



CHESTERFIELD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

*Overview and Performance Scrutiny
Forum*

Scrutiny Project Group

report on

HS2

Project Group Members:

Councillors:

Lead	Jenny Flood
Group Members	Howard Borrell Ray Catt John Dickinson Kate Caulfield Gordon Simmons Kate Sarvent Lisa-Marie Derbyshire
Project Group officer support was provided by Charlotte Kearsey, Democratic and Scrutiny Officer	

1.0 Introduction and Review Aims

1.1 HS2 was identified as a priority for scrutiny consideration during the development of the 2017/18 work programme. Approval was given by the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum on 9 May 2017 to identify or establish plans regarding how the council is preparing for the impact of the development and ensuring that the development will benefit the area, the residents and visitors.

1.2 The aims of the Project Group were established as:

- To ensure each area of responsibility within the Council works in partnership with others to ensure a joined-up cohesive approach to future changes.
- To contribute towards a shared vision for the opportunities that the development of the Infrastructure Maintenance Depot at Staveley and of HS2 trains services will bring to the borough as well as the wider area.

1.3 The Group's Project Start Report, including these aims, was approved by the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum on 27 June, 2017.

2.0 Reasons for Review and link to Council priorities

2.1 HS2 presents an opportunity to significantly increase economic growth in a wide range of areas including jobs, skills, homes, the visitor economy and inward investment for North Derbyshire and the wider region.

2.2 Significant work was already being carried out to help deliver growth in the local economy and HS2 has the potential to act as a catalyst to further other work due to the size of the project and the improved connectivity it will bring.

2.3 The East Midlands HS2 Growth Strategy; World Class – Locally Driven has been developed and submitted to Government to enable the benefits to be fully realised and maximised.

2.4 HS2 will deliver two major developments for Chesterfield, the Infrastructure Maintenance Depot at Staveley and HS2 trains stopping at the redeveloped Chesterfield Station. These developments have the potential to drive regeneration in these areas and the wider borough.

2.5 The scrutiny project group sought to ensure that a joined up approach would be taken by the council when it considered the positive and negative impacts of HS2.

2.6 The project supported the Council Plan priorities 'to make Chesterfield a thriving borough' and 'to improve the quality of life for local people'.

2.7 Within these priorities, the project will focus on the objectives "to make sure that local people benefit from growth in Chesterfield Borough", "to continue delivering regeneration projects that will

make Chesterfield Borough a better place” and “to improve the health and well-being of people in Chesterfield Borough”.

3.0 Review Approach

3.1 The review began with a meeting between the Lead Member and Democratic and Scrutiny Officer to discuss initial ideas and the project group membership. Then the project group and officer met with the Leader of the Council to gather information on the current position of HS2 and to discuss ideas and the topics of the review.

3.2 The project group began to meet in July 2017 to begin the research gathering process. This process involved meetings with Cabinet members and officers including:

- Councillor Steve Brunt, Cabinet Member for Town Centres and Visitor Economy;
- Alison Craig, Assistant Director – Housing
- Councillor Terry Gilby, Cabinet Member for Economic Growth;
- Councillor Tricia Gilby, Leader;
- Neil Johnson, Assistant Director – Economic Growth;
- Jonathon Little, HS2 Project Manager;
- Alan Morey, Strategic Planning and Key Sites Manager;
- Lynda Sharp, Economic Development Manager;
- Esther Thelwell, Senior Environmental Health Officer;
- Ian Waller, Assistant Director – Health and Wellbeing;
- Emily Williams, Senior Economic Development Officer.

3.3 We wish to place on record our thanks to all Officers, Cabinet Members and HS2 Ltd staff for their assistance with our aim of identifying the work already underway along with the future work required to deliver HS2 with maximum benefits for Chesterfield. In particular we wish to thank Charlotte Kearsey, who provided our administrative and organisational support.

4.0 Review Findings and Conclusions

4.1 In order to understand the far reaching impacts and opportunities of HS2 on the borough the project group agreed to consider the various topics within the scope separately. An overview of the findings from each topic is detailed in this section.

5.0 Environmental Impacts

5.1 The issues around health and wellbeing are important to HS2 Ltd and mitigation would feature heavily in the Environmental Statement. Environmental Health Officers from all along the Phase 2b line have been involved in multiple meetings with HS2 Ltd to discuss the plans and raise any concerns.

5.2 The Council's Environmental Services team are aiming to achieve minimal impacts on residents. There is an understanding that the development process and operation of HS2 will lead to an increase in pollution levels as would be expected from a new train line. In particular, there would be significant environmental impacts during the construction phase due to works vehicles and remediation. Due to the environmental impacts of the construction phase and remediation this process needs to be monitored. It was noted that the environmental impacts of the Infrastructure Maintenance Depot would be very different to the rest of the line. This was because there would be a separate design of train in use to serve the depot, these trains would function on a contrasting operating schedule and function of the depot would lead to varied noises.

5.3 The Government decision to cancel the Electrification of the Midland Main Line was a serious blow to reducing the environmental impact. This has been mitigated somewhat by a recent commitment to electrify up to Kettering and Clay Cross to Sheffield. Any section of the track without electrification would have to use a less environmentally friendly alternative, such as diesel or bi-modal trains. Current diesel trains will not be compliant with air quality standards by 2020-22. The Government favour the use of bi-modal trains but they are less fuel efficient

and environmentally friendly. Furthermore bi-modal trains will not be available until 2022 and there is also a need to look at the use of Hydrogen cells and batteries. It is hoped that these matters will be addressed in the Hybrid Bill or the desired advantages will not be maximised.

5.4 There is also the issue of the traffic congestion on roads around Chesterfield and how the growth in housing will cause further congestion and environmental health issues.

5.5 During the conversations around mitigating disruptions the importance of a full range of effective and proactive public relations and communications was emphasised. This was vital to ensure the negative consequences of HS2, in advance of and during the project, are minimised to the utmost degree possible while emphasising the positive impacts.

5.6 Chesterfield Borough Council will need to prepare a detailed response to the draft Environmental Statement in Autumn 2018 to ensure it's concerns are included and addressed.

5.7 Concerns were raised regarding the resourcing of the Environmental Services team to carry out the large amounts of work which will be created by HS2.

6.0 Transport to and from Chesterfield Station

6.1 Some initial masterplanning work for the station, which built upon the Town Centre Masterplan, was undertaken by AECOM. A more detailed plan is currently being produced by Cushman & Wakefield with the support of Whittam Cox. These masterplans have considered connectivity to the town centre onward links as a priority.

6.2 Derbyshire County Council have a large role to play regarding transport planning. Priorities for transport planning include delivering the Hollis Lane proposals, reviewing bus routes,

investigating park and ride and other potential solutions. It is very important that this work is carried out now to enable it to be included in the Hybrid Bill and access funding the Bill will provide.

7.0 Delivery Bodies for Chesterfield Station and the Infrastructure Maintenance Depot

7.1 The situation regarding delivery bodies for the Station and the Infrastructure Maintenance Depot is not as complicated as the Southern part of Phase 2b line. This means that delivery bodies have not been arranged at this time but they would need to be kept under review and considered in the forthcoming months.

7.2 Any future delivery body arrangements would need to be strategic and specialised to the needs of Chesterfield and North Derbyshire. It is likely that the Station and the Infrastructure Maintenance Depot will need different delivery bodies to meet the very different aspects of each site.

8.0 Tourism and the Visitor Economy

8.1 There are 1.7-3.2 million “day” visits to Chesterfield and 153k “night” visits a year. There is £100 million total spend from the visitor economy into the Chesterfield economy. In addition, HS2 Ltd believes that 50% of passengers will use the train for leisure purposes.

8.2 It is very important that the packaging of the Chesterfield offer is improved to encourage extended and overnight visits. The town centre is vital but needs improvements. The current situation in the town centre regarding the lack of Wi-Fi, the reconfiguration of the market having not yet taken place, the poor transport links and the decline of coach visits all need to be addressed to encourage longer visits.

8.3 A key issue is to strengthen Chesterfield’s role as a visitor hub to Chatsworth House and the Peak District. The development of the

international visitor offer is an important piece of work for the Chesterfield and Staveley Delivery Board. Challenges will involve:

- Reinforcing the local identity;
- New high quality, residential housing in the town centre;
- Provision of excellent events;
- A balance between offering experience and retail;
- Bringing the organisation and delivery of events into one team.

8.4 There is currently no finalised visitor economy strategy or action plan but this would help to improve the visitor economy for Chesterfield Station.

9.0 Skills and Economic Development/Growth

9.1 It is vital that businesses are ready to access the HS2 supply chain and that a large number of employment opportunities and apprenticeships are established throughout the project.

9.2 Business engagement needs to be carried out with a focus on HS2 as early as possible. Businesses need to be very closely supported because awareness of HS2 is low. We were pleased to note that the Council has already engaged with Destination Chesterfield but we also need to learn from the experiences of the London to Birmingham phase.

9.3 The group supports the aim of two HS2 trains calling at Chesterfield Station per hour and the added economic benefits this will bring to the borough.

9.4 The process to link skills and jobs into plans for major developments is being improved. The Council has been working hard to encourage schools, colleges and universities to engage with businesses and the National College of High Speed Rail. This work aims to address the skills requirements arising from HS2 and produce more meaningful apprenticeships which will deliver and fulfil the potential of young people in Chesterfield.

9.5 We were concerned to note that despite improving GCSE exam results for 18 -24 year olds this has not translated into employability. The council needs to work closely with schools and the Local Enterprise Partnership to ensure a greater emphasis on relevant skills development from an early age. Universities and Colleges need to improve their engagement efforts with local and regional skills agendas.

10.0 Housing Implications

10.1 Several Officers across the Council are responsible for housing growth. They are considering new ways of funding housing which will assist with housing needs for HS2. The Local Plan and Five Year Housing supply will assist with ensuring that there is a sufficient supply.

10.2 The Group were pleased to note that action has already been taken to lease properties to Housing Charities to help those that cannot afford to rent. HS2 is expected to put pressure on house prices and see an increase in "Buy to Let" properties pushing rents out of many families' reach.

10.3 The East Midlands HS2 Growth Strategy; World Class – Locally Driven demonstrated the initial thoughts regarding housing around the station. The Waterside and Northern Gateway projects would contribute to the housing needs for the area and assist with funding the station improvements.

10.4 Work with developers post planning permission approval is being improved to enable the delivery of more projects.

11.0 Planning Implications

11.1 Accessibility to platforms 2 and 3 at Chesterfield Station would need to be improved to accommodate the increased footfall from

the HS2 trains but major alterations to the area around the station are needed to draw in the maximum economic benefits.

11.2 Concerns have been expressed by the project group members about Chesterfield becoming a commuter town and planning will have a role to play with this through monitoring and overseeing the implementation of the Local Plan. The Local Plan would play a vital role in protecting land required for the developments around the station.

12.0 The Impact of HS2 on Properties

12.1 The group members considered the potential impact of the main and spur line on nearby properties, as well as the how soon the impact would affect some Chesterfield residents.

12.2 The Project Group were pleased that Consultation has already taken place regarding the preparation for the Infrastructure Maintenance Depot spur. A small number of properties which will be compromised have been identified. The line and trains will not affect other properties as freight already moves at night and the maintenance depot trains will run in a cutting to lessen the noise and visual impact.

13.0 Recommendations

13.1 That a Skills Scrutiny Project Group be established.

13.1.1 That the Skills Scrutiny Project Group examine how schools are proposing to work in partnership with the National Rail College and other education providers to better equip pupils to enter the work place.

13.1.2 That the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee obtain a report from the Skills Scrutiny Project Group regarding the impact of mental health issues affecting the employability of 18-24 year olds.

- 13.1.3 That the number and impact of Local labour Agreements in maximising opportunities for growth of jobs connected with HS2 be monitored.
- 13.1.4 That the Skills Scrutiny Project Group encourage the East Midlands Councils to lobby HS2 Ltd to include specific recommendations for the employment of Ex-Armed Forces personnel with relevant skills in their Local Labour Agreements.
- 13.2 That a report be brought to Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum before and after the Hybrid Bill has passed and the report will include detail on delivery bodies and infrastructure plans.
- 13.3 That a report be brought to Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum after the Hybrid Bill has passed to address how evolving effects on properties will be monitored and include plans for dealing with the negative impacts of construction work on the Infrastructure Maintenance Depot spur, including traffic management.
- 13.4 That an annual report be brought to the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum about the progress of the cohesive approach between the Council and partners.
- 13.5 That coordinated and overarching Public Relations be put in place to minimise the negative impacts of HS2 and to ensure that residents are kept fully informed about the mitigating process taking place.
- 13.6 That the way social media and digital innovation is used to improve communications and reinforce the positive impacts of HS2 be monitored.
- 13.7 That a report be brought to the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on the plans and progress of the construction phase

and remediation of the Infrastructure Maintenance Depot site to ensure scrutiny monitoring of the process.

- 13.8 That the HS2 Scrutiny Project Group support the development of a Visitor Economy Strategy.
- 13.9 That continuing Cabinet Member and Officer support for any future adhoc Scrutiny input relating to HS2 be provided.
- 13.10 That further consideration be given to the need to have new HS2 specific Scrutiny Project Groups after the Hybrid Bill and following further work up to 2022. It is considered essential that future reports on transport and highways, Local Enterprise Partnerships, housing, health and wellbeing and the Local Plan include HS2 as an integral part of all considerations.

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