliss – Director of Planning, Transport and Engineering
Paul Clarke – Head of Planning
Nigel Brien – Head of Traffic and Transport
Martin Brown – Housing Strategy and Initiatives Manager
Sue Li – Compulsory Purchase and Enforcement Officer
Christopher Archbold – Highways England
Adam Bunce – Linkconnex
Stuart McMenemy - Linkconnex

27/20 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

28/20 Late Items

There were no late items.

29/20 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

30/20 Minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

31/20 A38 Presentation by Highways England

The Board received a presentation from Christopher Archbold from Highways England and Adam Bunce and Stuart McMenemy from Linkconnex on the proposed works on the Kingsway, Markeaton and Little Eaton junctions on the A38.

The presentation gave an overview of the project and showed the junctions as they currently were and how they would look after the project was completed. It was reported that there had been a judicial review challenge of the proposed works. It was anticipated that a decision on the judicial review would be available shortly. Once the decision was known it would be fed back to the Board. Work had been paused until the outcome of the judicial review

was known. The plan was to start works in September 2021 and any delays would be incorporated into works at that stage.

A Member of the Board asked if the felling of the unprotected trees had been paused. It was reported that it had been paused until formal agreement was reached. The tree and vegetation removal would be programmed into the scheme in September.

A Member of the Board asked about pedestrian access to Markeaton Park and assurance was given that this had been included in the scheme and identified on the drawings.

In respect of environmental considerations provision had been made to protect wildlife such as water voles, bats and great crested newts.

It was reported that the removal of trees was being mitigated by tree plating and landscaping, these proposals would be consulted upon.

A Member of the Board asked about the footpath near the recycling yard, it was confirmed that this would be diverted.

It was reported that there would be access off the A61 to the site compound during the works. The area would be reinstated following the works.

Resolved to note the presentation.

32/20 A50/500 Presentation on the Work of Midland Connect

The Board received a presentation which set out the work of Midland Connect on the A46, A5 and A50/500. These were classed as economic corridors. In respect of the A50/500 corridor, there were many businesses along the corridor including advanced manufacturing; business, professional and financial; construction; energy and low carbon technology; transport technology and logistics and visitor and retail. All of which relied on connectivity east/west as well as north/south.

There had been historic underinvestment in connectivity and there was an ambition that by 2030 the A50/500 corridor would be one of the primary locations for sustainable growth and investment in the UK, driven by innovation and new technologies and supporting the move towards carbon neutrality.

What next – Due to the importance of this corridor, Midlands Engine had taken the lead for developing the vision for the growth strategy. The key economic aims that were important from a Derby perspective were; South Derby Growth Zone and the proposed new junction on the A50, supporting the SmartParc development on the former Celanese site, and retaining our large employers and their supply chains.

A Member of the Board asked about the timeframe for the junction on the A50. It was reported that it was unlikely to be done whilst the works were taking place on the A38.

A Member of the Board asked if there were any plans to improve connectivity over the Swarkstone causeway. It was reported that local authorities were working together on this looking at the big economic sites.

In respect of the Freeport announcement for East Midlands Airport, it was too early to tell what effect this would have on the region.

A Member of the Board asked about the Derby Crewe Railway study. It was reported that work was being undertaken to as part of consideration of HS2 services from Birmingham to Toton and a business case for additional services on the Derby-Stoke-Crewe corridor, so that the East Midlands can link HS2 services at Crewe.

Resolved to note the presentation.

33/20 Empty Homes Strategy Consultation

The Board received a presentation on the Empty Homes Strategy Consultation. The consultation was due to close on 27 April 2021. The aim of the strategy was to bring empty homes into use either through voluntary assistance or enforcement action, increase affordable housing supply by purchasing empty homes or leasing via a housing provider and tackling climate change by improving thermal efficiency.

It was reported that 67% of owners purposely acquire empty homes. Compulsory purchase was a last resort after owners were given every opportunity to bring the property back into use. The Council had to compete in a free market to purchase properties.

Successes included the current service delivery being on track despite the Covid response, the service had scored 5/5 in all categories of audit and empty properties reduced as a proportion of total housing stock. The Council had a nationally recognised Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) programme and had attracted £7m New Homes Bonus since 2011, £270,000 debt recovered since 2016 and £800,000 private finance levered in since 2016.

Members of the Board requested to see the results of the consultation.

Members of the Board asked what happened to those properties not purchased. It was reported that not all properties were acquired by CPO, properties were identified early on so that the owners could be given all the options available to them. If it wasn't financially viable for the Council to purchase the properties then owners would be put in touch with estate agents offering reduced fees, housing providers and private developers who may be interested in taking on the property. Properties were monitored every three months to ensure they were brought back into use at the earliest opportunity.

Resolved

- 1. To note the presentation.**
- 2. To request that the results of the Consultation be reported to a future meeting of the Board.**

34/20 Remit, Work Programme and Topic Reviews

The Board considered a report which allowed the Board to study its Terms of Reference and Remit for the Municipal Year. The report also allowed officers to inform the Board of any key work areas, issues or potential topic review subjects within the service areas for discussion or inclusion in the work programme.

The Board asked for the following items to be added to the work programme for 2021/22.

- Climate Change – mitigation beyond OCOR and CO2 emissions.
- Update on Covid Impact on Derby.
- A52 Wyvern Transport Improvement Scheme – Lessons Learnt.

In respect of the Topic Review the Board agreed that they had no recommendations to make to Council Cabinet.

Resolved

- 1. To request the following items be included in the work programme of the Board for 2021/22.**
 - **Climate Change – mitigation beyond OCOR and CO2 emissions.**
 - **Update on Covid Impact on Derby.**
 - **A52 Wyvern Transport Improvement Scheme – Lessons Learnt.**
- 2. To make no recommendations to Council Cabinet in respect of the Topic Review - 'what the Council does now or could do in the future to meet the demand for more affordable homes in the City'.**

35/20 Items Referred from the Executive Scrutiny Board

There were no items referred from the Executive Scrutiny Board.

MINUTES END