

GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL AND
SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL



GUILDFORD
BOROUGH

GUILDFORD JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: 18th MARCH 2020

LEAD

OFFICER: STACEY CAPEWELL – TRANSPORT STRATEGY PROJECT
MANAGER

SUBJECT: SCC LED LEP PROJECTS - GUILDFORD QUALITY BUS
CORRIDORS (QBC) AND TOWN CENTRE TRANSPORT
PACKAGE UPDATE

**AREA(S)
AFFECTED:** ALL DIVISIONS IN GUILDFORD

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on the programme and delivery of the Surrey-led Highway and Transport EM3 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) funded Guildford Quality Bus Corridor (QBC) major project and the Town Centre Transport Package (TCTP).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Guildford Joint Committee is asked to:

(i) Authorise the Area Highway Manager and Transport Strategy Project Manager in consultation with the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and relevant Divisional Member(s) to undertake all necessary procedures including the relevant advertisement of notices and traffic regulation orders (for the specific sites that require it), to deliver the Bus Stop Civil works to provide accessibility improvements around Guildford.

(ii) Note the updates provided for the Surrey County Council (SCC)-led Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) funded Quality Bus Corridor (QBC), the Town Centre Transport Package (TCTP) and the Guildford Local Transport Strategy (LTS).

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The purpose of this report is to provide sufficient information to enable the Joint Committee to agree the advertisement of the necessary statutory traffic regulation orders, notices and notifications which are required to deliver the Quality Bus Corridor pinch-point and bus stop improvement accessibility schemes.

This will enable the progression of the major transport scheme works as per the business case that was approved and funded by the EM3 Local Enterprise Partnership. The Local Growth Funding (LGF) is time-limited until 31st March 2021. Any delays to approvals, processes and scheme deliverables may mean the agreed outputs cannot be funded or delivered as part of the QBC project.

Updates are provided on the Town Centre Transport Package (TCTP) and Guildford Local Transport Strategy, and members were briefed at the recent Infrastructure Delivery Transport Working Group.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 In July 2014, the Government announced Local Growth Deals for each of the 39 LEP areas across England, for the 2015-2021 periods, based on their respective Strategic Economic Plans (SEPs). The Growth Deals set out the level of funding from the Local Growth Fund (LGF) that will be invested in each area.
- 1.2 Enterprise M3 LEP allocated funding to the Unlocking Guildford Package of projects from the 3rd tranche of this fund. The Town Centre Transport Package was funded from the 2nd tranche of LGF.
- 1.3 Unlocking Guildford comprises six separate projects which are spread across the borough with a general focus on the Town Centre area and the western approaches. SCC are leading on 2 of these projects; A31 Resilience and QBC. Members have been updated on the A31 Resilience scheme at the recent Informal Joint Committee.

2. ANALYSIS:

Guildford Quality Bus Corridors (QBC) Summary

- 2.1 The Guildford QBC project is a set of measures specifically designed to improve bus journey time reliability and provide improved on-street infrastructure and on-board experience to encourage growth in patronage along key bus routes into and around Guildford. To achieve these outcomes the project focuses on addressing congestion pinch-points for buses on the highway network and creating the back-office software to enable intelligent bus priority signal technologies to better operate and adapt to localised conditions. Bus stop Improvements around Guildford will improve accessibility, Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) and provide for new bus shelters. Match funding has also been spent on a new electric bus fleet which is operational.
- 2.2 The focus of the Quality Bus Corridor project is along key bus corridors for the major bus routes into and out of Guildford as shown in **Appendix A**.
- 2.3 Buses are a vital mode of transport for Guildford carrying approximately 15,000 people per day, enabling users to access employment, commerce and other key services. With further homes proposed in the borough over the next 20 years, the bus network will become even more important, ensuring that an already congested road network is not overwhelmed by the increased number of daily journeys which we encourage should be undertaken sustainably.
- 2.4 The proposed improvements to the local bus network bolsters the overall provision of sustainable transport facilities in the area, enabling the QBC project to fully complement the other schemes within Unlocking Guildford. The QBC Package has 3 main objectives:
 - Improved bus journey time reliability and punctuality
 - Increased levels of bus patronage
 - Reduced bus journey times

- 2.5 The total QBC project cost includes EM3 LGF and Local Contribution match funding. The LGF needs to be spent by 31st March 2021 and that is the completion date for the overall QBC project.

Total Project Cost	£4,520,000
EM3 LEP Local Growth Funding	£3,210,000
Local Contribution Match Funding	£1,310,000 (Already spent in 2018)

- 2.6 The £1.31m of Local Contribution Match Funding was provided by Stagecoach and has been spent on new electric bus fleet which have been operational since 2018. The remaining £3.21m Local Growth Fund is split accordingly:

- £1m towards Bus Stop Improvements including bus shelters, RTPI, accessibility improvements and improved passenger information.
- £2.21m towards pinch-point improvements – including civil engineering schemes and intelligent bus priority soft engineering.

- 2.7 A report on the QBC project was provided at the September 2019 Joint Committee, where members approved to undertake the necessary processes to progress the Bushy Hill Drive/A25 and Woodbridge Road A322 civil pinch-point schemes. An update was also provided in December 2019 to show the work that had been progressed in Q3 19/20.

- 2.8 The QBC project includes a number of linked work streams which will be discussed in more detail within this report:

- Bus Stop Improvements including accessibility civil improvements, new/improved bus shelters, real time passenger information (RTPI), bus stop clearways and improved passenger information. These measures should promote bus usage and increase bus patronage.
- Hard engineering civil pinch-point improvements; engineered bus priority measures to improve bus journey time reliability and punctuality.
- Soft engineering intelligent bus priority- Traffic light priority signal software which is an intelligent transportation management system which reduces the impact of bus congestion by offering late running buses priority through signal junctions. Intelligent bus priority technology has improved since the original system was set up in Guildford. This project enables the existing system to be significantly improved and better adapt to local conditions, widening the usage of the software across Guildford and links to other QBC areas which also have EM3 LGF along major bus corridors; for example, Blackwater Valley and Woking. This should improve bus journey times.

Bus Stop Improvements

- 2.9 The £1million towards Bus Stop Improvements has been provisionally split, based on deliverability, between civil works, bus shelters and RTPI which are the main outputs to deliver. There have been approximately 160 bus stops surveyed across Guildford. The surveys reviewed the existing conditions at the stop and potential improvements required; the bus stops were then prioritised into categories and deliverability to be undertaken within funding timescales.

- 2.10 The bus stop improvements have been packaged across the areas of Guildford based around the major bus corridors as shown in **Appendix A**. There are 4 bus stop improvement packages covering bus stops along bus routes; 36, 37,

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- 1, 2, 4 and 5. Bus stops have been prioritised with the highest priority being designed for improvements via the QBC project. The bus stop improvement packages are currently in different stages of delivery; feasibility, detailed design and pre-construction assessment including costings.
- 2.11 The civil bus stop improvements include new accessible 140mm kerbs of 9m in length (depending on constraints), footway/footpath improvements, resurfacing and widening waiting areas, street furniture decluttering, clearways, electrical connections for RTPI and bus shelter lighting if applicable. Bus stops may also be relocated to improve accessibility and patronage.
- 2.12 A Schedule of Bus Stop Improvements has been provided by the Passenger Transport Projects Team included in **Appendix B**. This shows the bus stop locations and potential improvements to be delivered subject to the QBC funding and time constraints. NB: not all will be deliverable within funding and time constraints but this provides an improvement framework for all future bus stop improvements within Guildford. Further updates will be provided to all members with the detail on the specific QBC bus stop improvements at future Working Groups and Committees. The Passenger Transport Projects Team will also be following the engagement and communication procedures for the bus stop improvements with site visits including local members and the police.
- 2.13 There are a number of bus stops improvements that require amendments to existing legal notices and/or TRO's which require member approval for advertisement through the Joint Committee. Given the QBC funding timescales any delays due to obtaining approvals for the processes of delivering the Bus Stop Improvements via the quarterly Joint Committee cycle will reduce the number of improvements that can be delivered. Delegated authority is recommended for approving consultation of the necessary legal notices, at specific sites where applicable.
- 2.14 Currently design drawings have been completed for the first package of bus stops within and around the Bellfield's area along bus route 3- this is within QBC Corridor A as shown in **Appendix A**. Of the 15 bus stops proposed for improvements, there are 3 locations which have been designed and require amendments to existing legal notices relating to traffic calming to improve bus passenger experience and accessibility. It is not considered that any of the proposed changes would affect the existing speed management measures, as these are just being replaced and improved in line with current Department for Transport (DfT) Legislation.
- 2.15 The bus stop improvement drawings which require amendments to existing traffic calming are included in **Appendix C** and explained below;
- Drawing SP0033/014 shows that the existing bus stops G27 Cypress Road/Berberis Close are located on the existing build outs which leads to congestion and reduced air quality while vehicles are waiting stationary for bus passengers to board/alight. The existing build outs are proposed to be removed and replaced with two speed cushions.
 - Drawing SP0033/016 shows that the existing eastbound bus stop G29 on Cypress Road is located on the existing build out which leads to congestion and reduced air quality while vehicles are waiting stationary for bus passengers to board/alight. The existing build out is proposed to be removed and replaced with an additional speed cushion to create two speed cushions.

- To improve buses manoeuvring to/from bus stop G31 Fir Tree Road/Hazel Avenue, the existing build out on Fir Tree Road by the junction with Hazel Avenue is proposed to be relocated to the opposite side of the carriageway. This would create an improved swept path for buses as they negotiate the build out and then turn right in and left out of Fir Tree Road as shown on Drawing SP0033/018.

2.16 The remaining funding from the £1million Bus Stop Improvements pot, will be spent on delivering new bus shelters and RTP1 units; both elements will follow procurement using SCC's current contractor frameworks. More information will be provided at the next Infrastructure Delivery Transport Working Group and Joint Committee once the procurement process has been finalised for commercial sensitivity reasons.

Civil Pinch-point Improvements - Hard Engineering

2.17 There are a number of civil pinch-point improvements being progressed which are at varying stages of development and discussed in detail within this report;

- Bushy Hill Drive/Epsom Road Junction Improvements
- Woodbridge Road Bus Lane extension
- Park Lane/Epsom Road Roundabout Westbound Merge Improvements
- Epsom Road Bus Lane

Bushy Hill Drive/A25 Epsom Road Junction

2.18 An option for a junction improvement scheme was approved with delegated authority in September 2019. Investigative trial holes information confirmed kerb line changes were not feasible due to the location of fibre optic cables. Further discussions with bus companies and the desire to keep the existing established trees along Epsom Road also provided opportunity for a redesign to maximise the benefits and meet the QBC Objectives.

2.19 The final scheme, included in **Appendix D**, proposes moving the central pedestrian island to the east, providing a longer right turn lane for westbound right turning traffic from Epsom Road to Bushy Hill Drive. This will reduce the likelihood of right turning vehicles blocking vehicles which are continuing towards Guildford. The improvements also include relocating and improving the existing eastern pedestrian crossing to create a reverse stagger on the main pedestrian desire line across Epsom Road. The northern footway and Bushy Hill Drive pedestrian refuge will be widened to provide greater pedestrian comfort. The scheme retains the existing on street cycling facilities so there is no impact to cyclists through the junction. The established trees along the southern kerb line are retained which is deemed a significant benefit over the previous options, given the climate emergencies SCC and GBC have declared.

2.20 The traffic signals will be refurbished and will operate via a more intelligent MOVA (Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Activation) system providing greater benefits and ability to optimise to the local conditions for buses and traffic. Intelligent bus priority will also be installed at the junction to provide priority for late running buses. This system will also be used for all traffic light systems along Epsom Road to provide corridor benefits.

2.21 This scheme has been modelled and initial results have confirmed that the extended right hand turn facility offers benefits for buses and general traffic. The model outputs confirmed that that the changes proposed would have a positive

impact on the junction in both the AM and PM peak hours. The right hand turn extension has been maximised whilst balancing the safety for the vehicular access of Cloyton as noted within the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA1).

- 2.22 The pinch-point junction improvements at the Bushy Hill Drive junction have delegated authority following the approval of the recommendation in September 2019. The scheme is therefore submitted for information, no TRO's are affected or required, just legal notices for the signal junction changes. Subject to the modelling and final detailed design which will take account of the RSA1 recommendations, as well as the necessary legal processes, the scheme is proposed to be constructed in Q3 2020/2021.

A25 Epsom Road Proposed Bus Lane

- 2.23 A bus lane scheme was originally included within the QBC Business Case which went through detailed feasibility. Extensive traffic surveys and bus journey time information was obtained in October 2019 for an evidence led approach to assess the feasibility of the proposals. A concept option has been designed included in **Appendix E**. Further detailed design work is required, which will be informed by Paramics traffic modelling and road safety assessments.
- 2.24 There are 6 bus routes that join or travel along Epsom Road, including the key Route 300 which links the Merrow Park and Ride (P&R) with Guildford Town Centre, via the A25/Epsom Road corridor. Analysis of the bus services along the A25 Epsom Road corridor is included in **Appendix F**.
- 2.25 As per the recommendation approved at Surrey County Council Cabinet on 25th February 2020, any introduction of the Epsom Road bus lane and determination of any formal objections will be through the public formal Cabinet Member decision making process via authority of the Cabinet Member for Highways. However Joint Committee and the Infrastructure Delivery and Transport Working Group will be kept up to date on the scheme.

Park Lane/Epsom Road Roundabout Westbound Merge Improvements

- 2.26 In addition to the bus lane the QBC scheme is proposing to formalise an existing situation, whereby drivers currently use the merge on the westbound exit at the Park Lane roundabout. As shown in **Appendix G**, the QBC project proposes to marginally reduce the island, remove the hatching and formalise the situation for safety reasons extending the merge for vehicles.

Woodbridge Road A322 bus lane improvements

- 2.27 This scheme obtained the relevant approval for consultation on the TRO changes and Delegated Authority through Joint Committee in September 2019. A bridge height survey in October 2019 confirmed that the existing height of the bridge had lowered over time due to structural compression, this required slight amendments to the eastern footway which will be marginally widened by 0.7m to push buses/HGV's into the central line for safety reasons. The final detailed design for Woodbridge Road is included in **Appendix H** for information. The scheme has been through a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit and the detailed design has been finalised.
- 2.28 The TRO consultations for parking changes and the extended bus lane (existing timings and us lane users remain the same) will commence shortly. A communications plan has been with the Works Communications Team prior to

the consultation to speak directly to Woodbridge Café and Local Members. The TRO consultations will be carried out alongside the TCTP Woodbridge Road Scheme consultations, albeit, it will be made clear that these are being funded through schemes with different sustainable objectives.

Intelligent Bus Priority - Soft Engineering

- 2.29 SCC is currently undertaking a jointly funded programme of signal junction refurbishment within Guildford Town Centre and the QBC project will fund the Trapeze software enhancements and is working with the Signals Team on the Traffic Signal refurbishment programme for efficiencies and cost savings. Intelligent signal technologies will provide bus journey time reliability and punctuality improvements as protocols can be set for individual junctions depending on the localised issues to improve bus journey times.
- 2.30 The back office software connection between Siemens (Surrey County Council's Traffic Signals term contractor) and Trapeze (Surrey County Council's RTPI term contractor) was set up in January 2020. The software connection and the trial sites in Guildford for intelligent bus priority are being tested and the system will then be rolled out in line with the signal refurbishment programme for the Guildford signal junctions as listed in **Appendix J**.

Update on Town Centre Transport Package

- 2.31 The Guildford Town Centre Transport Package (TCTP) is a package of infrastructure schemes, in delivery between 2017 and 2020 to make it easier for people to get around town on foot, by bicycle and by public transport.

Walnut Tree Close experimental one-way closure

- 2.32 Phase 1 works to build the vehicular turning facility on Woodbridge Meadows commenced in January and is now substantially complete with the exception of some minor snagging and landscaping work.
- 2.33 Phase 2 will involve the installation of measures to make a section of the road one-way northbound so the trial may commence. The programming of Phase 2 is linked to structural work on the replacement of Walnut Bridge, being led by GBC, which will require the temporary closure of the road near the railway station.
- 2.34 GBC has recently indicated that the start of work on Walnut Bridge is uncertain and may be delayed beyond March 2020. Therefore, following engagement with the Infrastructure Delivery and Transport Working Group on 13 February 2020, SCC have been given approval to put forward the start of Phase 2 in the spring and commence the trial earlier than originally planned.

Guildford College Link+

- 2.35 The scheme will provide an east-west cycle route between the new Walnut Bridge and Guildford College using mainly quiet residential roads. As part of the route, new toucan crossing facilities will be provided to help pedestrians and cyclists navigate across Woodbridge Road and Stoke Road.
- 2.36 Design work is now complete and engagement with bus operators is underway for the relocation of bus stops. During March 2020, advertisements will be undertaken for the necessary Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) to be made.

2.37 Discussions are also progressing with Network Rail to enable footway widening to take place on Stoke Road.

2.38 It is currently expected that scheme construction will commence by June 2020.

A25 Cycle Corridor

2.39 The final section of the corridor that was identified for improvement through the TCTP was the north side of A25 Ladymead in front of Ladymead Retail Centre.

2.40 Proposals involve widening the existing footway to a suitable width for a shared use pedestrian and cycle facility and installing pedestrian/cycle signals over the arm of the junction that entrance to the site.

2.41 Negotiations are progressing with representatives of the landowner to acquire a strip of land along the front of the B&Q site to facilitate the improvements.

A3100 London Road

2.42 Improvements along A3100 London Road will provide a new shared use pedestrian and cycle path between York Road and Boxgrove Roundabout, providing a safe cycle facility along a key corridor into the town centre and giving accessibility to destinations such as Guildford High School and Stoke Park.

2.43 Design work on the scheme is now substantially complete.

2.44 Engagement will be undertaken with key local stakeholders in advance of an anticipated construction start date during the school summer holidays, to minimise traffic disruption associated with the school and events in Stoke Park.

Update on Guildford Local Transport Strategy (LTS)

2.45 Following the adoption of the Local Plan (Part 1) last year, SCC officers have begun developing the Local Transport Strategy (LTS) for the borough with the aim of adopting and publishing the document in early 2021.

2.46 An LTS forms part of the council's statutory Local Transport Plan and sets out how it will approach existing and anticipated transport issues within the local area and the specific measures it will seek to undertake or facilitate.

2.47 During spring 2020 SCC will be carrying out early engagement on the LTS with key stakeholders including transport operators, GBC officers and members. Early member engagement is now commenced through the Infrastructure Delivery and Transport Working Group in February.

2.48 It is anticipated that a report will be brought to the upcoming July meeting of the Joint Committee to present the draft LTS document and seek agreement to undertake a full public consultation during the second half of 2020.

3. OPTIONS:

3.1 Delegated authority is requested for the associated statutory advertisement of the traffic regulation orders and notices for the pinch-point schemes along Epsom Road and the Bus Stop Improvements as noted above. This is to progress the QBC Project within the time funding limit.

- 3.2 Officers will revert to the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Divisional Member, or indeed the Committee as appropriate, whenever preferred options need to be identified if further authorisation is required. The Chairman, Vice Chairman and Divisional Member will be kept updated on the relevant consultations if and when delegated decisions are required.
- 3.3 The Unlocking Guildford package has been agreed with the EM3 LEP and by Joint Committee; the funding has been set aside for the schemes and project elements as explained above and funding is available until March 2021.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 The QBC project was included in the public consultation which encompassed five of the six Unlocking Guildford Projects (excluding the Sustainable Movement Corridor) which ran from 22nd January 2018 to 4th March 2018 and included public exhibitions. The business case for the QBC project was submitted to the LEP in April 2018 and funding was approved September 2018.
- 4.2 Engagement on the implementation of Traffic Regulation Orders and Notices for various aspects will take place as per the council's statutory requirements.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The schemes within the Guildford QBC Project are fully funded as per the business case submitted to the EM3 LEP and form part of an agreed capital programme.
- 5.2 Non-delivery of any scheme within the agreed Projects/work streams would create a risk that the LEP may ask the council to refund any revenue costs to date spent on developing said scheme.

6. WIDER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications
Equality and Diversity	No significant implications
Localism (including community involvement and impact)	Implications
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	Implications
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications
Public Health	Implications
Human Resource/Training and Development	No significant implications

Localism Implications

- 6.1 The schemes will require local changes to the road network. Statutory consultations are needed for various elements of the schemes and the consultation allows for objections to be received. The consultation information is delivered to every property in the consultation area. This will include all the relevant information, for example relating to any on street parking changes, bus stop change etc., and the response will help us decide whether the scheme should be introduced and how it will operate. Any representations will be assessed and a response compiled. The results of the consultations will be discussed with the Chairman and Divisional Member under delegated authority.

Sustainability implications

- 6.2 Increased use of public transport, specifically buses, where it replaces motorised forms of transport such as single-occupancy car journeys, will improve air quality and reduce carbon emission levels, which is a key objective of the Surrey LTP3. Transport is responsible for one third of carbon emission in Surrey. The council's LTP3 has a target to reduce carbon emissions from (non-motorway) transport by 10% (absolute emissions) by 2020, increasing to 25% reduction by 2035 from 2007 baseline of 2,114k tonnes.

Public health implications

- 6.3 Increased use of sustainable modes of travel has a positive impact on the health of a person. The emerging Surrey Health and Well-being Strategy has identified obesity as one of the priority public health challenges.

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 7.1 Work continues to deliver the schemes and sustainability improvements within the Guildford QBC Project with funding time-limited until March 2021. Future reports or updates will be brought to Committee for member's decisions or to note information as and when required.
- 7.2 A recommendation is made to facilitate the necessary legal notices and statutory advertisements of the associated Traffic Regulation Orders and notices to undertake the implementation of the Bus Stop Improvements and civil pinch-point schemes to progress the QBC project within the funding timescales. Delegated Authority is requested due to the timescales available that the quarterly committee cycle would affect.
- 7.3 An update is provided for the TCTP scheme and other elements within the QBC scheme which do not require recommendations. Further updates will be provided to the Infrastructure Delivery Transport Working Group and Joint Committee in the future.

8. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 8.1 The Guildford QBC project team will arrange for the necessary legal notices and traffic regulation orders to be advertised for the schemes; in consultation with the Chairman. Any representations will be assessed and discussed with the Chairman and Divisional Member under delegated authority. Subject to the consultations, preparations for the construction and implementation will commence.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

SCC Network Management Traffic Signals Team

SCC Highway Design and Delivery Team

SCC Passenger Transport Projects Team

SCC Parking Team

GBC Parking Team

SCC Local Area Highways

SCC Works Communications Team

Annexes:

Appendix A- QBC Bus Corridors

Appendix B- Schedule of Bus Stop Accessibility Improvements

Appendix C- Bus Stop Improvement Drawings- Bellfields Area

Appendix D- Bushy Hill Drive/Epsom Road Improvement Scheme

Appendix E- Epsom Road Bus Lane Scheme (Marrow P&R to Park Lane Rbt)

Appendix F- Bus Services Analysis A25 Corridor

Appendix G- Park Lane Roundabout Westbound Merge Improvement

Appendix H- Detailed Design Woodbridge Road Improvement Scheme

Appendix J- Schedule Traffic Signal Intelligent Bus Priority Junctions

Background papers:

None

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