



To be submitted to the Council at its meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2025

## **SPECIALTRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND STRATEGIC HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL**

**18<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 6.30 p.m.**

### **Present:**

Councillor Holland (in the Chair)  
Councillors Boyd (substitute for Hasthorpe), Crofts, Humphrey, Pettigrew, Wheatley,  
(substitute for Mill) and Wilson

### **Officers in attendance:)**

- Paul Evans (Assistant Director Infrastructure)
- Helen Johnson (Scrutiny and Committee Advisor)
- Simon Jones (Assistant Director Law and Governance)

### **Also in attendance:**

- Councillor Jackson (Leader of the Council)
- Councillor S. Swinburn (Portfolio Holder for Housing, Infrastructure and Transport)
- Cllr Harness (Portfolio Holder for Finance, Resources and Assets)

There were no members of the public in attendance.

### **SPTISH.62 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from this meeting were received from  
Councillors Hasthorpe, Lindley and Mill.

### **SPTISH.63 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest in any item on the agenda for  
this meeting.

## **SPTISH.64    TRANSPORT HUB UPDATE**

The panel considered a report from the Director of Economy, Environment and Infrastructure containing an update on the Transport Hub.

Mr Evans gave a brief introduction to the report in which he advised members of the requirements surrounding the demolition of the site and potential issues which included public safety, noise and dust complaints, removal of an operational electrical substation and security arrangements.

Phase one of the demolition would see the erection of hoarding, security measures and signage and the removal of internal fixtures. Mr Evans reiterated that he hoped that all possible items would be recycled, reducing waste disposal costs, and it was anticipated that removal of unrecyclable items would take place during the evening to minimise disruption. Phase two would see the removal of internal doors and scaffolding and preparation for phase three, which was full demolition eventually leaving the site at slab level. It was hoped to keep the majority of Garden Street car park open during the demolition phase, however, communication would be sent out if this changed.

An explanation was sought around the lack of permission to proceed with the hub. Mr Evans advised members that unfortunately they had been unable to acquire full funding for the project, so a modular progressive build approach would be taken which involved initially seeking permission to demolish the site. Officers confirmed they would return to scrutiny once a feasibility study and outline design had been received. Phase one would be a workable footprint of a bus station and cover.

Mr Evans advised the panel that WSP were carrying out a new 10 year projection study to forecast future parking usage and results were anticipated shortly. This would provide a refreshed parking strategy, taking into account the recent closure of Abbey Walk car park. Early indications showed that although some car parks were reaching capacity, short term resolution within the council's own stock and better communication would aid parking issues around the town centre.

Mr Evans gave an update on the wider transport hub, advising members that through the Lincolnshire County Council's framework they had been able to appoint WSP to carry out the architectural and transportation design. Results of the outline design would be brought back to scrutiny for consideration around early autumn 2025.

Mr Evans advised members that he was actively seeking funding streams and that funding via the Bus Service Improvement Partnership had been secured, if required, to aid with the completion of the transport hub.

Members showed concern around the potential delays completing the Transport Hub works and sought assurances that unsightly hoarding and an unusable car park would not occur while funding was obtained to complete the project. Mr Evans reiterated that it was his intention to have the hoarding up for as little time as possible and that he would seek approval to tarmac the site to enable an extended car park in the event of a delay. Councillor Jackson (Leader of the Council) responded that there were spending time limits with funding obtained via the devolution deal which would therefore not allow for the project to be postponed.

The scrutiny panel proposed a recommendation that officers explore the opportunities for the site to be opened as soon as possible.

Members asked officers to confirm timelines for the tender. Mr Evans advised that the selection process had commenced, and he would provide members with expected timelines.

With regard to environmental issues around the project, members enquired what this entailed. Mr Evans advised that during demolition sustainability was around recycling where possible. With the wider project, proposed elements such as planting, drainage and roofing would be included. Mr Evans advised that an update would be given to members on what the tender involved and how they could push for sustainability.

In response to the panel's questions regarding the location of the hub, the need for dropped kerbs and the potential need for closer bus stops, Mr Evans confirmed accessibility for the project would be in accordance with policy and guidance. Councillor Jackson (Leader of the Council) confirmed that the site was closer to the Freshney Place Shopping Centre entrance than with the existing stops. Councillor S Swinburn (Portfolio Holder for Housing, Infrastructure and Transport) added that the site was also closer to the train station and gave an assurance that areas of concern highlighted by the panel would be addressed.

Mr Evans advised the panel he would provide a full financial breakdown of the project's finances including timelines, where the money had been spent and what proportion of the funding would need to be returned if the project failed to go ahead. He confirmed that the initial estimate of £4 million for phase one would allow for the creation of a workable facility. Councillor Jackson (Leader of the Council) confirmed that there were numerous funding streams and there was scope to transfer additional funding.

Mr Evans advised the panel that he had hoped to bring a more comprehensive report before the panel once a contractor had been selected. It was requested that this be added to this panel's work

programme for 2025/26. Mr Evans would provide more details around the expected timelines.

In response to a member's question on Equans role in the project, Mr Evans confirmed that they were currently acting as technical managers during the demolition stage and that staff would move under his management once the Equans transfer was complete. WSP would then take over the next design and technical stage of the project.

Mr Evans reassured members that full site surveys had been carried out by project managers and that they were being fully open with the work scope of the project.

With regard to the HSE element of the project, Mr Evans advised he would provide details of responsibilities. Mr Evans also confirmed that potential job creation during the demolition stage of the project would form part of the tendering process weighting, however, job creation could not be guaranteed.

In response to members questions on consultation, Mr Evans advised that he was currently working on this and was mindful of the panel's request that the public be consulted up front and that a two stage consultation process would be adopted. Initial consultation questions would include 'what do the public want from a transport hub?' Suggestions would then be factored into the design process and the later consultation around July 2025 would include reference to 'you said we acted'.

#### RESOLVED –

1. That the report be noted.
2. That a further update be provided to this panel once a feasibility study and outline design had been acquired for the transport hub.
3. That officers explore the opportunity for a useable site to be opened as soon as possible to eliminate any unsightly, unusable areas.
4. That the following information be circulated to members of this panel:
  - expected tender timelines.
  - details of the sustainability concepts within the transport hub tender.
  - a full financial breakdown showing current expenditure and any potential loss of funding if the project failed to proceed.
  - HSE responsibilities.

5. That the Transport Hub, including results of the WSP outline design, be added to this panel's work programme for 2025/26.

## **SPTISH.65 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED – That the press and public be requested to leave on the grounds that discussion of the following business was likely to disclose exempt information within paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

## **SPTISH.66 CORPORATION BRIDGE UPDATE**

The panel received a presentation providing an update on the Corporation Bridge project.

Mr Evans provided panel members with an update on the following aspects of the Corporation Bridge project:

- Status on spans 1,2,3,5 and 6
- Redesign and costings of span 4
- Control room refurbishment
- Assurances around funding
- Communication around completion dates
- Maintenance

The panel asked questions of Mr Evans.

The panel welcomed improvements officers had made with communication around delays and costs.

RESOLVED –

1. That the update be noted.
2. That it be recommended that Cabinet receive a full breakdown of the additional potential expenditure.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.38 pm.