

8 February 2018**Agenda Item: 5****REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR, PLACE****CONSULTATIONS ON A MAJOR ROAD NETWORK FOR ENGLAND & THE
SECOND ROADS INVESTMENT STRATEGY****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval to grant the Corporate Director for Place, in consultation with the Leader of the County Council and Chair of Communities & Place Committee, delegated authority to discuss and submit responses to Government on the emerging Major Road Network for England and the second Roads Investment Strategy.

Information

2. In July 2017 the Department for Transport (DfT) published its Transport Investment Strategy – Moving Britain Ahead. Within this document reference is made to a consultation for creating a 'Major Road Network': a designated network reaching all parts of the country. It is intended that this will form a middle tier of the busiest and most economically important local authority 'A' roads, which will remain under local authority control but may have access to an allocation from the National Roads Fund through future competitive bidding rounds. Consultation on the 'Proposals for the Creation of a Major Road Network' was published by DfT on 23 December 2017; and responses must be received by the DfT by 19 March 2018.
3. On 13 December 2017, the DfT released a consultation document 'Shaping the Future of England's Strategic Roads'. This document summarises evidence and proposals about the Strategic Road Network and the second Roads Investment Strategy (RIS2) for the period 2020-25 covered by Highways England. The closing date for comments on the broad analytical approach being undertaken was 7 February 2018.

Major Road Network for England

4. Following the publication by the Rees Jeffreys Road Fund of the report 'A Major Road Network for England' in October 2016, the Government is proposing to develop a 'major road network' (MRN) for England in order to try and rebalance the disparity between the funding and planning of the strategic road network (major roads and motorways managed by Highways England) and local authority A roads. The proposed MRN would see a share of the annual National Road Fund, funded by vehicle excise duty, given to local authorities to improve or replace the most important A roads under their management.

5. The consultation seeks views on the plans for defining the major road network, investment planning and the criteria for eligibility and assessment:
 - a. Defining the network – It is proposed that current traffic data, qualitative criteria, and evidence from local and regional partners is used to define the MRN so that it is consistent across the England. It is also proposed that the MRN is reviewed every five years
 - b. Investment planning – It is proposed that local and regional bodies (such as sub-national strategic bodies or regional groups) work together to develop and prioritise packages of interventions for consideration
 - c. Eligibility and investment assessment criteria – MRN funding should target significant interventions which offer value for money transformative solutions to the most economically important 'A' roads. Only MRN schemes costing between £20m and £100m, supported by a local contribution will be considered.
6. The Rees Jeffreys Road Fund report includes a number of potential criteria for the roads to be included in the MRN. In preparation for this consultation Midlands Connect has, however, employed consultants to identify what it considers to be the MRN for the wider area; and is consulting with highway authorities as part of this process.
7. The County Council will also have the opportunity to submit its own response to the DfT MRN consultation. The recently published Nottinghamshire Place Plan identifies corridors in the county for future growth and as part of its development the County Council has also identified what it considers to be Nottinghamshire's MRN (and this is included in the Place Plan). This work will inform the County Council's response to the consultation. The MRN identified by the County Council (attached as Appendix 1) includes roads that pass through the 'growth corridors' such as the A38/A617, as well as roads that link settlements and/or 'growth corridors', such as the A614.

Road Investment Strategy

8. The Road Investment Strategy (RIS) sets out Government's long-term programme to deliver improvements to England's motorways and major roads managed by Highways England (the 'strategic road network'). RIS 1 was announced in December 2014 and outlines a multi-year investment plan (including over 100 major schemes funded by £15.2 billion of public money) for the period 2015/16 to 2019/20. RIS 1 included the following schemes in Nottinghamshire as well as those that link the county to the motorway network:
 - Schemes that were already under construction when RIS 1 was published:
 - (i) A453 Widening – upgrade of the A453 between Nottingham and the M1, replacing rural sections with new dual carriageway, adding an extra lane in each direction to the urban sections and improving junctions along the route.
 - (ii) M1 Junctions 28-31 – upgrading the M1 to Smart Motorway between junction 28 (Mansfield) and junction 31 (Sheffield). Together with existing improvements to the south, this creates a Smart Motorway link between Derby, Nottingham and Sheffield.
 - Committed schemes (previously announced):
 - (i) M1 Junctions 24-25 – upgrading the M1 to Smart Motorway between junction 24 and junction 25 in the East Midlands.
 - Newly announced committed schemes:

- (i) M1 Junction 23A-24 – extends the previously announced M1 Smart Motorway junctions 24-25 improvement to junction 23A (East Midlands Airport).
 - Schemes funded from other sources:
 - (i) M1 Junctions 24-24A improvement – as part of the transport mitigation measures associated with the new Roxhill rail freight interchange, developers are proposing to fund improvements to junctions 24 and 24A on the M1, including removal of the roundabout at junction 24A, a new direct southbound link from the A50 to the M1 and better links to junction 24.
 - Schemes committed subject to securing other contributions (in this case developer contributions):
 - (i) A52 Nottingham junctions – a two phase package of measures to improve the junctions along the length of the A52 in Nottingham, including signalisation and junction reconstruction.
 - Schemes to be developed for next RIS period:
 - (i) A46 Newark northern bypass – widening of the A46 north of Newark to dual carriageway, raising the last section of the A46 between the A1 and M1 to Expressway standard. Improvement of the A46/A1 junction to allow for better traffic movement to Newark and Lincoln.
9. RIS 1 was the initial step in a long-term programme to improve these roads and work is now underway by the Department for Transport to develop the second RIS — known as RIS 2 — covering the second road period post 2020. RIS 2 is due to be published in 2019 following the analysis of the evidence base and consultation with stakeholders to identify the locations with the most severe issues and therefore where the need for improvements is the greatest. It is anticipated that consultation with stakeholders (such as local highway authorities) will be undertaken in early 2019.

Other Options Considered

10. The other option is to not respond to the consultation. This, however, has been discounted as it is thought that the County Council should respond to the consultation to help ensure that the road improvements believed to be necessary to support delivery of the Council Plan, and the emerging Place Plan, are considered in the development of the Major Road Network for England and the second Road Investment Strategy.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

11. If it is possible, consultation responses to the development of the Major Road Network for England and the second Road Investment Strategy will be presented to Committee for consideration prior to being submitted but this has often proven difficult in the past due to the short notice/consultation period and fitting these in with scheduled Committee cycles. It is therefore considered that giving the Councillor Director Place in consultation with the Chair of Communities & Place Committee delegated authority to discuss and respond to consultations will ensure that the County Council is able to submit responses to these consultations.

Statutory and Policy Implications

12. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

13. Whilst there are no direct financial implications, not responding to the consultations may have future financial implications if it results in less investment, or funding available for, improvements on Nottinghamshire roads.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that Committee:

- 1) Grant the Corporate Director Place, in consultation with the Leader of the County Council and Chair of Communities & Place Committee, delegated authority to discuss and respond to consultations on the Major Road Network for England;
- 2) Acknowledge the response of the Corporate Director Place, Leader of the County Council and Chair of Communities & Place Committee to consultations on the second Road Investment Strategy.

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For any enquiries about this report please contact:
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Constitutional Comments [SLB 10/01/18]

14. Communities and Place Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments [SES 12/01/18]

15. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- A Major Road Network for England report – the Rees Jeffreys Road Fund (12 October 2016)
- Proposals for the Creation of a Major Road Network Consultation – Department for Transport (December 2017)
- Road Investment Strategy: for the 2015/16 - 2019/20 Road Period – Department for Transport (March 2015).

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All

Draft Nottinghamshire County Council – Major Road Network

Major Road Network in Nottinghamshire

