



**CABINET – 6 JULY 2018**

**A5 STRATEGY AND PARTNERSHIP**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT**

**PART A**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to present to the Cabinet the A5 Partnership's revised draft Strategy '*The A5: Supporting Growth and Movement in the Midlands 2018-2031*' ('the A5 Strategy') and proposed Governance and Terms of Reference (ToR); to seek Cabinet's approval of the Council's response to these documents, and to seek agreement on the way forward regarding the Council's future support and engagement with the Partnership.

**Recommendation**

2. It is recommended that:
  - (a) The Council continues to express its support in principle for the upgrade of the A5, but in the context of the Council's wider transport infrastructure priorities as set out in the Leicester and Leicestershire Rail Strategy and its Prospectus for Growth;
  - (b) The revised draft A5 Strategy, attached as Appendix A to this report, be approved;
  - (c) Subject to the A5 Partnership meeting of 29 June agreeing the Council's proposed amendments to the governance structure attached as Appendix B to this report, the revised Governance and Terms of Reference be approved;
  - (d) The Director of Environment and Transport, in consultation with the Lead Member for Environment and Transport, be authorised to approve minor amendments to the A5 Strategy as appropriate;
  - (e) In the event that c) above is not agreed by the A5 Partnership, the Council ceases engagement with the Partnership.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

3. To ensure that the final draft A5 Strategy and A5 Partnership Constitution (Governance and Terms of Reference) address the issues previously considered and raised by the Cabinet and as set out in the report below.

### **Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)**

4. The A5 report that was considered by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC) on 12 June noted that 'each constituent Council in the A5 Partnership needs to ratify the finalised draft A5 Strategy, prior to its adoption. This follows agreement in principle at a special A5 Partnership Member meeting on 23 March 2018, subject to additional amendments'.
5. A meeting of the A5 Member Partnership on 29 June will be asked to consider:
  - a. The latest version of the A5 Strategy.
  - b. This Council's suggested amendments to the draft governance and terms of reference.
6. If approved the new A5 Strategy and Governance and Terms of Reference will come into force immediately.

### **Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

7. A Strategy for the A5 was produced in 2011. The Cabinet considered the report '*A Strategy for the A5 2011-2026 A449 Gailey (Staffordshire) to A45 Weedon (Northamptonshire)*' in October 2012 and adopted the A5 Strategy as an evidence base.
8. At its meeting in March 2018, the Cabinet considered a report concerning the Council's response to the A5 Partnership's revised draft Strategy "The A5: A Strategy for Growth 2018-2031" and recommendations for the future operation of the Partnership.
9. The Cabinet resolved that, until such time as the Cabinet had approved a final version of the A5 Strategy and a new Partnership constitution, the Council would advise the other A5 Partnership members that it was unable to endorse the draft revised Strategy or support the continued functioning of the Partnership in its current form.
10. The Cabinet also requested the Director of Environment and Transport, following consultation with the Lead Member and the County Council's representative on the A5 Partnership, to enter into immediate discussions with the other local highway authorities and other A5 Partnership members, with the aim of establishing a constitution for the Partnership. It also requested that a further report be submitted to the Cabinet to present a final version of the revised A5 Strategy and a new Partnership constitution for approval, when available.

**Resource Implications**

11. There are no resources implications arising from this report. All officer time to resource the A5 Partnership is covered by existing revenue budgets.
12. The Director of Corporate Resources has been consulted on the content of this report.

**Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

A copy of this report has been sent to County Councillors representing divisions on the route of the A5: Mr. I. D. Ould CC, Mr. D. C. Bill MBE, CC, Mrs A, Wright CC, Mrs R. Page CC, Mr. B. L. Pain CC and Mrs. M. Wright CC

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## **PART B**

### **Background**

#### The A5 route

13. The A5 (T) is a Trunk Road for which Highways England is the highway authority. It provides a long distance strategic route between London and Holyhead, which travels through large parts of southern and central England, including Leicestershire. The corridor is a key artery to movement that supports and provides access to economic activity and growth.
14. Problems on the A5 (congestion, accidents or bridge strikes) more often than not result in detrimental impacts on local roads through Hinckley and villages in south Leicestershire.

#### A5 Partnership and Strategy

15. The key purpose of the A5 Partnership, which covers a 70 mile section of the A5, is to work to achieve wholesale improvements for the A5.
16. The Partnership is a voluntary body with no statutory role or powers. It is made up of 18 local authorities that are supported by other public agencies, including Highways England, Midlands Connect and Local Enterprise Partnerships.
17. It consists of two groups, an A5 Member Partnership and an A5 Transport Partnership which is made up of officers. Both groups include representatives drawn from the local authority areas, including officers and members of Leicestershire County Council and Highways England.
18. The length of the A5 corridor covered by the Partnership and a full list of its constituent members is shown at Appendix C.

#### Changes in context since 2012

19. In 2012 the Cabinet approved the first (current) A5 Strategy. Achieving the upgrade of the A5 was the sole strategic transport objective of Leicestershire County Council at that time.
20. Since then, there have been significant changes to the way in which both national and local policies, priorities and funding are developed and managed. Through a combination of its own study work and working with other bodies (including Midlands Connect, Leicester City Council and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership) the County Council has identified a much wider range of strategic transport interventions necessary to support long term housing and economic growth in the sub-region. These are set out in publications, including the Leicester and Leicestershire Rail Strategy (published February 2017) and the Prospectus for Growth (published September 2017).

21. A number of these priorities are also reflected in the 'Midlands Connect Strategy: Powering the Midlands Engine', which was published in March 2017. Midlands Connect is undertaking a number of studies to support the Midlands Engine, with the most relevant to Leicester and Leicestershire including:

- Leicester to Coventry direct rail (LeNuCKLe)
- Enhancement to Leicester to Birmingham rail connections
- A46 Expressway
- A5 Expressway\*
- Midlands Major Road Network (MRN)
- HS2 Gateway.

*\* The A5 Partnership has been asked by Midlands Connect to provide its views on a draft A5 study brief, prior to it being issued for tender.*

22. The Council continues to support, in principle, the upgrade of the A5 and considers that this should remain a strategic investment priority, both to address current operational issues (such as limiting impacts on local roads) and to support long term housing and economic growth (including as set out in the recently published draft Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan to 2050 (Draft 'Growth Strategy').

23. In light of the above, however, the Council now has a wider set of priorities and the upgrading of the A5 is one of a number of road and rail investments identified as being necessary to meet the needs of the area.

#### Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

24. On 6 June 2018, HBBC's Executive considered the final draft A5 Strategy. On 12 June its full Council considered the A5 Strategy. Its Council on 12 June:

- a) endorsed the refresh of the A5 Strategy, subject to final formatting and minor amendments to be agreed by its Leader with other members of the A5 Partnership;
- b) recommended that HBBC continued to express its support to, and lobbying for, the upgrade of the A5 through the work of the A5 Partnership, engagement with national and regional bodies, MPs and Ministers; and
- c) continues to encourage all partner authorities to fully support the A5 strategy and actively engage in promoting its objectives.

25. The HBBC Cabinet report noted that 'each constituent Council in the A5 Partnership, including HBBC, needs to ratify the finalised draft A5 Strategy, prior to its adoption. This follows agreement in principle at a special A5 Partnership Member meeting on 23 March 2018, subject to additional amendments'.

### **Functioning of the A5 Partnership (Governance and Terms of Reference)**

26. Whilst the Partnership is a non-statutory body with no powers it nevertheless has a role in seeking improvements for the A5. As such, it is important that its role and functions are clearly set out in an approved and transparent constitution, something which has not yet been put in place.
27. To ensure that the Partnership acts in accordance with the '*Local Government Transparency Code 2014*' the Cabinet resolved in March 2018 for the Director of Environment and Transport to enter into discussions with local highway authorities and the A5 Partnership with the aim of establishing a formal and transparent constitution which would cover issues such as:
  - a. the chair, its rotation, role and remit
  - b. roles, responsibilities and remit of constituent members and the Partnership as a whole
  - c. meeting frequency and ability to call special meetings
  - d. decision making, voting and approvals processes
  - e. communication e.g. with constituent members and external bodies, such as Department for Transport, Highways, England and Midlands Connect
  - f. conflict resolution
  - g. secretariat support and responsibilities.
28. Further to this, the A5 Member Partnership discussed governance and terms of reference (23 March 2018). The Minutes of the meeting noted that the Partnership had worked well thus far because it was not overburdened with bureaucracy and processes, however, it would be prepared to review its constitutional arrangements.
29. In May 2018, to assist with the development of appropriate governance arrangements, the Council sent a draft Constitution (Governance and Terms of Reference) to the Chair of the A5 Transport Partnership (the officer group). This document aimed to provide a clear framework for the roles and responsibilities of all constituent members of the Partnership, minimising ambiguity that can potentially lead to misunderstanding, poor communication and/or transference of roles.
30. The A5 Partnership did not, however, accept this but proposed an alternative governance model, based on the A46 Partnership's model. Officers continue to discuss this matter with the Chief Executive of HBBC on behalf of the Chair of the Partnership with a view to agreeing a finalised document as attached as Appendix B. This document will be discussed at the A5 Members Partnership meeting on 29 June 2018.

### **Further Revised draft A5 Strategy**

31. Since the Cabinet meeting in March, further changes have been made to the draft Strategy.
32. Officers have requested that suitable wording be added to the draft A5 Strategy to ensure that reference is made to other wider strategic priorities and clarify how the

A5 sits and interacts with these projects, including HS2, the A46 Expressway and proposed new M1 junction 20A. This wording has now been added to the latest version of the Strategy, as attached in Appendix A.

33. A meeting of the A5 Member Partnership on 29 June will be asked to consider:
- a. The latest version of the A5 Strategy (Appendix A)
  - b. The Council's suggested amendments to the draft governance and terms of reference (Appendix B).

### **Equality and Human Rights Implications**

There are no equality or human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

### **Background Papers**

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council's report to Council - 12 June (item 13)

<http://moderngov.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=119&MId=1639&Ver=4>

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council's report to Executive - 6 June (item 8)

<http://moderngov.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/documents/s9744/A5%20strategy%20refresh%20report.pdf>

Report to the Cabinet – 9 March 2018: 'A5 Strategy'.

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=5178&Ver=4>

Report to the Cabinet – 16 October 2012: 'A Strategy for the A5 2011-2026 A449 Gailey (Staffordshire) to A45 Weedon (Northamptonshire)' on 16 October 2012

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MID=3395#AI32599>

Leicester and Leicestershire Rail Strategy

<http://bit.ly/2Fa1lkw>

Prospectus for Growth (2017)

<http://bit.ly/2CKwF3V> (high resolution PDF: 15.9 mb)

<http://bit.ly/2F63DBg> (low resolution PDF: 4.85 mb)

Local Government Transparency Code 2014

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-government-transparency-code-2015>

### **Appendices**

Appendix A: Final draft A5 Strategy

Appendix B: Draft Governance and Terms of Reference

Appendix C: Plan of the A5 corridor covered by the A5 Partnership

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