

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Corporate Director for Place

To
Cabinet

on
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Agenda
Item No.

A127/A1015 Kent Elms Corner Junction Improvement - Local Growth Fund Scheme

Economic & Environment Scrutiny Committee
Executive Councillor: Councillor Terry

1. Purpose of Report

To advise Cabinet that:-

- 1.1 Advance and enabling works to create a new surface pedestrian crossing of the A127 and the necessary movement of utility equipment is under preparation for implementation in 2015/16
- 1.2 This will require approval for the preliminary layout of the crossing, any related traffic regulation orders and agreement to fund the utilities diversionary costs in accordance with the New Roads and Streetworks Act
- 1.5 The procurement of the contractor will be made through the new term contracts that commence on 1st April 2015
- 1.6 The budget for this advance work is in the Council's capital programme for 2015/16

2 Recommendations:

- 2.1 That Cabinet agree to proceed with the installation of a controlled surface pedestrian crossing of the A127 in advance of the major junction improvements currently being considered
- 2.2 That Cabinet agree the preliminary design and the programme for detailed design and construction of the surface crossing, including the advertisement of any necessary traffic regulation orders;
- 2.3 That delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive and Corporate Director for Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection, Waste and Transport to agree the detailed design and

implementation of the surface crossing, following circulation of these details to all Members and discussions with the Leaders of the opposition parties;

- 2.4 That Cabinet delegate authority to the Chief Executive and Corporate Director for Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection, Waste and Transport to approve the implementation of the project.**

3. Background

The South East LEP Strategic Economic Plan identifies the A127 as a key corridor for growth. The A127 links London with Basildon and Southend and Rochford. In Basildon, the A127 corridor is home to one of the largest single concentrations of advanced manufacturing companies in the South of England. It makes substantial contributions to the prosperity of the SE LEP area and offers considerable growth prospects. London Southend Airport, now with scheduled air services to Europe and hub airports for onward global travel, and planned business parks, will prove attractive to a wide range of global companies and offers capacity for at least 4,200 additional jobs up to 2021 and a further 3,180 post 2021. Southend and Rochford have agreed the Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP) to unlock these opportunities and the Council has appointed a development partner.

To enable growth in Thames Gateway South Essex the A127 requires substantial improvement and a higher level of maintenance. The 'A127 Corridor for Growth Economic Plan', approved by Cabinet, sets out the rationale and supporting evidence in detail. The A127 Corridor for Growth package is a partnership project between Essex County Council and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council. The Southend element includes A127 Major Scheme Highway Maintenance; Highway and bridge maintenance identified through asset management surveys and the bridge maintenance programme together with the A127 Kent Elms and A127 The Bell junction improvements.

The A127 Corridor for Growth package has currently been designated as a "retained" scheme which, subject to the approval of the business case, will be supported by the Local Growth Fund.

The A127/A1015 Kent Elms Corner junction improvement works are programmed to commence construction in 2016/17. The provision of a new surface crossing and undertaking utility diversions necessary for the new crossing in advance of the main works will support the delivery of the main scheme and provide access for pedestrians during the main works. Negotiations are underway with the utility companies in order for the new pedestrian crossing to be installed. The advance works will be undertaken by the new works term contractor with works proposed to commence in 15/16.

The crossing can be implemented in advance as a means of crossing the A127 to access amenities for local residents and residents with mobility issues. The crossing will help facilitate the removal of the bridge in the future by providing an alternative route for pedestrians. The early diversion of utilities will assist in kerb widening, which will be required in any future scheme.

4. Other Options

The advance enabling works and new pedestrian access across the A127 will provide a route for local residents up to and during the junction improvement works. These works will support any future scheme at this junction.

5. Reasons for Recommendations

The new pedestrian surface access crossing will support the delivery of the final junction improvement works whilst providing access to pedestrians in the immediate future. The new crossing will provide access to local businesses, Kent Elms Health Centre and Library. These works will not compromise any future designed scheme and will support the implementation of the future scheme.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities

This scheme contributes to the Council's visions, particularly in terms of creating a thriving and sustainable local economy and planning safety and accessibility for those with disabilities.

6.2 Financial Implications

The A127 Corridor for Growth package will draw down £16.6m of growth funding subject to the approval of the Business Case. The funding profile for the projects is as follows:

A127 Bridge and Highway Maintenance Funding Profile

Funding Profile	FY 2015/16	FY 2016/17	FY 2017/18 - 2020/21	Total
DfT LGF	£400,000*	£300,000*	£7,300,000*	£8,000,000*
Southend Capital	£0	£0	£0	£0
	£400,000	£300,000	£7,300,000*	£8,000,000

A127 The Bell Junction Improvement Funding Profile

Funding Profile	FY 2015/16	FY 2016/17	FY 2017/18 - 2020/21	Total
DfT LGF	£0	£0	£4,300,000*	£4,300,000*
Southend Capital	£100,000	£100,000	£520,000	£720,000
	£100,000	£100,000	£4,820,000*	£5,020,000

A127/A1015 Kent Elms Corner Junction Improvement Funding Profile

Funding Profile	FY 2015/16	FY 2016/17	FY 2017/18 - 2020/21	Total
DfT LGF	£500,000*	£3,800,000*	£0	£4,300,000*
Southend Capital	£500,000	£100,000	£120,000	£720,000
	£1,000,000	£100,000	£171,000*	£5,020,000

*Subject to business case approval

The total scheme cost for the A127/A1015 Kent Elms Corner project is estimated at £5.020m which includes the advance enabling works and surface crossing. Subject to the approval of the business case, the contribution from the Local Growth Fund is £4.3m with the remaining £720,000 contribution from the capital programme.

6.3 Legal Implications

6.3.1 Some of the traffic management features will require the advertisement of Traffic Regulation Orders.

6.4 People Implications

6.4.1 These works will provide a pedestrian and cycle crossing at the Kent Elms Junction which currently does not exist and will also allow people with mobility issues to cross the A127 and access local amenities. The scheme affects the lives of all those who live, work and visit the town. The implications are positive as the intention is to provide an improved accessibility and safety.

6.5 Property Implications

6.5.1 There are no property implications as all the improvements are within the highway boundary.

6.6 Consultation

6.6.1 The consultation process for this work is based on the "Southend Together" toolkit which seeks to engage and inform residents businesses and key stakeholders throughout the life of the project.

6.6.2 A127 schemes were reported to Cabinet on 8th January 2013 with cross party support towards developing the schemes. Proposals for consultation were contained within that report. The consultation process commenced focusing on community engagement conversations to explore the issues and problems around the junctions to hear the views of residents, businesses, key stakeholders and drivers. The consultation plan for A127 Kent Elms junction will be reviewed to reflect the scheme programme.

6.6.3 The engagement consultation exercise for the three A127 schemes commenced in February 2013, with all Councillors given the opportunity to attend a discussion, focus group or feedback session to consider and offer input about potential improvements to the junctions, together with Opposition Group Transport Leads briefings. This was followed by a focused business group session in March 2013 and on site engagement and an online questionnaire.

6.6.4 The A127 Kent Elms consultation process will continue throughout the life of the project and those principles of the Better Southend communications plan will be adopted. The Better Southend website will inform residents, businesses and visitors of the progress of the works throughout the design and construction. Officers will also engage further with those businesses located at the junction.

6.6.5 The principles of the Better Southend Transport Access Routeing Plan (TARP) will also be adopted, which seeks to minimise disruption and delay to road users. Investigation and consultation will be undertaken during the design process to determine the best way to maintain access to the businesses, residents and the town during the construction of the works.

6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.7.1 Best practice will be adopted in the design proposals with the aim to improve accessibility for pedestrians, cyclist and the disabled which will be a major factor in the development of the schemes.

6.8 Risk Assessment

6.8.1 Risks will be reviewed throughout the life of the project and mitigation measures undertaken to reduce risks.

6.9.9 Value for Money

6.9.1 The business case for the project is required to provide value for money.

6.10 Community Safety Implications

6.10.1 The scheme will provide a surface access to local amenities and provide a route for pedestrians, cyclists, wheel chair users to cross the A127 at this location.

6.11 Environmental Impact

6.11.1 The scheme will help deliver an improved local environment and contribute positively towards sustainable transport objectives.

7. Background Papers

7.1 LTP3 (2011-2026) and the LTP Implementation Plan

7.2 Framework for Prioritising Strategic Transport Infrastructure in the SELEP area

- 7.3 Devolving local major transport schemes DfT 31st January 2012
- 7.4 SELEP response to Devolving local major transport schemes
- 7.5 Devolving local major transport schemes: consultation responses
- 7.6 Local frameworks for funding major transport schemes: guidance for local transport bodies DfT 23rd November 2012.
- 7.7 Report to Cabinet 8th January: A127 Kent Elms, A127 The Bell Corner and A127 Tesco Junction Improvements and progress of South East LEP Local Transport Body
- 7.8 A127 Corridor for Growth – An Economic Plan March 2014

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – proposed layout plan