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## Investigation Review

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Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership  
Dorking Sustainable Transport Package

## ITEM 9

**Project Title:** Dorking Sustainable Transport Package

**Local Partnerships Reference Number:** LP539G000

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**Version number:** FINAL

**Date of issue to PO:** 16 January 2018

**Project Owner:** Paul Castle, Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership

**Review dates:** 10/01/2018 to 16/01/2018

**Review Team:**

Austin Hogger

Martin Sachs

This report is an evidence-based snapshot of the project's status at the time of the review. It reflects the views of the independent review team, based on information evaluated over the review period, and is delivered to the Project Owner at the conclusion of the review.

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## Conclusion

This independent investigation review has been commissioned by Coast to Capital Local Enterprise partnership (C2C) in order to evaluate the validity of the complaint raised by Dorking Town Forum with regard to:-

- the quality of the works undertaken
- the alleged failure to complete contracted works
- allegations of financial mismanagement by Surrey County Council in their role as the delivery body

The Review Team understands that this scheme is Phase 1 of a proposed 3 phase improvement in and around Deepdene Station; however, the scheme business case does state that the aims of the phase 1 investment includes (inter alia):-

- providing a seamless rail to rail connection between the two stations in a similar way to changing platforms at a large station
- improving the accessibility of the Dorking Deepdene station

It would be our view that neither of these aims have been fully realised by the phase 1 investment. The implementation of the recommendations set out in the table on the following page may go some way to addressing the first of the above aims ie the realisation of a seamless rail to rail connection between the two stations. However, for significant improvements to the accessibility of Deepdene, it seems to us inevitable that the proposed later phases of the Dorking Transport Package will be required.

Taking each of the elements of the complaint set out above, we would summarise our findings as follows:-

- quality of the works undertaken: our concerns here relate to the following and are reflected in our recommendations:-
  - signage
  - RTP1 in bus stops
  - The 3-way junction of the A24/station approach/Lincoln Road

However, we consider the finished works, particularly to highway surfaces, are to a good standard.

- alleged failure to complete contracted works: with the major slippage on the project, significant work at Deepdene station remains to be completed including replacement shelters and CCTV. We also have a concern about the medium and longer term viability of further substantial investment at Deepdene station especially in the light of the structural problems uncovered by the removal of the old passenger shelters.
- allegations of financial mismanagement by Surrey County Council: we have found no evidence to support this element of the complaint. The financial management of the project and the way in which claims for payment have been compiled, submitted and approved has been set out for us in some detail and we find the arrangements to be sound. We do, however, have a concern about the level of charges for design fees and supervision and we make a recommendation on that matter.

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### Summary of Report Recommendations

The Review Team makes the following recommendations.

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Action</b>
1.	To ensure that design changes made during the implementation of traffic schemes be reflected in communications materials and the reasons for them be fully explained.	SCC
2.	To reconsider the provision of RTPI at all bus stops close to Main and Deepdene stations, particularly in the light of funds remaining available to the Dorking STP.	SCC
3.	To ensure that in the event that it is decided to provide RTPI at the A24 bus stops, a realistic delivery plan be developed, taking into account the uncertainty over the bus shelter contracts.	SCC
4.	To audit the wayfinding signage within the Dorking STP area (pre-existing and newly introduced) against the STP terms of reference (including identifying opportunities to minimise or mitigate street clutter).	SCC
5.	To explore whether there are other means (e.g. signage) to draw attention of cyclists and pedestrians to the possibility of unseen traffic emerging from Lincoln Road.	SCC
6.	To explore whether the road hatchings be amended so that a "lane" is provided for vehicles entering Lincoln Road from the A24.	SCC
7.	To revisit the medium/longer term viability of major investment at Deepdene station.	SCC/FGW
8.	To ensure that business case delivery timescales are robust and realistic.	SCC/FGW
9.	To obtain a detailed breakdown of the design and supervision element of the latest cost estimates together with reasons for the variance in costs.	C2C/WSCC
10.	To develop active stakeholder management with DTF so that an open channel of communication exists, particularly to underpin the completion of Dorking STP (Ph 1) and also the development of future phases.	SCC

## Background

### The aims and objectives of the project:

Extract from Business Case:-

*As well as being the first phase of the Dorking Transport Package, the scheme is both a catalyst to delivering an accessible station at Dorking Deepdene with full customer facilities and a key step in delivering a fully integrated and accessible sustainable transport network in Dorking that provides a real alternative to the private car, enabling sustainable economic growth. An exercise has been undertaken to identify current barriers to using Dorking Deepdene station and to interchanging between the station and other transport modes. The results of this work has identified a number of improvements that will have a significant impact in improving the attractiveness of travelling to, from and through Dorking by sustainable means.*

*Dorking Deepdene (approximately 636,500 passengers per annum) is a key station on the North Downs line (Reading via Guildford to Redhill/Gatwick Airport), but currently offers a poor customer proposition, being accessed only by steps, creating major difficulties for certain people, and lacking what passengers now expect to be the norm, such as CCTV and good cycle and waiting facilities.*

*The Dorking Transport package (phase 1) scheme is seen as a 'gateway' to facilitate interconnectivity between two key rail lines, the Horsham to London via Dorking main station (approximately 1,346,700 passengers per annum) and the Reading to Redhill/Gatwick line via Dorking Deepdene station. This scheme will provide a seamless rail to rail connection between the two stations in a similar way to changing platforms at a large station, and with different destinations, will open up new destination opportunities.*

*The long term vision for the station is to deliver a fully accessible, secure and manned facility, with a station building including toilets and retail facilities and lifts to both platforms. Dorking Deepdene is in close proximity to Dorking Main station but a lack of signage and information is a barrier to interchange opportunities. The link between the two stations would also be improved to allow easy interchange between bus/rail and rail/rail, building upon the recently completed enhancement scheme at Dorking Main station.*

*The aims of the scheme (phase 1) are to improve the accessibility of the Dorking Deepdene station, the attractiveness of travelling by rail and the ease of making door to door journeys by sustainable means. These in turn would deliver:-*

- modal shift away from the private car*
- reduce congestion and carbon emissions*
- improve public health through an increase in active travel*
- increased social inclusion by opening up new journey opportunities for certain people*
- improve safety and security and reduce fear of crime*
- an increase in the attractiveness of Dorking town centre as a destination through improved*
- connectivity and the delivery of a better gateway for the town.*

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### **The procurement/delivery status:**

The project is still in its construction works stage but is due for completion later in 2018. Dependent on the outcome of the structural survey work beneath the now removed shelters on the two Deepdene station platforms, the replacement shelters are still outstanding. Installation of RTPI at bus stop A is also outstanding.

### **Purposes of this Investigation Review:**

Appendix A gives the terms of reference and the methodology for this investigation review.

### **Scope of this Investigation Review:**

This independent investigation review has been commissioned by Coast to Capital Local Enterprise partnership (C2C) in order to evaluate the validity of the complaint raised by Dorking Town Forum with regard to:-

- the quality of the works undertaken
- the alleged failure to complete contracted works
- allegations of financial mismanagement by Surrey County Council in their role as the delivery body

During the review period additional hard copy and electronic copy material (documents, spreadsheets, diagrams and photos) have been made available to the review team with hard copies handed over by SCC and by DTF on 10 January, electronic copies submitted by email the following day, 11 January (from SCC and DTF) and with further emails from DTF on 13 and 15 January. Material submitted by SCC was directly relevant to DTF's complaint; however, the material submitted by DTF was much more wide ranging, covered a considerable period and dealt with many matters which were beyond the scope of the original complaint and the review's terms of reference. For instance, one of the attachments to DTF's email of 13 January was a response to an FoI request from Network Rail and comprised 180 pages of spreadsheets and text.

We have limited our work in line with the review's terms of reference.

### **Conduct of the Local Partnerships Investigation Review:**

This investigation review was carried out from 10 to 16 January 2018. The review team were based in the Christian Centre, Dorking on 10 January and made a site visit during the day accompanied by officers from Surrey CC and members of the Dorking Town Forum.

The investigation review team members are listed on page 2 of this report.

The people interviewed are listed in Appendix B.

## Findings and recommendations

These findings follow each of the heads of complaint made by Dorking Town Forum.

### Footpath widening

The core outputs of the Dorking Sustainable Transport Package (Ph 1) included improvement of provision for pedestrians and cyclists travelling in both directions between Dorking Main and Dorking Deepdene railway stations. A major feature of this is a shared pedestrian/cycleway along the eastern footway of London Road (A24) north of the railway overbridge and the south eastern footway of Station Road, aimed at providing a safe and uncongested route for pedestrians and cyclists between the two stations. Provision of this shared route relied on widening the footways by moving the kerblines into space occupied by the existing carriageway.

The extent of this widening is shown as 1.5 m (London Road) and 1.0 m (Station Road) on the SCC progress newsletters issued between April 2016 and January 2017. However in the case of London Road, although a new kerblines has been laid, its alignment appears to be along, or very close to, the original kerblines. In the case of Station Road, the widening has been reduced to 0.5 m. Along both sections of the shared route, a width of 3.0 m has been provided.

DTF has suggested that the London Road section of the shared footway/cycleway is not acceptable as such under local design guidance due to its 3.0 m width. However, we were told by SCC that the 3.0 m wide route is acceptable within both national and SCC design guidance for a shared pedestrian and cycle route. The wider alignments originally envisaged would have been desirable but could not be achieved because the narrower carriageways were unacceptable through impact on traffic congestion and safety. DTF remain unhappy with the narrower pedestrian/cycle route because of

- Roadside - vehicle doors being opened across the shared pedestrian / cycleway
- Property side - people / vehicles emerging directly from properties onto the shared pedestrian / cycleway

We note that there is direct egress from the Lincoln Arms site onto the pedestrian/cycleway. However, this results from constraints intrinsic to the site and appears unavoidable. We note also that there was a DTF proposal to use the pedestrian subway Station Approach / Croft Avenue also for general cycle movements. However, this idea was controversial within the cycling community and opposed by SCC road safety team.

DTF also told us that during construction there appeared to be a lack of co-ordination between the footway works carried out by SCC and Southern Rail respectively. Namely the works carried out by SCC were completed a month before the SR works. During this interval, a kerbway protruded into the carriageway of Station Approach, and we were told several road traffic accidents resulted from this protrusion. We were also shown a photograph indicating, at least on the day the photo was taken, signing/guarding of this protrusion was limited to a single traffic cone. A single traffic cone is unlikely to have been effective in highways safety terms and accordingly we have concerns about this issue; we would suggest that it may indicate the need for better planning and co-ordination when different clients are carrying out improvements on the same stretch of roadway.

On the substantive issue of the finished width of the footway/cycleway, however, the review team conclude that the shared pedestrian/cycle route along London Road (A24) and Station Road is

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acceptable from a design point of view. Nevertheless, the design changes were not communicated effectively and we therefore recommend as follows:-

### **Recommendation 1**

**To ensure that design changes made during the implementation of traffic schemes be reflected in communications materials and the reasons for them be fully explained.**

### **Bus stop improvements**

One of the key aims of the Dorking Sustainable Transport Package is improved connectivity between modes of transport and buses are one of these. Improved bus stops feature as important deliverables within DSTP, measure principally comprising improved wayfinding and better real time information.

Issues on wayfinding are addressed in our section on signs and lines below.

Measures on real time information are electronic signs which have been placed on station platforms, station entrances, in bus shelters and at other locations (including within Dorking Town Centre). Some of these are innovative signs, containing both train and bus departure information.

While it appears to have been the original intention to have placed RTPI signs within most, if not all of the bus stop shelters within the area in and around Main and Deepdene stations, this has not so far been achieved. Notably the main bus stops (A, B and E) on London Road (A24) have no RTPI provided, although those on the Main Station forecourt do have such.

It appears that the issue with the A24 bus shelters (stops A, B and E) is that the contract for their provision and maintenance (let by Mole Valley District Council) has expired and it is therefore very difficult for SCC to arrange the RTPI provision. It also appears that the local SCC Mole Valley committee monitoring the Dorking STP has agreed to delete the proposal for RTPI at Bus Stop E and approved on 2/3/16 the transfer of £30K funds for RTPI from bus stop E to bus stops at Main station. However the local information newsletters (as per SCC website) show no reference to these decisions. There is also no reference to RTPI at Bus Stop B in any of the newsletters. There is no reference to the outstanding provision at Bus Stop A in newsletters from August 2017 onwards.

The review team considers that RTPI at bus stops is a provision that provides real value to many actual and potential bus passengers. Although real time bus information is available to people with modern smart phones, bus usage is characterised by less advantaged sections of the population. The Review Team therefore recommends as follows:-

### **Recommendation 2**

**To reconsider the provision of RTPI at all bus stops close to Main and Deepdene stations, particularly in the light of funds remaining available to the Dorking STP.**

### **Recommendation 3**

**To ensure that in the event that it is decided to provide RTPI at the A24 bus stops, a realistic delivery plan be developed, taking into account the uncertainty over the bus shelter contracts.**

It is also important that any decisions relating to onward provision of RTPI be clearly communicated to stakeholders.

## Signs and Lines

Signs and lines form a key part of highway infrastructure and have bearing on highway based schemes such as Dorking STP in the following areas:-

- Wayfinding
- Regulatory, e.g. yellow lines
- Non-regulatory traffic control, e.g. hatch markings
- Part of “street furniture”, making a contribution to the “look and feel” of the physical environment

Wayfinding signage in the vicinity of Main and Deepdene stations comprised both pre-existing signage and new signs provided through the Dorking STP (Ph 1). Indeed, this part of the package is incomplete and further signage remains to be erected outside the northern entrance to Deepdene station. DTF have raised concern about the coherency, consistency and correctness of some of the wayfinding signage. The Review Team accept the validity of some of these concerns (e.g. directions to Bus Stop “E” on the white signs over both exits from Deepdene station are incorrect). We also saw a plethora of signs of many different styles, ages and relevance which may mitigate against the “seamless rail to rail transfer between stations” that the project aspires to. We therefore recommend as follows:-

### Recommendation 4

**To audit the wayfinding signage within the Dorking STP area (pre-existing and newly introduced) against the STP terms of reference (including identifying opportunities to minimise or mitigate street clutter).**

DTF drew our attention to “give way” lines alongside the edge of tactile paving leading to the dropped crossing with Lincoln Road (from A24). The location of these is such as to deny a clear sight line of traffic approaching from Lincoln Road (which we verified on site). SCC told us that the “give way” lines cannot be painted on the tactiles. We therefore recommend as follows:-

### Recommendation 5

**To explore whether there are other means (e.g. signage) to draw attention of cyclists and pedestrians to the possibility of unseen traffic emerging from Lincoln Road.**

We also identified that traffic entering Lincoln Road from the A24 via the east side of the extended traffic island near Main Station had to cross road hatchings.

### Recommendation 6

**To explore whether the road hatchings be amended so that a “lane” is provided for vehicles entering Lincoln Road from the A24.**

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### **Safety and Quality**

We have referred to issues on signage, RTPI provision and the layout of the A24 / Station Approach / Lincoln Road junction detracting from the “output” quality of Dorking STP (Ph 1). On the matter of construction quality, we base our opinions on our observations on site; we consider the works carried out by contractors on behalf of SCC, GWR and SR to be of good standard. There appear to be no obvious needs for reconstruction, remedial or snagging work. We have referred above to our concerns over the co-ordination of work by SCC and SR at the Station Approach footway widening although limited evidence has prevented us from investigating this further.

### **Scope of contracted and completed works**

With the major time slippage on the project, significant work at Deepdene station remains to be completed including replacement shelters and CCTV. We also have a concern about the medium and longer term viability of further substantial investment at Deepdene especially in the light of the structural problems uncovered by the removal of the old passenger shelters. We understand that later phases of DSTP will include investment at Deepdene to improve access, including staircase improvements, lifts, etc but may not currently include a wider consideration of the structural life of the platforms themselves.

### **Recommendation 7**

**To revisit the medium/longer term viability of major investment at Deepdene station.**

### **Project and financial management and accounting**

When the project’s business case was approved in March 2015, project expenditure, for both on-highways and on-station expenditure, was forecast to occur wholly within the 2015/16 financial year. In the event, because of a delay in the finalisation of the funding agreement, the project did not start until early 2016 and consequently there was minimal spend in 2015/16. For the on-highways works, there were further construction delays during 2016/17 and forecast completion was re-set for the end of 2017/18. However, in December 2017, SCC further revised the project completion date to Q1 2018/19 for on-highways works and Q2/3 2018/19 for on-station works.

These are very significant slippages in timescale and expenditure. Whilst the various causes of the slippage have been explained to us, we remain concerned that the original forecast timescales at business case approval stage were overly optimistic. We understand that processes are being put in place to ensure that timescales are better forecasted and better adhered to on future schemes.

### **Recommendation 8**

**To ensure that business case delivery timescales are robust and realistic.**

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DTF have been particularly critical of the cost management on the project. DTF's own summary of the likely outturn costs of the scheme compared with the original estimated cost shows an approximate £150k cost overrun set out as follows.

	Original cost estimate £	Projected final cost £	Variance £
On-station works	403 750	475 000	71 250
On-highways works	276 250	346 318	70 068
Total	680 000	821 318	141 318

Source: DTF

The shaded boxes shown above are given by DTF to be £829 132 and £149 132 respectively but these figures appear to be an error.

One immediate observation on the above figures is that the "original cost estimate" column does not include the 15% contingency allowance set out in the funding agreement.

The original funding agreement makes no allowance for works price inflation. Whilst this was a reasonable assumption based on the original delivery programme, with the significant slippage referred to above, works price inflation is bound to have played some part in outturn costs. As a guide, the ONS works cost index (repair and maintenance 9/17 bulletin) gives the following:-

- 9/15 (mid-point of business case delivery programme) 100.1
- 5/17 (mid-point of Q1 2017/18) 102.5

Based on these assumptions, works cost inflation would account for an uplift of 2.4% of the original estimate ie some £20k.

Therefore, after adding the contingency allowance of 15% and taking into account the effects of inflation, even using DTF's own "Projected final cost" figures from the table above, there has been no significant cost overrun on the project. SCC's position, on the contrary, is that there is likely to be a small cost underspend overall once the project is finally completed. However, the latest iteration of Schedule 2, dated September 2017, shows a total outturn forecast of £832 000, with the excess match funding over and above the original £200k being met by SCC. This latest Schedule 2 also includes 5% contingency (reduced because of course the project is nearing completion) and an inflation allowance of 5% of total costs. A 5% allowance for inflation applied to total costs appears to us to be on the high side but actual costs will show the true outturn over the next few months.

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Looking in more detail at the 9/17 Schedule 2 and comparing each element with the original schedule, shows a number of variances on the on-highways work:-

	Original cost estimate £	Latest cost estimate £	Variance £
Station approach – widen footway/island	27 600	30 000	2 400
Lincoln Road – install road table	29 750	25 600	(4150)
Signing between both stations/town centre	28 750	40 000	11 250
Bus stop improvements	103 500	112 000	8 500
Design preparation & supervision	40 250	94 250	54 000

Only one of the above variances is particularly significant in our view ie the Design & Supervision element. We would suggest that a detailed breakdown is sought from SCC for the variance together with reasons why it has arisen.

### **Recommendation 9**

**To obtain a detailed breakdown of the design and supervision element of the latest cost estimates together with reasons for the variance in costs.**

During the review we have been made aware of the methodology used to submit claims for payment on the project. We understand that all claims made by SCC (including those originating from FGW acting as sub-contractor to SCC) are verified by the Accountable Body, WSCC, prior to be paid by C2C. Payments relate to work done with supporting invoices provided where necessary as well as proof of payment. Internal SCC costs are supported where necessary by ledger transfers or similar.

It is certainly the case that forecast expenditure in a given financial year (or quarter) has not equated to actual expenditure either against particular heads of expenditure or indeed against the overall project – this being due to the effects of the substantial slippage referred to above. However, regarding the allegations of financial mismanagement by Surrey County Council, we have found no evidence to support this element of the complaint. The financial management of the project and the way in which claims for payment have been compiled, submitted and approved has been set out for us in some detail and we find the arrangements to be sound.

### **Stakeholder Management**

We have looked carefully at the issues raised by DTF and have found some of their complaints to be justified and others not. Whilst we recognise that the zeal with which some members of DTF conduct their enquiries is challenging, we consider DTF to be an active representative body representing the views of many Dorking residents. SCC is a well resourced local authority with dedicated, enthusiastic and professional officers. We are concerned that a relatively modest transport package has become the centre of some acrimony (although our interviews reflected calm and restrained presentation on the part of all participants without exception.)

It is our view that, in general, there need to be open channels of communication between scheme promoters and all key stakeholders. For whatever reason, these do not appear to exist at the moment between SCC and DTF. In particular it is better in all cases for information flow to follow discussion rather than recourse to freedom of information legislation. Whilst recognising the difficulties, we therefore recommend as follows:-

### **Recommendation 10**

**To develop active stakeholder management with DTF so that an open channel of communication exists, particularly to underpin the completion of Dorking STP (Ph 1) and also the development of future phases.**

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## APPENDIX A

### Terms of reference

1. To review the effectiveness of the project
2. To evaluate the validity of the complaint raised by Dorking Town Forum with regard to:-
  - a. the quality of the works undertaken
  - b. the alleged failure to complete contracted works
  - c. allegations of financial mismanagement by Surrey County Council in their role as the delivery body
3. To report findings to Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership in their role as the funding body

### Methodology

1. To undertake a desk study of available documentation.
2. To carry out a short site visit to view the completed works.
3. To interview, either face to face or by telephone, relevant stakeholders.
4. To produce a short, focussed report giving findings, conclusions and, if appropriate, recommendations for further action.
5. To submit the report to Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership.

## APPENDIX B

### Interviewees

Name	Organisation
Paul Fishwick	Surrey County Council, Environment & Infrastructure Directorate
Love Bhabuta	Surrey County Council, Environment & Infrastructure Directorate
Cnllr Margaret Cooksey	Chair of Dorking Town Forum
John Meudell	Dorking Town Forum
Chris Heaps	Dorking Town Forum
Andi Guinea*	West Sussex County Council (Accountable Body)

\* Indicates telephone interview

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