

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	Research and Development Committee	Item	Page 1 of 5
Report Originator	Valerie Hitchman Head of Community Services	<i>Fwd Plan Ref No:</i>	
Wards Affected	All	22 nd April 2014	
Title	Report of HS2 Task and Finish Group		

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To submit the conclusions and recommendations of the Task and Finish Group, for debate and consideration and in order to formulate a reference to the Executive Committee on 7th May 2014.

2. INFORMATION

2.1 At its meeting on 3rd December 2013, the Research and Development Committee identified the impact and implications of High Speed Two (HS2) and rail services in the borough, for inclusion on the Committee's work programme as a Task and Finish Group.

2.2 The aims and objectives for the Task and Finish Group were set by Research and Development Committee at its meeting on 29th January 2014 and are listed below:-

Aims: To seek to understand the implications of HS2 on the future economy of Kettering Borough and on rail services available to Kettering residents over the longer term.

Objectives:

- What impact will there be on the Borough, both adversely and beneficially in terms of economy and otherwise?
- Train services in the Borough and connectivity to HS2
- The effects of the proposed 3rd rail line between Kettering and Leicester

2.3 The Task and Finish Group met on three occasions and consisted of Councillors Cliff Moreton (Chair), David Bishop, Paul Marks, Margaret Talbot and Michael Tebbutt. The scrutiny was undertaken between February and March 2014. The minutes of the Task and Finish Groups held on 25th February, 11th March 2014 and 25th March are attached as Appendix A.

2.4 The Task and Finish Group members have been invited to attend the committee meeting to introduce the report, answer questions members may have and participate in the debate.

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3. Consultation and Customer Impact

3.1 To assist in the consideration of their task, initial background information and documents were provided by officers, including a report to Planning Policy Committee dated 30th January 2014 which is included as Appendix B.

3.2 Evidence was taken from the following external organisation:-

- Chris Wragg from Northamptonshire County Council
- Hilary Chipping from SEMLEP (South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership)
- Jo Lappin from NEP (Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership)
- David Horne, Chairman of East Midlands Trains
- Simon Taylor, Head of Network Development for East Midlands Trains
- Andrew Pritchard, Director of Policy & Infrastructure for East Midlands Councils
- Christopher Groome Chairman of LANRAC (Leicestershire and Northampton Rail Action Committee)

3.3 The work of the Task and Finish Group, and their resulting action plans, has the potential to make a significant and positive impact on the future prosperity of the borough.

4. High Speed 2 (HS2)

HS2 is a government plan for a new high-speed rail network from London to Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds. The initial plan is for a new link between London Euston and Birmingham Curzon Street which would operate at speeds of up to 250mph. This would be followed by a V-shaped Phase 2 taking services from Birmingham to Manchester and Leeds. A final route for Phase 2 is expected to be chosen by the end of 2014. Construction on the London-West Midlands phase is expected to begin around 2017 and open in 2026. The construction on Phase 2 could start in the middle of the next decade, with the line opening in 2032-33. The East Midlands Hub Station, which will be the nearest connection for North Northamptonshire to access HS2 for onward connection to Sheffield Meadowhall, Leeds and stations further north, is proposed to be at Toton which is between Derby and Nottingham and about one mile from the M1 motorway.

4.1 What impact will there be on the Borough, both adversely and beneficially in terms of economy and otherwise?

The consensus is that there will be little adverse environmental impact on Kettering Borough because of the proposed route.

Potentially it could have a positive economic impact. Northamptonshire County Council is supportive of HS2 due to the potential benefits it could bring to the county and LANRAC supports this view.

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However, the extent of economic impacts is not known with certainty. NEP and SEMLEP' views on HS2 are still being formed, as the information required to make a serious economic assessment is yet to be made available. They both wish to work together to undertake further work on economic impacts in consultation with all partner organisations including the county council and district and borough authorities.

Passenger numbers on Midland Mainline (MML) have more than doubled from 6 million to 14 million a year, with growth set to continue strongly. As a result of these increases, MML has reached maximum capacity. As a consequence, in the short term there is a need for electrification of the line going north, and in the long term HS2 is critical for ongoing growth because it will free up capacity as long distance passengers, for example from Sheffield to London, would switch to HS2.

There is housing growth, jobs growth and manufacturing in this area and plans for regeneration of the Station Quarter and an Energy Park. These are strong arguments for more investment in rail to serve Kettering but there needs to be more of a city region approach to the lobbying activity.

4.2 Train services in the Borough and connectivity to HS2

Connectivity northwards was considered to be very important, although it may prove difficult to secure. The view of East Midland Trains is that it would be possible to use Toton as a nodal point for trains straight down MML to St Pancras in order to provide a more direct route to Europe.

Northamptonshire is poorly served with regard to core city connections, other than London or Birmingham. Figures on the top 10 destinations from Kettering and into Kettering were provided by East Midland Trains and are attached as Appendix C. A service to the East Midlands Hub at Toton, and connection to HS2 would provide much faster access to cities such as Leeds or Newcastle.

This improved connectivity north and south is possible if three things happen:

1. Freeing up of capacity on MML by Sheffield passengers being routed through HS2 which would enable East Midlands Trains to concentrate on connectivity between towns and cities
2. Electrification of the line to Toton: although electrification would take place as far as Kettering and Corby, there was no guarantee of finance for the next phase through to Sheffield.
3. Frequency of services stopping at Kettering; LANRAC is concerned about a current lack of services from Kettering to Derby, and only one train per hour

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to Nottingham, especially given rumours of services post-HS2 being reduced below current service levels.

4.3 **The effects of the proposed 3rd rail line between Kettering and Leicester**

Over the next five years there would be substantial investment in the existing network, adding track between Bedford, Kettering and Corby, improved signaling infrastructure and with additional trains and certain platforms being increased in length to accommodate longer trains.

5. **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The Council's policy is to grow the local economy as part of the growth agenda, delivering better town centres, better skills and higher density, better quality jobs. Rail connectivity is a crucial part of the attractiveness of the Borough as a place to live and to invest.

6. **FINANCIAL RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

None outlined in the report

7. **HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

None outlined in the report

8. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

None outlined in the report

9. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

Potential positive impacts will not be achieved if there is no effective lobbying for the changes required.

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10. **RECOMMENDATION**

That work be undertaken with East Midlands Councils to find a compatible approach that provides effective lobbying. HS2 has the capacity to benefit Kettering Borough by providing better north and south connectivity, better capacity and faster, more frequent, trains.

To use our positions on NEP and SEMLEP to influence their Strategic Economic Plans to better promote the economic growth of the area and the need for rail networks to serve the area.

Background Papers:

Title of Document:

Date:

Contact Officer:

Previous Reports/Minutes:

Ref:

Date:

APPENDIX