

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MANAGEMENT REVIEW OF LENDAL BRIDGE TRIAL CLOSURE

Update November 2014

The report does not give numbered recommendations, though it divides the relevant section between governance, programme management and project management. This note follows that convention but numbers and articulates recommendations for ease of reference.

1. Governance

1.1 More effective communication between senior officers and elected members before manifesto promises are made. It is not appropriate for officers to comment on manifesto expectations, and so this recommendation is not accepted. Within the services covered by CES, senior managers have sought to ensure leading members are aware of the budget constraints and choices which will face any incoming Administration post May 2015.

1.2 Introduction of protocols which provide a clear point of contact for members and set clear boundaries between political leadership and operational responsibility. This is the case. Key projects (both within Transport and beyond) have a specific point of contact. Officers and members are expected to direct enquiries to that relevant person. Member governance and liaison is now explicitly considered at project initiation and, at the current time, major projects are being reviewed in the light of the changed political make-up of the Council. A stronger culture of engaging and informing ward members is also in place, particularly with regard to minor highways works.

1.3 Ensure clarity about project stages, particularly between 'in principle' political agreement and formal operation approval. This is dealt with by the project initiation protocols described below. In particular, ensuring that projects undergo a formal financial approval process is key to removing any doubt about their status, while ensuring that projects which are part of the Council's programme are progressing as required. This is particularly important for projects which require some work and investment by the Council to win external funding to progress, such as several sustainable transport initiatives.

1.4 Introduce formal audit trails, including formal chairing and minuting of project boards. This is now in place, especially for larger projects and for the overall transport programme with remaining projects establishing these protocols. It should be noted that for several projects this was in place. It is now a requirement for expenditure.

2. Programme management

2.1 Establishment of a programme to enable prioritisation. This has been in place for transport since July and is now being established for major projects across CES.

2.2 A robust project management system to underpin the programme. For Transport schemes a documented project management system has been introduced, including formal initiation, critical path analysis, governance establishment, and gateway requirements to proceed to next stages. A similar process is now in place for more complex projects (such as York Central) which require partnership with

other organisations. Gateways include in principle approval, business case approval and procurement decisions, and include achieving clarity about who are the decision makers in each case. A core objective of the process is to minimise the risk of reactive decision-making based on short-term considerations rather than a considered appraisal of the issues and options. The first full cycle to which this discipline is being applied is the 15/16 capital programme as the 14/15 programme is of course underway.

2.3 Introduce a Programme Delivery Board with senior leadership. A Transport Board was established in July, chaired by the Assistant Director, Highways, Transport and Waste. This board has the specific remit of ensuring robust project management, managing slippage and enabling transparency. An Infrastructure Delivery Board is being established, chaired by the Director CES with membership from CBSS and CANS, to provide a similar programme oversight of major projects.

2.4 Ensure member oversight of the Programme. The Capital Monitor is discussed with the Cabinet member for Transport biannually, and officers are reviewing ways to make this more transparent and proactive, including whether the lead member attends the Programme Board three monthly as the report suggests. Major projects are reported biannually to the EDSOC committee. The objective for the future will be to focus on fewer large projects but have greater transparency of milestones and progress. This has been particularly difficult during the recession as York, in common with many places, has seen slower investment.

3. Project management

3.1 Ensure robust project management protocols. As at 2.2 above, this is now largely in place. For some larger schemes it has been important to dovetail these to the expectations of funders, such as the gateway system developed since September by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership, from which the Council is aiming to win over £60m of capital for investment in York Central and Station Gateway and the Outer Ring Road over the next few weeks. The report notes that ensuring robust project and programme management is not 'free' but represents an overhead for which resources are required. Within the large transport projects, this is an element of capital funding; for the major infrastructure projects, discussions are needed as part of budget planning to ensure sufficient resource is available to progress and manage the work appropriately. The project management approach now contains a risk analysis which enables a stronger focus on potential solutions to challenges encountered during the project development.

3.2 Ensure appropriate consultation. The report suggests that the Lendal Bridge trial does not appear to have been subject to the same consultation as some schemes, but this is not accepted as accurate. There was extensive discussion before and during the trial, including public consultation sessions in the city centre, two business consultation sessions, leaflet drops with businesses, and a leaflet drop to all households in the city, alongside publicity in the press and social media. The Council, including its Transport function, has historically a strong track record of consultation. The importance of consultation has been reviewed and reinforced consultation on schemes, illustrated by improved member relationships on the A19 pinch point scheme. One way of viewing the proposed Congestion

Commission is an extended form of consultation and policy debate on approaches to traffic management in the city.

3.3 Promote proactive monitoring enabling data analysis to guide enforcement This recommendation is particularly relevant for transport schemes and has been adopted, for instance in the month-long and monitored introduction of enforcement of the new Minster Badge. Officers are also exploring experimental methods to test traffic schemes, such as those used in New York. Officers also note that consultation, monitoring and evidence-gathering all require time and resources in addition to the core project spend.