

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 6 March 2018

By: Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

Title: Proposals for the Creation of a Major Road Network – consultation response

Purpose: To report to Cabinet the response to the Government’s consultation on the proposed creation of a Major Road Network and ask Cabinet to review and approve the response

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- (1) review and approve the consultation response attached as appendix 1 and delegate authority to the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport to take all other necessary actions in respect of the recommendations.**
-

1 Background Information

1.1 The Government’s Transport Investment Strategy, published in July 2017, laid out plans to consult on the creation of a Major Road Network (MRN) which would sit between the Strategic Road Network (SRN), which is the responsibility of Highways England (HE), and the local road network, which is the responsibility of local authorities, and include the busiest and most economically important local authority A roads.

1.2 In December 2017 the Department for Transport (DfT) published a consultation document on the creation of the MRN. The consultation was based on the Rees Jeffreys Road Fund report ‘A Major Road Network for England’ published in October 2016.

1.3 Many of the regionally important roads, which are proposed to be included in the MRN, cross local authority boundaries so their management and funding can be inconsistent as different authorities take different approaches. The creation of the MRN intends to provide more long-term certainty of funding, with a portion of the National Roads Fund being dedicated to the MRN. The National Roads Fund will be funded through Vehicle Excise Duty and is due to be implemented by 2020, however it is expected that initial funding will be dedicated to HE funding requirements so we are expecting funding for the MRN to become available from around 2022.

1.4 The creation of the MRN does not mean that all of the roads will be managed by a single organisation, and the consultation is not proposing any changes to current local authority responsibilities.

1.5 The consultation began on 23 December 2017 and runs until 19 March 2018.

1.6 A formal consultation response is scheduled to be published in summer 2018, at the same time as the finalised MRN network.

2 Supporting Information

2.1 A draft response form is attached as appendix 1 to this report detailing the Council’s response to the proposals, and suggestions and amendments we think would improve the proposals.

2.2 A draft letter from Cllr Glazier is attached as appendix 2 to this report and could be used as a way of introducing and summarising the report when it is returned to the DfT.

2.3 The Consultation Document 'Proposals for the Creation of a Major Road Network' is attached as appendix 3 to this report.

2.4 The Council's response was informed by a report by infrastructure consultants, Atkins, commissioned by Transport for the South East, entitled 'Major Road Network Review – Technical Report'. The report is attached as appendix 4 to this report.

3 Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation

3.1 The proposal to create the MRN is overwhelmingly positive and, if Government go ahead, it will provide funding opportunities to improve parts of the road network serving East Sussex.

3.2 Our response to the consultation includes a number of areas where we feel the proposals could be improved, including:

- Recommendations of changes which should be made to the criteria used to define the roads eligible for inclusion in the MRN, providing a wider classification which includes economic needs and the provision of resilience for the SRN, e.g. through alternative routes / additional capacity.
- A number of roads in East Sussex, which are not currently included in the draft MRN, are suggested for inclusion (please see the table below). These roads are both economically important in terms of connecting centres of growth but also provide vital added resilience to the existing SRN routes in the county, many of which are operating at, or near, capacity.

| Road | Reason for inclusion |
|---|--|
| A259 Brighton to Newhaven and Seaford | Completing economic connections / Parallel route |
| A259 Seaford to Eastbourne | Completing economic connections / Parallel route |
| A22 Golden Jubilee Way/A2270/A2280/A2021 in Eastbourne | Completing economic connection from the strategic road network into economic growth location |
| A271/A269 Hailsham to Bexhill | Completing economic connections / Parallel route |
| Bexhill Hastings Link Road between A259 and A21 (A2690) | Completing economic connections / Parallel route |

3.3 Although our response covers the roads within East Sussex, there are a number of other important schemes outside of the county which we would support as they will benefit connectivity and boost the economy and connectivity of the whole region.

RUPERT CLUBB

Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

Contact Officer: James Harris

Tel. No. 01273 482158

Email: james.harris@eastsussex.gov.uk

LOCAL MEMBERS

All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None