

Cheshire East Council

Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	13 th March 2018
Report of:	Executive Director of Place
Subject/Title:	Notice of Motion – M6 Junction 17
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Don Stockton, Environment

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. On the 14th December a Notice of Motion was raised at Full Council in relation to Junction 17 of the M6.
- 1.2. The Notice of Motion requested that the Portfolio Holder for the Environment, in conjunction with the Executive Director for Place, include within the Council's response to Transport for the North's (TfN) consultation on their Strategic Transport Plan, support for an early inclusion of a major scheme to improve capacity at Junction 17 in Highways England's next investment period.
- 1.3. Consultation on TfN's Strategic Transport Plan commenced on 16th January 2018 and runs to 17th April 2018. This report recommends to Cabinet that the issues at M6 Junction 17 are fully covered in the Council's response to the consultation which will be considered by Cabinet at its April meeting.

2. Recommendation

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1. Note that the issue of capacity at Junction 17 of the M6 and a potential future upgrade to the junction will be addressed in the Council's response to the current consultation on TfN's Strategic Transport Plan, to be considered at the April meeting of Cabinet.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. Junction 17 on the M6 provides vital access to and egress from the busy A534 near Sandbach to the motorway network on one of the busiest sections of motorway in the country forming a key link between Birmingham and Manchester.

- 3.2. Cheshire East has recently adopted its Local Plan which is helping to deliver sustainable growth via jobs and housing to the area. Transport infrastructure plays a vital role in supporting this growth. Sustainable growth will depend on the ability of people to make reliable journeys on Highways England's Strategic Road Network and that the adjacent local roads can cope with the additional traffic that will need to safely access and exit the Junction into the future. The arrival of the HS2 Hub at Crewe will place more demands on the road network in this area, but the growth of traffic on the M6 should not be at the expense of more congestion on local roads which will affect local journeys.
- 3.3. Future investment by Highways England into a major upgrade of Junction 17 should therefore be a key consideration of Transport for the North as they commence their process of developing a Strategic Transport Plan for the North which will be the basis for determining Highways England's future programme.

4. Other Options Considered

Not responding to the TfN consultation or not covering Junction 17 in the response:

- 4.1. Cheshire East is a full member of Transport for the North, so it is considered vital that the Council fully engages in the development of the TfN Strategic Transport Plan. As Junction 17 forms a key element of the Strategic Road Network in the borough, the Council's response should cover this issue.

5. Background

- 5.1. In summer 2015, Highways England completed a small scale improvement scheme at Junction 17 of the M6. This was funded from the Government's 'Pinch Point' programme and was aimed at preventing traffic leaving the M6 queuing back along the exit slip roads and obstructing the main carriageway of the motorway, causing safety concerns.
- 5.2. Highways England modelled the traffic impacts of this scheme and on the basis of these assessments, the scheme progressed. Highways England always envisaged that inevitably there would be a little additional delay on the local road network; offset by improvements to safety and reduced queuing on the motorway network.
- 5.3. Although the results of Highway England's formal post opening assessment of the scheme are awaited, it has become clear that the predicted impact on the local road network had been underestimated by Highways England. Whilst the scheme may have achieved its safety aims, it has also produced a much worsened congestion problem on the local roads. There have been many complaints from residents about this issue. It is important that the local road network and the strategic network work together effectively to support the economy.

6. Wards Affected and Local Ward Members

- 6.1. Sandbach Town and Sandbach Heath and East
- 6.2. Cllr Barry Moran (Sandbach Town) and Cllr Sam Corcoran (Sandbach Heath and East)

7. Implications of Recommendation

- 7.1. The implications of the recommendation will be considered when the Council's response the TfN consultation is fully considered at the future meeting. These implications will include :
 - Policy Implications
 - Legal Implications
 - Financial Implications
 - Equality Implications
 - Rural Community Implications
 - Human Resources Implications
 - Health and Wellbeing Implications
 - Implications for Children and Young People
 - Overview and Scrutiny Committee Implications
 - Other Implications

8. Risk Management

- 8.1. There are no risk management consideration as a result of this recommendation

9. Access to Information

- 9.1. Transport for the North's Strategic Transport Plan consultation document can be found at www.transportforthenorth.com

10. Contact Information

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