

REPORT TO: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE 03 FEBRUARY 2009

SUBJECT: ELGIN TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT – REPORT 1

BY: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update to Committee on matters affecting Elgin Traffic Management. A separate report on the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) is presented to this Committee.
- 1.2 To set out the general background for the related report (Elgin Traffic Management – Report 2) to this Committee.
- 1.3 To seek approval for the preparation and award of a new Framework Agreement to enable projects within the scope of Elgin Traffic Management to be taken forward.
- 1.4 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to the function of the Council as Roads Authority including safety, the detailed planning, design and construction, improvement, maintenance and lighting of roads, bridges and other structures.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **The Committee is invited to note the contents of this report.**
- 2.2 **The Committee is invited to delegate the Director of Environmental Services to prepare and award a new Framework Agreement for transportation and design services.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In November 2002 a petition for 'A96 Improvements (Elgin Bypass)' was submitted to the Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee. Since then a number of studies were carried out in relation to an Elgin Bypass. The HITRANS A96 Bypasses Economic Appraisal Study was reported to the Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee on 17 June 2008.
- 3.2 The Strategic Transport Projects Review was published in December 2008. The STPR and the matter of an Elgin Bypass is covered by a separate report submitted to this Committee. It should be noted that in light of the outcome of

the STPR, then there may be a knock-on effect on much of the local network through gradual displacement of trips from the A96 to alternative/parallel local road routes.

- 3.3 Since September 2004 there have been a series of reports to Committees concerning the preparation of an Elgin Traffic Model and a STAG Report. The full list of reports is attached at **Appendix A**.
Note: Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) is the method of appraisal for transport policies and projects throughout Scotland.
- 3.4 The Elgin STAG Study key objective, 'to provide a quicker, safer and more reliable transport system in and around Elgin while accommodating future development', was identified by stakeholders and adopted for the Study.
- 3.5 The Elgin Community Council was one of the stakeholders who were involved in the preparation of the Elgin STAG objectives. They have strongly advocated improvements to the road network in Elgin.
- 3.6 Five transport themes were identified in the Elgin STAG Study process. From these themes seven options were taken forward to the Elgin STAG Part 2 appraisal. The Environmental Services Committee on 30 August 2007 (para 5 of the Minute refers) approved officers to proceed with detailed design work for two options from the seven that were considered in the Elgin STAG Part 2 Report. A separate report (Elgin Traffic Management – Report 2) concerning the findings of work carried out for the two options is presented separately to this Committee.
- 3.7 In the preparation of the Elgin STAG Reports and the Elgin Traffic Model account was taken of the prevailing policies, strategies, committed infrastructure and approved developments. Since the publication of the Elgin STAG Part 2 Report there have been some significant updates and changes at national, regional and local level. The details of these are noted in the table at **Appendix B**. The next two paragraphs highlight some of the notable policy, strategy and legislation changes since 2006.
- 3.8 In terms of Transport policies, strategies and studies these include the publication of the National Transport Strategy; HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy; a number of studies concerning the A96(T); Moray Road Safety Plan 2008-2011; and the Strategic Transport Projects Review.
- 3.9 Other policies and strategies that have a bearing on Elgin Traffic Management include: The Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2006; Moray Local Plan (2008); Moray Council Priorities for 2008-2011; Moray Council Single Outcome Agreement.
- 3.10 The current traffic situation in Elgin is one of increasing congestion at a number of locations at particular times of the day. Recent transport assessments received in connection with major development applications show capacity/delay problems at specific junctions in Elgin. River crossings, and more particularly rail crossings, are responsible for only some of the

constraints on the road network, but they tend to be critical for future development as well as a major source of existing problems. The existing rail crossings in the town are all inadequate in different ways and most have very limited scope for on-site improvement.

3.11 A series of TSP measures have been identified in the Moray Local Plan that cover strategic transport improvement options (including possible Bypass lines), individual junctions that will require improvements in relation to designated land uses, railway sidings, bus station, and strategic cycling network routes.

3.12 The levels of traffic flows on various road links in Elgin are monitored through a set of permanent traffic count sites and additional temporary traffic surveys. The average 24 hour 2-way traffic flow for the A941 railway crossing is 22,470 and this peaked, just before Christmas 2009, at 27,290 vehicles. The typical 24 hour 2-way traffic flow on the A96 at Alexandra Road is 23,650.

3.13 The original Elgin Traffic Model (base 2006) used traffic data collated in late 2005 and early 2006. Recognising there would be an impact on normal traffic flows due to the closure of Reiket Lane a series of junction surveys were carried out during summer 2008. These surveys reveal the following levels of traffic passing through these key junctions on the A941 in their respective busiest PM peak hour:

<u>Junction</u>	<u>PM period</u>	<u>Movements</u>
New Elgin Road/Edgar Road Roundabout	1630:1730	(2612)
New Elgin Road/Station Road Roundabout	1630:1730	(2285)
North Street/Morrison Road Priority Junction	1645:1745	(1487)

3.14 During the period between 2006 to 2009 a number of 'major developments' were given planning consent and some have now become operational:

Aldi Store (Trinity Place)
 Mezzanine floor extension at Tesco Store (Alexandra Road)
 Lidl Store (Station Road)
 Extension to Walkers Factory (Edgar Road)
 Johnstons Cashmere Visitor Centre (Newmill Road)
 Mezzanine floor extension at Asda Store (Edgar Road)
 R11 Waulkmill (Reiket Lane)
 R14 Thornhill (Thornhill Road)
 R9 Bilbohall North (Mayne Farm Road)
 Community facilities at CF4 Thornhill Field (Thornhill Road)
 60 residential units at former Pinefield Community Centre (Pinefield Road)
 Waulkmill phase 2 (Reiket Lane)
 Garden Centre (Sheriffmill Road)

3.15 There are developer contributions, associated with some of the above developments, towards network infrastructure improvements related to the impact of each development. There are specific dates set out in legal agreements when these funds have to be spent.

- 3.16 There are a number of major planning applications in the pipeline that are being evaluated for their impact on the road network and consideration of mitigation measures associated with these developments.
- 3.17 The Council and Community Planning Partners have a number of projects in Elgin that will require an assessment of their traffic impact. This includes housing, sports, health, education and transport related projects. Pre-application advice and information has already been provided to some of the Community Planning Partner organisations.
- 3.18 Whilst some long term vacant posts within Transportation and Consultancy have recently been filled there remain two long term vacant posts that would contribute some project management and design support to Elgin Traffic Management projects.
- 3.19 The current Transportation Call-off Contract with Halcrow is due to expire at the end of March 2009. However, like many other term contracts operated by public sector clients, there is an arrangement for an extension for a period of up to 12 months.
- 3.20 Elgin Traffic Management projects will have to be taken forward in accordance with procedures, regulations and relevant legislation. There will in many cases be a requirement for the identification of all known constraints, surveys (including ground investigations), consultations with stakeholders, discussions with landowner(s), preparation of project management proposals and detailed designs.
- 3.21 Due to the requirement for Elgin Traffic Management projects to proceed through statutory procedures and to be progressed to tender stages there is a requirement to acquire transportation and design services from consultants. This is not only to supplement existing resources and capabilities within the Council but to provide specialist support, such as traffic modelling, environmental assessment, economic evaluation, etc.
- 3.22 There will have to be a new Framework Agreement to replace the Call-off Term contract. The Committee is requested to approve the preparation and award of a new Framework Agreement that will enable all aspects required to efficiently prepare and deliver Elgin Traffic Management projects.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan

This report contributes to:

CDP Environmental Programme 4 Transport

Provide suitable transport and other infrastructure to help the local economy

SIP Improving Transport Infrastructure

- (b) **Policy and Legal**
This report takes account of:
Moray Local Plan (2008)
Regional Transport Strategy
SPP17 Planning for Transport
Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG)
Elgin Traffic Management projects will be required to comply with statutory procedures.
- (c) **Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)**
Funding for the preparation of a new Framework Agreement will be met from the 'Elgin Traffic Management & Car Parking'. Economic evaluation of Elgin Traffic Management projects will be required. The procurement of a new Framework Agreement will have to be in accordance with EU Regulations and the associated mandatory timescales (Open Procedure without Prior Information/Indicative Notice - minimum of 52 days from issue of invitation to tender to receipt of tender response). Developer contributions already secured must be spent by specified deadlines.
There are still a small number of vacant posts in Transportation and Consultancy.
To achieve the Elgin STAG key objective will require land and may also require property.
- (d) **Consultations**
The Development Management Manager, Planning & Development Manager, Principal Accountant, and Principal Solicitor (Commercial & Conveyancing) have been consulted. Comments received have been incorporated in this report.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 There is a need to work towards the Elgin STAG key objective 'to provide a quicker, safer and more reliable transport system in and around Elgin while accomodating future development'.
- 5.2 Five transport themes were identified in the Elgin STAG Study process and from these themes seven options were taken forward to the Elgin STAG Part 2 appraisal. The Environmental Services Committee on 30 August 2007 approved officers to proceed with detailed design work for two of the seven options. The Elgin Traffic Management – Report 2 covers the work taken forward in relation to the two options.
- 5.3 The prevailing traffic situation in Elgin does not reflect the increasing amount of developments that have been granted planning consent but have not yet become operational. Recent transport assessments received in connection with major development applications show capacity/delay problems at specific junctions in Elgin.

- 5.4 Given the requirement for Elgin Traffic Management projects to proceed through statutory procedures and to be progressed to tender stages there is a requirement to acquire transportation and design services. A new Framework Agreement will replace the current Call-off Term Contract and enable all aspects required to efficiently deliver Elgin Traffic Management projects to be put in place

Author of Report:

Background Papers: Reports to Committee – see **Appendix A**

Ref:

Introduction

Over the years the transport situation in Elgin has been the subject of a number of various reports to the Environmental Services Committee.

Copies of presentations and reports are available at the Council web site:

http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_52145.html

Date	Description
01/02/2006	Transportation Professional Services Call-off Term Contract
01/03/2006	STAG Report & Transport Model Update
22/03/2006	STAG Pre-appraisal Workshop
15/06/2006	Transport Model & STAG Study Report - Update
10/07/2006	Elgin STAG Study Part 1 Appraisal
29/08/2006	Elgin Transport Model - Progress
30/08/2006	Elgin STAG Study Part 1 - Implications & Options Testing Requirements for STAG Part 2
25/10/2006	Use of Elgin Transport Model for Development Management/ Charges
05/04/2007	Elgin STAG Study Information Report Elgin STAG Study Interim Review Report Elgin STAG Study Options Testing Report
30/08/2007	Elgin STAG Study - Part 2 report Elgin STAG Study - Part 2 Summary report Elgin STAG Study - Part 2 Appendix B Elgin STAG Study- Committee presentation Elgin - A road strategy for the future Elgin STAG Study - Part 2 Elgin STAG Study - Part 2 Final Report Elgin STAG Study - Part 2 Final Environmental Report Elgin STAG Study - Part 2 Appendix C (Appraisal summary tables) A to G)

Policies and Strategies Updates	
Update	Notes
National Transport Strategy	Published for consultation in April 2006. The NTS was published in December 2006 along with policies covering railways, bus and freight.
HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy (RTS)	The RTS was published for consultation in November 2006 and was submitted to Scottish Ministers in March 2007.
Aberdeen to Inverness Transport Corridor Study (AITCS)	Transport Scotland published the Aberdeen to Inverness Transport Corridor Study in 2007.
HITRANS A96 Bypasses Economic Appraisal Study	HITRANS A96 Bypasses Economic Appraisal Study was reported to the Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee on 17 June 2008.
Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR)	STPR published in December 2008. Separate Report to this Committee.
Moray Local Plan 2008	The new Moray Local Plan 2008 replaces the Moray Local Plan 2000, and will remain in force for five years, when it will again be reviewed. Moray Local Plan 2008 interprets the strategic direction provided by the Moray Structure Plan 2007 into detailed policies and proposals for use in the determining of planning policies.
Moray Council Priorities	Eight key priorities have been identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood alleviation • Educational attainment • Care of older people • Community safety • Affordable housing • Rural development • Elgin traffic management
Moray Council Single Outcome Agreement	The Concordat which was agreed by the Scottish Government and Scottish local authorities in 2007 established a new

Policies and Strategies Updates	
Update	Notes
	<p>relationship between the two tiers of government.</p> <p>Roads Infrastructure and traffic management Transport infrastructure in Moray requires to be developed in order to facilitate the movement of goods and people to and from Moray. Further Moray has a high rate of car dependency and therefore it is a priority for residents to be able to get to their destinations. Upgrading of key trunk roads – the A96 between Inverness and Aberdeen, the A941, A95 A9 and A90 continue to be a priority. Traffic movement within Elgin is also a major concern and requires major improvement if investment within the town is not to be constrained. The Council is committed to supporting and lobbying for an Elgin Bypass and improvements to the roads infrastructure in Elgin and beyond.</p>
National Planning Framework	This is a framework to guide the spatial development of Scotland to 2025.
The Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2006	<p>Scottish legislation covering public contracts. "framework agreement" means an agreement or other arrangement between one or more contracting authorities and one or more economic operators which establishes the terms (in particular the terms as to price and, where appropriate, quantity) under which the economic operator will enter into one or more contracts with a contracting authority in the period during which the framework agreement applies</p>

THE MORAY COUNCIL

EXTRACT FROM MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2009

COUNCIL OFFICE, ELGIN

PRESENT

Councillor J Russell (Chairman), J Cree (Deputy Chair), L Bell, G Coull, J Hamilton, G Leadbitter, G McDonald, G McIntyre, I Ogilvie, P Paul and A Wright.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors J Divers and R Shepherd.

IN ATTENDANCE

The Director of Environmental Services, the Chief Financial Officer (for Item 19 only) the Head of Direct Services, the Head of Development Services, the Transportation Manager, the Planning & Development Manager, L Paisey, Principal Accountant, A Scott, Principal Solicitor (Commercial and Conveyancing) and the Principal Committee Services Officer, Clerk to the Meeting.

1. ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

In terms of Standing Order 25 (iv) the Committee agreed to accept as an additional item of business to be transacted at the meeting a report by the Director of Environmental Services in regard to Business Gateway on the Chairman certifying that, in his opinion, it required to be considered on the grounds of urgency given the timescales involved.

The Committee further agreed to it being taken as item 15(a) on the Agenda (paragraph 16 of the Minute refers).

2. DECLARATION OF GROUP DECISIONS

In terms of Standing Order 20 Councillor Leadbitter confirmed that the SNP Group had discussed in some detail the traffic papers at Items 5 6 and 17(a)(para 19 of the Minute refers) on the Agenda but that it should, however, be appreciated that the SNP Group Members are free to vote as they see fit. There was no whip on the decision of the SNP Members and no sanctions in place to encourage them to vote in any particular way.

The Convener also confirmed that the Administration Group had also discussed items 5, 6 and 17(a)(para 19 of the Minute refers) on the agenda it should, however, be appreciated that the Administration Group Members are free to vote as they see

issues can reasonably be taken forward by such a sub-committee and to consider the remit and membership of such a sub-committee.

6. ELGIN TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT - 1

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environmental Services updating the Committee on matters affecting Elgin Traffic Management and to seek approval for the preparation and award of a new Framework Agreement to enable projects within the scope of Elgin Traffic Management to be taken forward.

Following consideration the Committee noted the contents of the report and agreed to delegate the Director of Environmental Services to prepare and award a new Framework Agreement for transportation and design services.

7. INVESTIGATION OF 20MPH SPEED RESTRICTIONS FINDOCHTY AND PORTKNOCKIE

Under reference to paragraph 1 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee dated 2 December 2008, there was submitted a report by the Director of Environmental Services asking the Committee to note the outcome of a feasibility study on the possibility of making the adjoining villages of Findochty and Portknockie wholly 20 mph speed zones and to confirm that no further action should be taken on this matter as it cannot be introduced without major infrastructure investment.

During discussion Councillor G McDonald expressed his disappointment with the report and in particular the financial implications. He further stated that he would like to ask the Committee to allow consideration of paragraph 4.16 of the report which sets out an alternative option and moved that it agree to officers entering into discussion with the local members to determine whether there is any merit in progressing this further.

Following consideration the Committee noted the contents of the report and agreed that officers enter into discussion with the local members to determine whether there is any merit in progressing this further.

8. PROPOSED 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT FINDHORN

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environmental Services asking the Committee to approve the promotion of a 20 mph speed limit within the conservation area of Findhorn and the adjoining cul-de-sacs.

Following consideration the Committee approved the proposal to introduce a 20mph speed limit within the conservation area of Findhorn and the adjoining cul-de-sacs and instruct the Director of Environmental Services and the Chief Legal Officer to proceed with the statutory process.

9. PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE OF FOOTWAY - B9011 AT FINDHORN

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environmental Services asking the Committee to approve the proposed redetermination of the means of exercise of

Planning Officer has also had to follow this up with Transport Scotland and that she has also had discussions with him in this regard and that he is now in the process of agreeing a way forward and bringing the matter before Committee or determining the application which is before the Council.

BUCKIE HARBOUR

In response to Councillor G McDonald's query regarding an update report on Buckie Harbour, the Head of Direct Services advised that the report had been drafted and had been circulated for consultation and that responses were still awaited. He further advised that the report would be submitted to the next meeting of this Committee.

LHANBRYDE - ELGIN CYCLEWAY/PATHWAY

Councillor Wright asked for an update on the progress of a cycleway/pathway between Lhanbryde and Elgin. In response the Head of Direct Services advised that as this was a trunk road, representation would require to be made to BEAR Scotland as the Trunk Roads Authority.

WEARING OF HARD HATS

In response to the issue raised by Councillor Hamilton relating to the wearing and supply of hard hats, the Head of Direct Services advised that these can be provided to Members.

18. PROPOSED LEASE TERMINATION - UNITS J & R, ISLA BANK MILLS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, KEITH [PARAS 6 & 9]

There was submitted a report by the Head of Estates Services inviting the Committee to approve a request to terminate the current tenant's lease of Units J & R, Isla Bank Mills Industrial Estate, Keith.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to terminate the current tenant's lease of Units J & R, Isla Bank Mills Industrial Estate, Keith with effect from 30 September 2008.

19. ELGIN TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT - REPORT 2 [PARAS 8 & 9]

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environmental Services which expanded upon the related report "Elgin Traffic Management - Report 1" and in particular the issues surrounding Elgin Western Distributor Road.

The Head of Direct Services advised Committee of the investigations carried out to date by referring to the background section of the report. He further advised that the report had not been presented to seek the Committees approval of a preferred option, rather it was to identify that any proposal had to comply with current standards and as such wider investigations would be required to enable the Council to be in a position to consider all options fully at a future meeting.

Following consideration the Committee noted the information provided in the report and agreed that investigation of options along alignments A and B be continued.