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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TUESDAY, 15 AUGUST 2017

A MEETING of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE will be held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, NEWTOWN ST BOSWELLS, TD6 0SA on TUESDAY, 15 AUGUST 2017 at 10.00 am

J. J. WILKINSON,
Clerk to the Council,

8 August 2017

BUSINESS		
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Order of Business	
3.	Declarations of Interest	
4.	Minute (Pages 1 - 4) Minute of meeting held on 20 June 2017 to be approved and signed by the Chairman (copy attached).	2 mins
5.	Road Safety - Annual Position Statement (Pages 5 - 16) Consider report by Chief Officer Roads giving an update on reported road casualties in 2016 and progress towards meeting the Scottish Government casualty reduction targets (copy attached).	30 mins
6.	Union Chain Bridge - Request to Increase Financial Contribution (Pages 17 - 30) Consider report by Service Director Assets & Infrastructure seeking approval to increase the funding for the Union Chain Bridge Project (copy attached).	10 mins
7.	Any Other Items Previously Circulated	
8.	Any Other Items which the Chairman Decides are Urgent	
9.	Private Business Before proceeding with the private business, the following motion should be approved:- "That under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business	

	on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the aforementioned Act”.	
10.	Minute (Pages 31 - 32) Private section of Minute of meeting held on 20 June 2017 to be approved and signed by the Chairman.	2 mins
11.	Minute of Social Work Complaints Review Committee (Pages 33 - 40) Consider Private Minute of Meeting held on 10 April 2017.	10 mins

NOTES

1. **Timings given above are only indicative and not intended to inhibit Members' discussions.**
2. **Members are reminded that, if they have a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in any item of business coming before the meeting, that interest should be declared prior to commencement of discussion on that item. Such declaration will be recorded in the Minute of the meeting.**

Membership of Committee:- Councillors S. Haslam (Chairman), S. Aitchison (Vice-Chairman), G. Edgar, C. Hamilton, E. Jardine, W. McAteer, T. Miers, S. Mountford, M. Rowley, G. Turnbull and T. Weatherston

Please direct any enquiries to Fiona Walling Tel:- 01835 826504
Email:- fwalling@scotborders.gov.uk

**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

MINUTE of Meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE held in Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, on Tuesday, 20th June, 2017 at 10.00 am

Present:- Councillors S. Haslam (Chairman), S. Aitchison, G. Edgar, C. Hamilton (from para. 2), E. Jardine, W. McAteer, T. Miers (from para. 5), S. Mountford, M. Rowley, G. Turnbull and T. Weatherston

Also Present:- Councillors S. Bell, J. Greenwell, S. Marshall.

In Attendance:- Chief Executive, Executive Director (P. Barr) Executive Director (R. Dickson), Service Director Assets & Infrastructure, Service Director Customer & Communities, Service Director Regulatory Services, Chief Financial Officer, Democratic Services Team Leader.

1. **MINUTE**

The Minute of meeting of the Executive Committee of 21 March 2017 had been circulated.

DECISION

NOTED for signature by the Chairman.

- 1.1 With reference to paragraph 2 of the Minute, regarding the delivery of 1140 hours funded early learning and childcare, specifically the decision to bring a report on the revenue and capital implications, the Chief Executive advised that it had not been possible to prepare this report as information on funding was awaited from Scottish Government.

DECISION

NOTED.

MEMBER

Councillor C. Hamilton joined the meeting.

2. **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2016/17 ANNUAL SUMMARY AND DATA FOR QUARTER 4**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Executive presenting a high level summary of 2016/17 performance information for Members, with details contained within Appendix 1 to the report. Appendix 2 to the report presented the information on a quarterly basis, with detailed commentary about performance. Mrs Watters, Policy, Performance and Planning Manager, gave a presentation to Members on how performance monitoring was currently carried out within the Council which included a short animation which was proposed to be used as an alternative way to communicate the information on the Council's website with the aim of making the information accessible to a wider audience. In response to a question on the use of percentage figures, the Chief Executive advised that numbers could also be presented for some indicators in numerical format e.g. number of looked after children. Members also requested that more commentary be provided to give clarification in some areas. The Chairman advised that annual measures in respect of the new Corporate Plan would also be added.

DECISION

AGREED to:-

- (a) **note the changes to performance indicators outlined in Section 4 of the report; and**

- (b) **acknowledge and note the performance summarised in Section 5 of the report and detailed within Appendices 1 and 2 together with the action that was being taken within Services to improve or maintain performance.**

3. 2016/17 UNAUDITED REVENUE OUTTURN

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing a statement comparing final revenue outturn expenditure and income for 2016/17 with the final approved budget for the year and explanations for significant variances. The report explained that an unaudited outturn underspend of £0.128m had been achieved in the 2016/17 revenue budget. The £0.128m underspend (0.05% of final approved budget) was delivered following a number of earmarked balances approved by the Executive Committee during 2016/17. In total, these amounted to £6.554m and related to a number of initiatives across departments and specifically included £1.69m of carry forward for Devolved School Management (DSM). A high level summary of the outturn position in each Council department was detailed in section 4 of the report. Overall, as required in the Financial Plan, savings of £12.36m were successfully delivered during 2016/17. Of these, £8.963m (73%) were delivered permanently. The remaining £3.397m (27%) of savings were achieved on a temporary basis and thus particular emphasis was being placed on permanent delivery of these savings during the early part of 2017/18.

DECISION

AGREED:-

- (a) **the content of the report and to note the outturn position prior to Statutory Audit;**
- (b) **to note that the draft unaudited outturn position would inform the budgetary control process and financial planning process for the current and future years;**
- (c) **to approve the adjustments to earmarked balances as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report; and**
- (d) **subject to the Statutory Audit, to approve the allocation of the 2016/17 underspend to the Early Retirement/Voluntary Severance (ER/VS) budget in 2017/18.**

4. BALANCES AT 31 MARCH 2017

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing an analysis of the Council's balances as at 31 March 2017. The report explained that the Council's General Fund useable reserve (non-earmarked) balance was £5.638m at the end of the financial year. The 2016/17 balances were before a series of technical accounting adjustments, the effect of which were expected to be broadly neutral. Adjustments required as a result of the Statutory Audit process would be reported at the conclusion of the Audit. There were a number of areas of potential pressures identified for 2017/18 which, if not addressed during the financial year, may require the drawdown of further resources from the useable reserve. The total of all useable balances, excluding developer contributions, at 31 March 2017 was £25.467m compared to £29.910m at 31 March 2016. It was noted that the 2016/17 figures included £6.554m of balances earmarked for use in 2017/18 and future years compared to 2015/16 when £12.720m of balances were earmarked for use in 2016/17 and future years. The Chief Financial Officer outlined the risk based approach which was taken when setting the level of balances.

DECISION

NOTED:-

- (a) **the revenue balances as at 31 March 2017 as per Appendices 1 & 2 to the report including movement in the Allocated Reserve since the last reporting period; and**

(b) the balance in the Capital Fund as per Appendix 3 to the report.

MEMBER

Councillor Miers joined the meeting.

5. CAPITAL FINANCIAL PLAN 2016/17 - FINAL UNAUDITED OUTTURN

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing a statement comparing the final capital outturn for 2016/17 with the final budget for the year and identifying the main reasons for any significant variations. The final capital outturn statement for 2016/17 was included at Appendix 1 to the report and included reasons that had been identified by the Project Managers and Budget Holders for the variances to the final approved budget. This identified an outturn expenditure of £51.547m which was £7.740m below the final revised budget of £59.266m. The chart in paragraph 4.9 of the report showed that there had been an increase in the cumulative net movement during 2016/17, compared to the previous financial years. Mr Robertson answered Members' questions including the level of borrowing, debt re-scheduling and the additional funding received from the Timber Transport Fund.

DECISION

(a) AGREED:

- (i) the final outturn statement contained in Appendix 1 to the report; and**
- (ii) to approve the block allocations detailed in Appendix 3 to the report.**

(b) NOTED:

- (i) the adjustments to funding detailed in Appendix 1 to the report;**
- (ii) the final block allocations contained in Appendix 2 to the report; and**
- (iii) the whole project costs detailed in Appendix 4 to the report.**

6. CORPORATE DEBTS - WRITE OFFS IN 2016/17

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Financial Officer detailing the aggregate amounts of debt written off during 2016/17 under delegated authority, as required by the Financial Regulations. The report covered the areas of Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates, Sundry Debtors, Housing Benefit Overpayments and aged debt from the balance sheet. The total value of write-offs reduced from £0.679m in 2015/16 to £0.645m in 2016/17.

There were ongoing risks associated with the management of the Council's debts and these could lead to an increase in the level of debts that required to be written off as irrecoverable in future years; these were identified in paragraph 6.2 of the report.

DECISION

NOTED the debtor balances written off during 2016/17 under delegated authority.

7. PRIVATE BUSINESS

DECISION

AGREED under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the business detailed in the Appendix to this minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs of part 1 of schedule 7A to the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

8. **MINUTE**
The private section of the Minute of 21 March 2017 was noted.
9. **MINUTE OF SOCIAL WORK COMPLAINTS REVIEW COMMITTEE**
The Minute of the meeting held on 6 April 2017 was approved.
10. **URGENT BUSINESS**
11. **SCOTTISH WIDE AREA NETWORK (SWAN)**
The Chief Financial Officer updated Members on the contract.

The meeting concluded at 11.10 am

ROAD SAFETY – ANNUAL POSITION STATEMENT

Report by Chief Officer Roads

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

15 August 2017

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 This report proposes to update the Committee on reported road casualties in 2016 and progress towards meeting the Scottish Government casualty reduction targets.

1.2 In June 2009 the Scottish Government set revised targets for accident reduction across a number of key headings. The base taken for this is the 2004 – 08 annual average and the target reduction is by the year 2020 with interim targets set for 2015.

1.3 The five areas identified as national reduction targets are as follows:-

1. The number of people killed in road accidents
2. The number of people seriously injured in road accidents
3. The number of children under 16 killed in road accidents
4. The number of children under 16 seriously injured in road accidents
5. The slight injury accident rate

Progress against these national targets is the main focus of this report.

1.4 The national position is generally positive based on the official 2015 figures, with reductions continuing to be shown across all the accident reduction areas identified in 1.3 above and all but the second category outlined currently exceeding the interim 2015 reduction targets. Provisional 2016 figures, however, indicate some worrying increases in key categories.

1.5 At a local Scottish Borders level 2016 was a disappointing year with a rise on previous years in the overall number of fatal and serious injuries as well as in the number of serious injuries to children. Consolidation of the figures for the last few years however suggests that the long-term trend of road-accident casualty reduction in the Scottish Border's area continues.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 I recommend that the Executive Committee:-

- (a) notes the position with respect to injury accidents in 2016 and the progress that is being made in relation to meeting the Scottish Government targets for road casualty reduction.**
- (b) endorses the proposals for accident prevention going forward:**
 - To continue to concentrate its Accident Investigation and Prevention resources on locations identified through the moving cursor programme.**
 - To submit, as justified, proposals for more substantial schemes for inclusion in future Capital Programmes.**
 - And that broader elements; such as education, encouragement and communications will continue to be addressed through the Scottish Borders Road Safety Working Group. In particular, maintaining close liaison with Police Scotland in terms of appropriate enforcement as necessary.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Scottish Borders Road Safety Working Group is the overarching body looking at road safety and vehicle accident prevention in the area. The Working Group is multi-partnership with representatives drawn from the Police, Fire and Rescue, RoSPA, Trunk Road Operating Company AMEY and the South-east Safety Camera Unit, in addition to the Council's Network section and Children and Young Peoples' Service.
- 3.2 Although accidents and casualties have shown a general decrease over recent years it has previously proved difficult for rural areas, such as the Scottish Borders, to meet the ambitious national targets set for the rate of casualty reduction.
- 3.3 Accident and casualty reporting is initially undertaken by the police and the statistics are passed to local authorities for vetting before being returned for validation. This can be a time consuming practice and means that data is some three to five months behind in terms of validated accident figures at any point in the year. It should also be noted that only injury accidents are recorded and notified by the police.
- 3.4 It should further be noted that all accident figures quoted include those that occur on trunk roads as well as those on Council controlled roads.

4 NATIONAL POSITION

- 4.1 In looking at the national position the statistics available are up until the end of 2015, as national statistics are published in late October for the previous year. Subsequent to the first drafting of this report provisional 2016 figures have been released and these are also outlined in the following paragraphs.
- 4.2 168 people were reported as killed on Scotland's roads in 2015. This was 42% below the 2004-2008 average of 292 and as such the reduction exceeded the 2015 milestone and that needed to reach the 2020 target (175). Unfortunately, the provisional figures for 2016 indicate a sharp rise, in the number of fatalities nationally, to 191 (a year on year rise of 14%).
- 4.3 1,596 people were reported as seriously injured in 2015. This was 39% below the 2004-2008 average of 2,605. The number of people seriously injured was therefore well above the 2015 milestone reduction target of 1484. Provisional figures for 2016 indicate a 6% rise (to 1,694) in the number of serious injuries compared to 2015.
- 4.4 Four children were reported as killed on Scotland's roads in 2015. This in isolation is 73% below the 2004-2008 baseline average of 15, but it is also worth noting that the average deaths involving children over the 2011-2015 period is 7 (53% reduction). The reduction therefore exceeded the 2015 milestone target (10) and was ahead of the 2020 target of a 50% fall. Unfortunately, provisional figures for 2016 indicate that 12 children were killed in road accidents in Scotland. This worryingly being a two-fold increase on the 2015 figures.

- 4.5 139 children were reported as seriously injured in road accidents across Scotland in 2015. This is 57% below the 2004-2008 average of 325, exceeding the 2015 milestone reduction target and on profile to achieve the 2020 reduction target. Unfortunately, the provisional 2016 figures indicate a sharp rise to 167.
- 4.6 The slight casualty rate of 20 casualties per million vehicle kilometres in 2015 was 38% below the 2004-2008 baseline average of 32. The 2016 figure has not been released to date.
- 4.7 Overall it can be seen that the national picture based on the official 2015 figures is a very positive one, with accident rates reducing across all five categories and the previously set national 2015 milestones and 2020 reduction targets being surpassed already in most instances. Unfortunately it would appear that 2016 has bucked the downward trend and in all the key areas there has been a significant and worrying increase from the previous year.

5 2016 ACCIDENT STATISTICS FOR SCOTISH BORDERS

- 5.1 In general terms 2016 was a mixed year locally, with 3 of the 5 indicators showing an increase on the previous year. Overall however, the long term trend of accident casualty reduction in the Scottish Borders was continued.
- 5.2 Progress against targets is discussed in the following paragraphs and shown in graphical and tabular form respectively in Appendices A and B.

Progress Against Target 1 – 30% Reduction by 2015 in the Number of People Killed and a 40% Reduction by 2020

- 5.3 In 2016 there were 12 vehicle accident related fatalities in the Scottish Borders; four of which were on the trunk road network. This is significantly up on the previous year and, in isolation, shows no reduction on the 2004 – 08 base. The last five year average comparison, however, illustrates that over the period 2012 to 2016 the average was 8 fatalities per annum. This compares favourably with the 2015 nationally set reduction target of 8.7 for the area. Based on provisional figures there have been two fatalities in the first six months of 2017.
- 5.4 The 2016 total of 12 resulted from 11 separate incidents and consisted of nine car occupants (6 of whom were drivers) two motorcyclists and a pedestrian.

Progress Against Target 2 – 43% Reduction by 2015 in the Number of people Seriously Injured and a 55% Reduction by 2020

- 5.5 The total number of serious casualties in 2016 was sixty five. This is a slight increase on the previous year's figure. It is significantly down on the 2004 -08 base of ninety five, but above 2015 milestone target (54) and remains above the reduction rate required to achieve the 2020 national reduction target (43).

- 5.6 Forty percent of the serious injury casualties occurred in the months of June and August. Other than these are two of the busier traffic months there is no indication why the rate should be so pronounced at this time of the year.

Progress Against Target 3 - 35% Reduction by 2015 in the Number of Children (aged < 16) Killed and a 50% Reduction by 2020

- 5.7 As in the previous five calendar years there were no child fatalities resulting from road accidents in the Scottish Borders in 2016. The 2004-08 base annual average was zero point four.

Progress Against Target 4 - 50% Reduction by 2015 in the Number of Children (aged < 16) Seriously Injured and a 65% Reduction by 2020

- 5.8 There were 8 children under 16 years of age seriously injured on roads within Scottish Borders in 2016. This is the highest rate recorded for the category in recent years and shows no reduction on the 2004 – 08 annual average. This year's high figure was influenced by one of the fatal accidents which also included 3 serious child injuries. The most recent five year (2012 – 2016) figure for serious child injuries is somewhat more re-assuring at 4 per annum; a reduction of 4 on the 2004 – 2008 base average.

Progress Against Target 5 – 10% reduction in the slight casualty rate, expressed as the number of people slightly injured per million vehicle kilometres

- 5.9 The slight casualty rate for an area is calculated nationally and is not available until the November following the previous year end. The Scottish Borders figure for 2015 was eighteen which, as in previous years, was comfortably below the five-year base average of thirty eight and the 2020 reduction target of thirty five.

Identified Trends and Issues for Scottish Borders

- 5.10 The long-term trend for the Scottish Borders is relatively positive in that all categories of accident (fatal, serious and slight) are showing a reduction. The mid-term 2015 national reduction targets were met in all but one of the five categories, but 2016 saw two further categories drift above the desire lines required to meet the 2020 targets.

It is important to emphasise that while this report measures performance against these national targets the over-riding aim is to reach a day when there are no injuries on local roads.

- 5.11 There remain a number of road-user categories that continue to be a particular concern at a local level. These are discussed below and will continue to be the focus of the Scottish Borders Road Safety Working Group and the Council's Network Section. It should be noted that both the 2016 figures and the previous four years figures have been taken into consideration in the following paragraphs.

- 5.12 Pedestrians are perhaps the most vulnerable of all road users and this is reflected in the seriousness of their injuries when they are involved in vehicular accidents. Unfortunately there was a pedestrian fatality in 2016 bringing the five year total to five. The area, however, remains significantly below the national average for both fatal and serious accidents in this road-user category. This is perhaps not that surprising in that such accidents are most prevalent in more urban authority areas where vehicle and pedestrian interaction is much greater. Nevertheless this is an area of concern; not least because fatalities have a tendency to fall under the very young or very old age group category.
- 5.13 Cyclists can be equally vulnerable as borne out by two fatalities over the five year period. In terms of fatalities this is similar to the national average over the period. It is perhaps worth pointing out that in any category where the traditional numbers are relatively low, the introduction of small variations can cause very spiky results and it is pleasing to report no cycle fatalities occurred in the most recent four years. Nevertheless this is an area that continues to necessitate careful consideration and monitoring.
- 5.14 Motorcyclists make up 1% of Scotland's road traffic, but account for 15% of its fatalities. This user group has been a particular concern for the Scottish Borders for a number of years as they are attracted in large numbers to the area; in part by the nature of the roads and the challenge that they can present. There have been five motorcycle fatalities in the area in the five year period to 31 December 2016, and many more serious casualties. In percentage terms the Scottish Borders is above (22% to 17%) the national average for combined fatal and serious motorcycle casualties, although this can, to an extent, be explained by the rural nature of the area. Casualties in this particular group continue to be dominated by those over the age of thirty five. One area where attempts have been made to try and address motorcycle accidents is through the "Around the Corner Campaign" which originated in the Lothian and Borders and has gone on to win national acclaim including a Prince Michael International Road Safety Award.
- 5.15 In common with almost every area in Scotland, young drivers make up a disproportionate amount of those involved in injury accidents, with road users under 26 making up a third of all casualties recorded. In addition young drivers make up almost a quarter of all fatal and serious casualties involving car occupants. Locally the area continues to target new and future drivers through various education initiatives at schools and more recently the Scottish Borders has been leading the country with its funding of Advanced Driver courses for young drivers and the delivery of introductory courses for those drivers who are yet to reach the legal age to drive. Nationally more stringent tests, graduated licences and night-time curfews are some of the areas that are again under active consideration.
- 5.16 In line with Scotland's Road Safety Framework Targets it is suggested that the Council continues to concentrate its Accident Investigation and Prevention resources on locations identified through the moving cursor programme that identifies where injury accidents are occurring. In addition to this the broader elements such as education, encouragement and communications will continue to be addressed through the Scottish Borders Road Safety Working Group. In particular, close liaison will be maintained with Police Scotland in terms of appropriate enforcement as necessitated.

6 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial

- (a) There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.
- (b) The costs associated with accidents are substantial with current national statistics putting the average cost to the nation of an injury accident at £101,115 and the cost of a fatal accident at £2,119,521. An annual capital allocation of £50,000 is currently available to spend on accident investigation prevention schemes.

6.2 Risk and Mitigations

There is a risk that the current downward trend in accident casualties is not continued. This is particularly true of the Scottish Borders where the relatively low figures for some categories can sometimes lead to quite dramatic fluctuations in the numbers involved. This risk is mitigated by the work of the Network Section and the wider Scottish Borders Road Safety Working Group.

6.3 Equalities

An Equalities Impact Assessment scoping exercise has been carried out on this proposal which concluded that there are no adverse equality implications and a full EIA was not required.

6.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no economic, social or environmental effects directly related to the recommendations of this report.

6.5 Carbon Management

This report has no direct impact on the Council's carbon emissions.

6.6 Rural Proofing

This report does not relate to new or amended policy or strategy and as a result rural proofing is not an applicable consideration.

6.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to be made to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals contained in this report.

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.
- 7.2 As the report may be of media interest the Corporate Communications team have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

David Girdler
Chief Officer Roads

Signature

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Brian Young	Network Manager 01835 825178

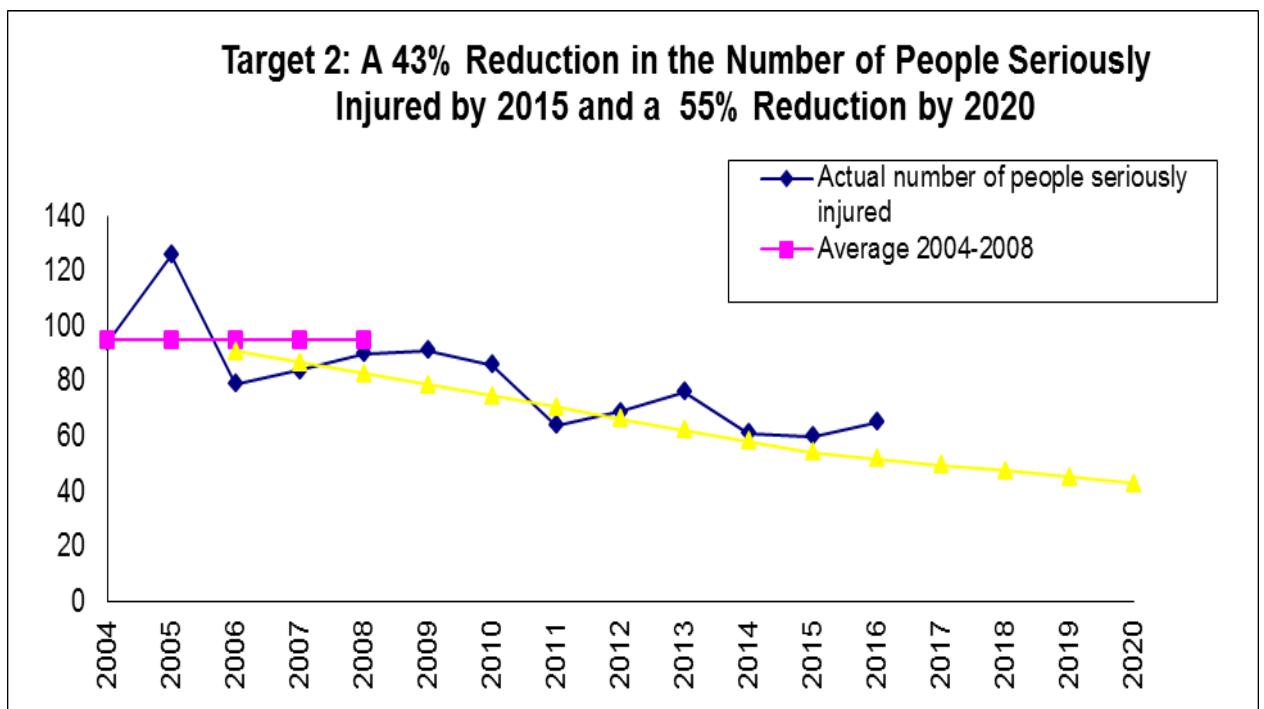
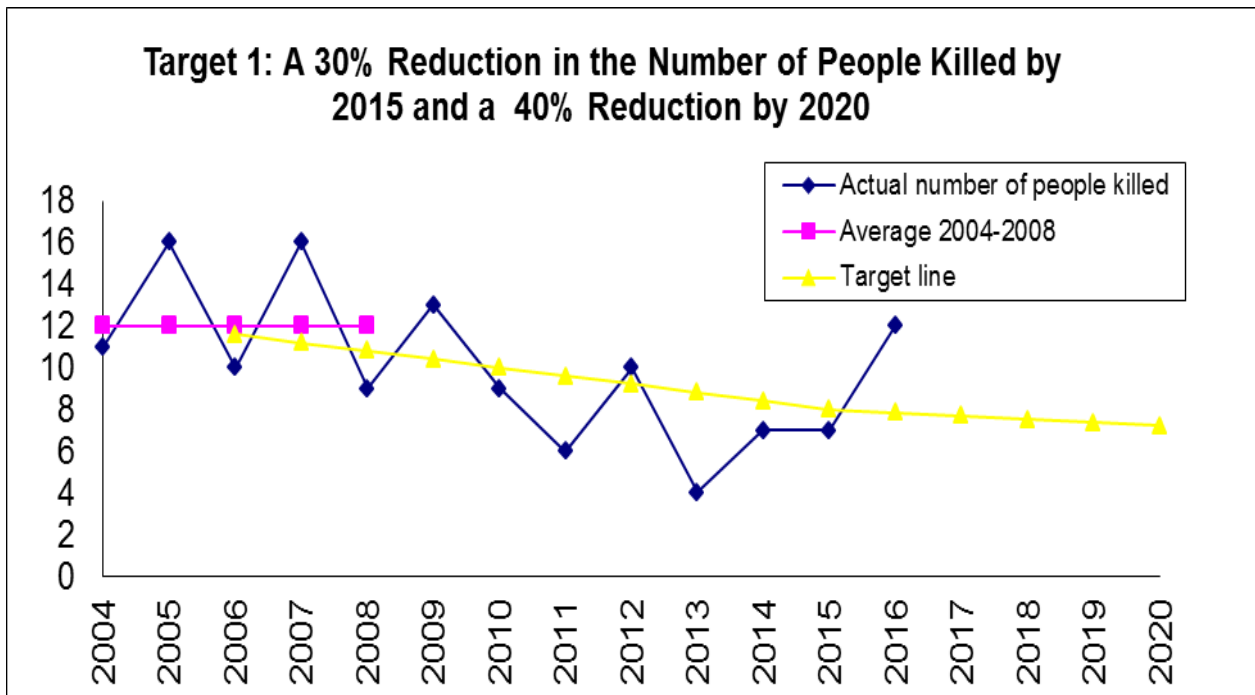
Background Papers: Scottish Borders Road Safety Plan 2010 - 2020

Previous Minute Reference: None

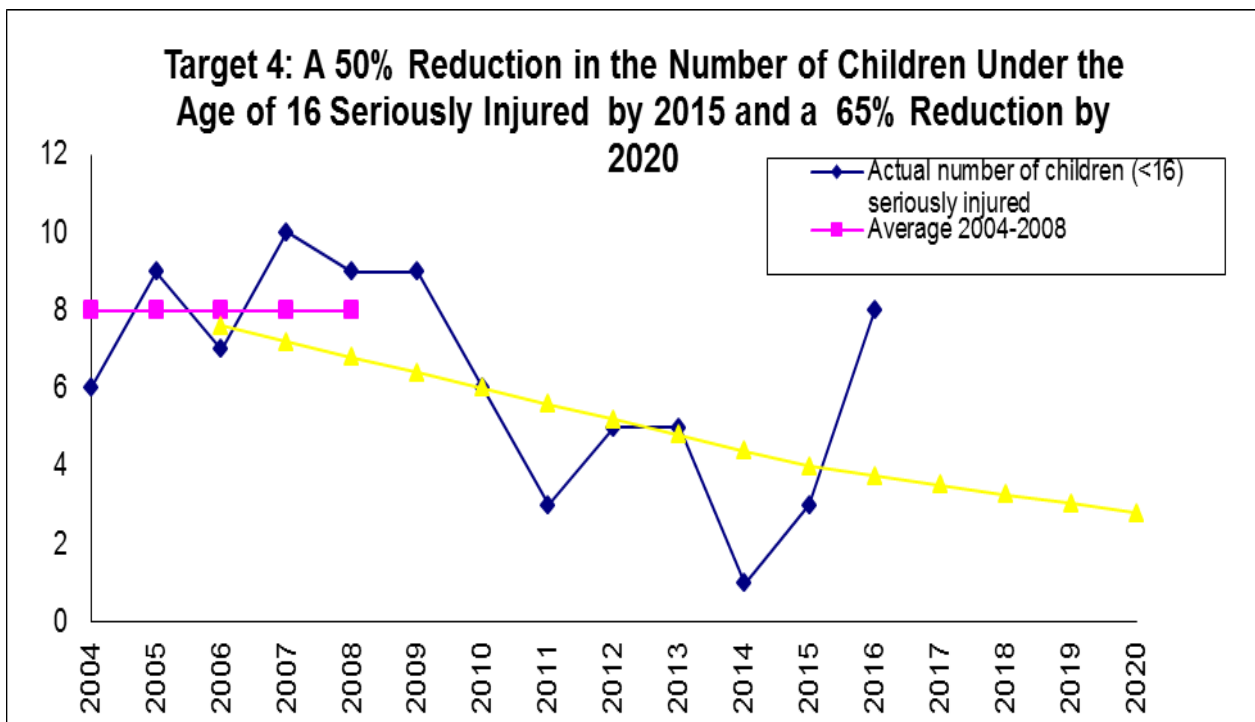
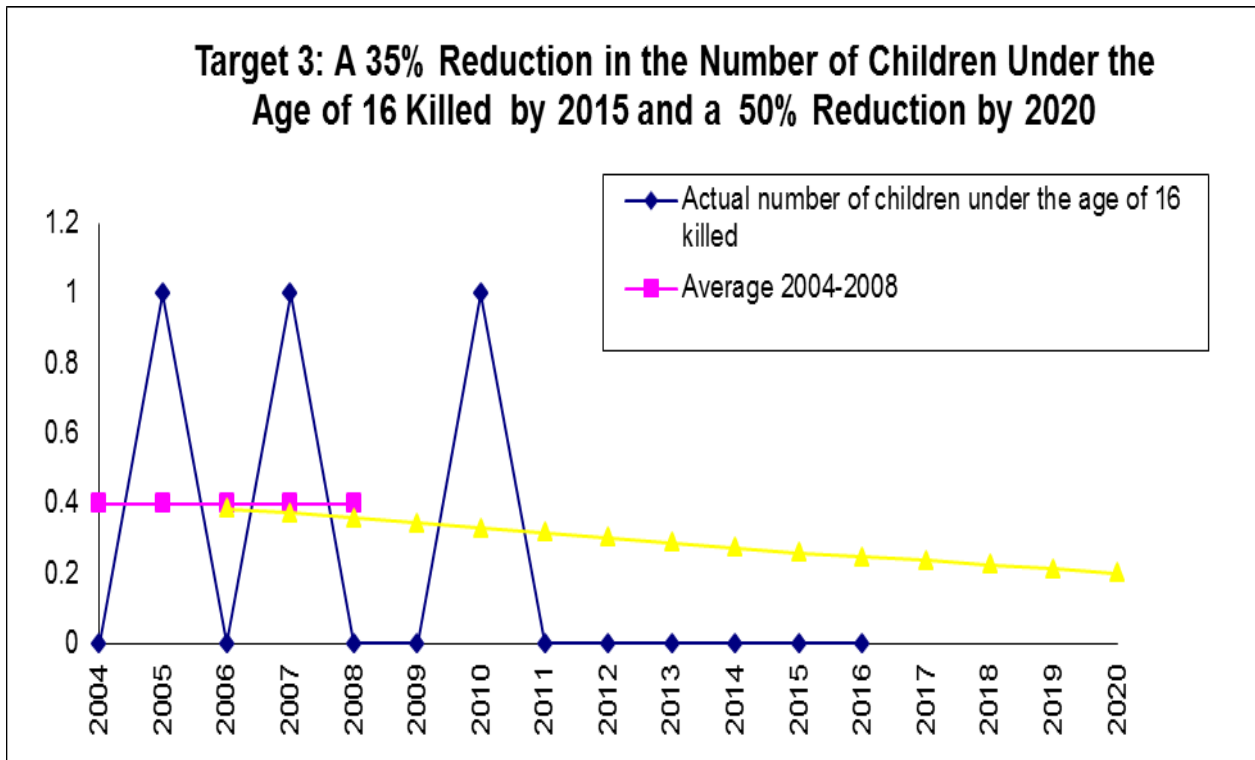
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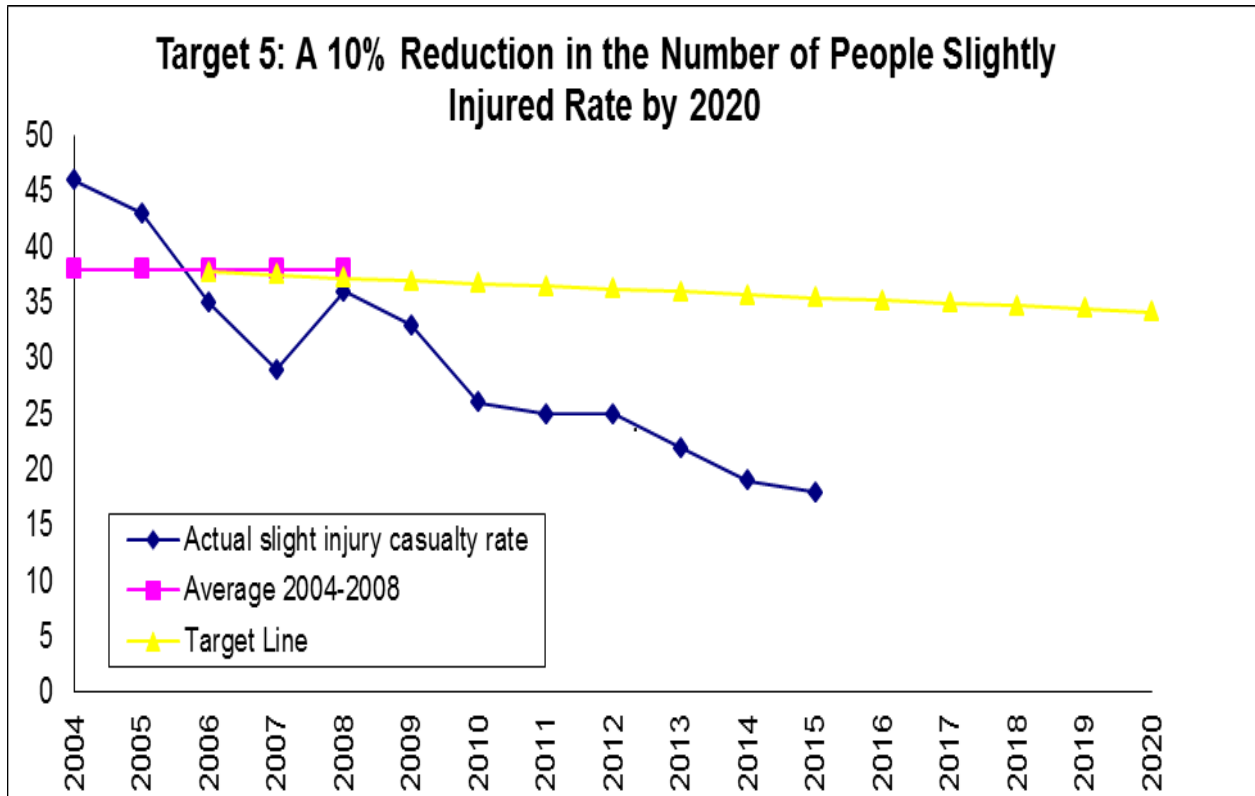
ROAD SAFETY ANNUAL POSITION STATEMENT



ROAD SAFETY ANNUAL POSITION STATEMENT



ROAD SAFETY ANNUAL POSITION STATEMENT



Appendix B
Progress Towards National Target Reductions

	Target 1		Target 2		Target 3		Target 4		Target 5	
YEAR	Killed	National Reduction Target	Serious	National Reduction Target	Children <16 killed	National Reduction Target	Children <16 serious	National Reduction Target	Slight	National Reduction Target
Ave 2004-2008	12.4		94.6		0.40		8.2		37.8	
2004	11		94		0		6		46	
2005	16		126		1		9		43	
2006	10	12.4	79	94.6	0	0.40	7	8	35	38
2007	16	12.0	84	90	1	0.38	10	7	29	38
2008	9	11.6	90	86	0	0.37	9	7	36	37
2009	13	11.2	91	81	0	0.35	9	7	33	37
2010	9	10.8	86	77	1	0.34	6	6	26	37
2011	6	10.4	64	72	0	0.32	3	6	25	37
2012	10	9.9	69	68	0	0.30	5	5	25	36
2013	4	9.5	76	63	0	0.29	5	5	22	36
2014	7	9.1	61	59	0	0.27	1	5	19	36
2015	7	8.7	60	54	0	0.26	3	4	18	36
2016	12	8.5	65	52	0	0.24	8	4		35
2017		8.2		50		0.23		4		35
2018		7.9		47		0.22		3		35
2019		7.7		45		0.21		3		35
2020		7.4		43		0.20		2.9		34
Annual reduction required to 2015	0.410		4.500		0.016		0.410			
Annual reduction required to 2020	0.255		2.270		0.012		0.250		0.252	

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UNION CHAIN BRIDGE – REQUEST TO INCREASE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION

Report by Service Director Assets & Infrastructure

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

15 August 2017

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **This report seeks approval from the Executive Committee to increase the funding for the Union Chain Bridge Project to £1M to support the application to Heritage Lottery Fund and match the commitment from Northumberland County Council.**
- 1.2 Union Chain Bridge has substantial historical significance as it was the longest suspension bridge in the world when opened in 1820, and is currently the oldest operational suspension bridge in the world still carrying vehicles. It is a Grade 1 structure in England and a Category A listed building in Scotland the highest designations.
- 1.3 Northumberland County Council and Scottish Borders Council are working in partnership to pursue Heritage Lottery Funding for a restoration project to repair and continue the usable lifespan of the bridge.
- 1.4 Since the update report to the Council's Executive Committee in March 2017, that stated the Heritage Lottery application date of June 2017, there have been several developments on the project that have affected its progress and budget estimate.
- 1.5 Northumberland County Council has made significant structural changes to their staffing levels, that has left the authority without the key personnel to complete the Heritage Lottery application process. Ultimately causing a delay in the application to Heritage Lottery until August 2017.
- 1.6 There has been proactive consultation with Historic England over the past twelve months, which is required to support the Heritage Lottery Fund application. Unfortunately Historic England do require a higher level of restoration to the original features than originally envisaged, contributing to an estimated increase from the aspiration of circa £5M project to £7.8M, and ultimately creating a £900k funding gap.

- 1.7 Northumberland County Council has approved a report to their Cabinet Committee to re-affirm their commitment to the project and increase their financial contribution from £550k to £1M, with the suggestion that Scottish Borders Council will do the same.
- 1.8 Scottish Borders Council's Project Management Team Leader has suggested actions by Northumberland County Council to mitigate the current fragmented approach to ensure that the August 2017 Heritage Lottery Fund submission date is achieved.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 I recommend that the Executive Committee:-

- (a) Agrees to increase the financial commitment to the Union Chain Bridge Project by £450k, in line with the current agreement with Northumberland County Council.**
- (b) Approves virement of £190k in 2019/20 and £260k in 2020/21 from Roads and Bridges capital block to the Union Chain Bridge.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Union Chain Bridge has substantial historical significance as it was the longest suspension bridge in the world when opened in 1820, and is currently the oldest operational suspension bridge in the world still carrying vehicles. It is a Grade 1 structure in England and a Category A listed building in Scotland; the highest designations.
- 3.2 The bridge has become structurally unsafe and may only be accessed by one light vehicle at a time. Scottish Borders Council and Northumberland County Council are jointly working up a project to refurbish the bridge to mark its 200th anniversary in 2020.
- 3.3 The current funding of the bridge maintenance is based on a 50/50 contribution between both Authorities, based on a maintenance agreement that dates back to a report of October 1996.
- 3.4 The draft Roads Asset Management Plan indicates that the condition of bridges and structures are continuing to deteriorate. Without significant investment within the next few years these assets will be more expensive to repair in future and it may result in the managed decline of the bridge. Over time the risks are:
- Future repairs will be more expensive;
 - There is risk of increase claims being made against the Council;
 - The safe condition of these assets will be an issue;
 - Loss of an infrastructure connection between communities; and
 - There will be a loss of reputation.
- 3.5 The opportunity was identified in 2014 by Northumberland County Council to look at external funding opportunities to fully refurbish the bridge, targeting funding that promoted culture and heritage.
- 3.6 Northumberland County Council, as lead agents, have previously committed £550k from their budget to act as leverage to seek to pull together a funding package of not less than £4.6m. Scottish Borders Council are responsible for half of the structure and committed £550k of capital in 2015/16 as match funding to maximise the possible leverage.
- 3.7 The Heritage Lottery Fund are supportive of the project due to its substantial heritage value, but also the international significance and educational opportunities that can be achieved through a potential project.
- 3.8 An update report was presented to the Executive Committee on 7 March 2017 prior to the expected completion of the Stage 1 bid to Heritage Lottery Fund in April 2017.

4 PROGRESS UPDATE

- 4.1 The completion of the application to Heritage Lottery Fund for April 2017 was not achieved. The April target was put in place to allow final comments from stakeholders (including Heritage Lottery Fund) to be incorporated prior to the actual application submission date of 15 June 2017.

- 4.2 Northumberland County Council were still confident in April 2017 that the application could be complete by the submission date, with good progress being made on:
- the Capital cost estimate incorporating the views of Historic England;
 - the Conservation Management Plan, and
 - the Activity Plan development
- 4.3 A meeting was rescheduled for the Project Board (containing officers from both authorities) on 16 May 2017 to review the final documentation for the Heritage Lottery Fund application. The meeting revealed that:
- although the application had been advanced it was not in a position to be submitted to Heritage Lottery Fund on 15 June 2017.
 - The project estimate had increased from £5.643M (reported on 7 March 2017) to £7.8M. Keeping to the original funding structure this would mean that HLF would be expected to fund circa £6.1M;
- 4.5 It was also reported that the Northumberland County Council team had met with representatives from Heritage Lottery Fund to discuss the application. Feedback from the meeting was as follows:
- There is still strong support for the project;
 - Heritage Lottery Fund can only decide you fund up to £2-3M at a local level, if the bid is submitted with a request of funding in excess of this figure then the project will be considered at a national level. From a national perspective this project would find it difficult to successfully compete with the level of outcomes that are currently proposed.
- 4.6 The Project Board were obviously disappointed with the status of the project at this point. Northumberland County Council were of the opinion that the application date should be delayed until December 2017 for the following reasons:
- The bid for Heritage Lottery Funding has to be as strong as possible to maximise the possibility of being successful. With the increase financial contribution from Heritage Lottery Fund, the outcomes of the project have to be more aspirational in terms of heritage, economy and people. Extra time is required to make sure that the supporting information is in place for the application;
 - The Engineering team require time to identify areas of possible Value Engineering. This will need to be validated with Historic England and Historic Environment Scotland.
- 4.7 Also it was confirmed that with a new Administration at Northumberland County Council the project team needed to re-fresh the authorisation to continue with the project (including the Capital commitment).

4.8 Northumberland County Council committed to an increased financial commitment at the Cabinet meeting on 11 July 2017, based on:

- a contribution from Historic England (not previously offered)
- an increased contribution from Scottish Borders Council (without consultation with this Authority)
- an increased contribution from the Friends of the Union Chain Bridge;
- and the previously identified contribution from Historic Environment Scotland (commitment still to be obtained).

See **Table 1** Below and a copy of the report in **ANNEX 1**.

Table 1 – Northumberland County Council proposed funding structure for the project

Party	Financial year					
	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	Total
HLF grant	nil	£636,141	£735,000	£1,328,859	£2,300,000	£5,000,000
Historic Scotland	nil	nil	£100,000	£300,000	£100,000	£500,000
Historic England	nil	nil	nil	£200,000	nil	£200,000
Friends of UCB	nil	nil	nil	£100,000	nil	£100,000
NCC	£93,759	£151,241	£95,000	£400,000	£260,000	£1,000,000
SBC	£35,000	£155,000	£150,000	£400,000	£260,000	£1,000,000

4.9 It has been requested by Scottish Borders Council lead officer that an independent project manager be introduced into the project team to create a controlled approach to the delivery of the Heritage Lottery Fund application process and ensure that targets are met going forward. This approach has been agreed and an appropriate resource is being procured.

4.10 Northumberland County Council have also brought in some former Heritage Lottery Funding officers to deliver the changes required to the application so that it can compete on a national level.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

- Scottish Borders Council has currently committed £550k to the project to match fund the previous commitment from Northumberland County Council.
- The project team continue to challenge Historic England to deliver a solution that balances heritage aspirations against project budget.
- To match the potential commitment from Northumberland County Council the current budget would have to be increased by £450K

from the block allocation for Roads & Bridges as per Table 2 below.

Table 2 – Revised Capital Profile

Heading	Financial year					Total
	Expenditure to date	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	
Existing Capital Budget	£35,000	£155,000	£150,000	£210,000		£550,000
Roads & Bridges Block Allocation				£190,000	£260,000	£450,000
TOTAL	£35,000	£155,000	£150,000	£400,000	£260,000	£1,000,000

5.2 Risk and Mitigations

- (a) Despite the efforts to Value Engineer the current project to reduce the capital cost, it is unlikely that it can be reduced significantly due to the heritage requirements set by Historic England and Heritage Lottery Fund. The Project Board have looked to maximise the other available funding from 3rd Parties. If the funding request to Heritage Lottery Fund exceeds the £5M it is unlikely that the application will be successful.
- (b) If the Heritage Lottery Fund application was unsuccessful and the authorities would be left with a declining asset, what could be delivered for the remaining money available (circa £1.8M)?
 - Stripping out the heritage obligations of Heritage lottery Fund and Historic England, it would still be a £5M project to repair the bridge to secure the long term future of the structure.
 - However, as the bridge is listed there will still be heritage requirements set by Historic England and Historic Environment Scotland with any repair.
- (c) If the Heritage Lottery Fund application was unsuccessful future bids could still be submitted. However with the continued deterioration of the bridge and the risk of construction inflation the cost of a future project would increase, requiring an increased contribution from both Authorities.

5.3 Equalities

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on this proposal and it is anticipated that there are no adverse equality implications.

5.4 Acting Sustainably

If the future of the Union Chain Bridge is not secured there is a likelihood of a situation of managed decline and the reduction in its service to the local communities. This would have a localised negative effect on the economy of the communities and environmental impacts from increased journey distances.

5.5 Carbon Management

Not applicable.

5.6 Rural Proofing

Not applicable.

5.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

Not applicable.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

6.2 Corporate Communications have also been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

Martin Joyce
Service Director Assets & Infrastructure

Signature

Author(s)

Ewan Doyle	Project management Team Leader – 01835 825124
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Background Papers:

Previous Minute Reference: Executive Committee 7 March 2017

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Jacqueline Whitelaw can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Jacqueline Whitelaw, Scottish Borders Council, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA, Tel 01835 825431, Fax 01835 825071, email eitranslationrequest@scotborders.gov.uk.

**ANNEX 1 – Northumberland County Council –
Cabinet Committee Report –
11 July 2017**

NORTHUMBERLAND

Northumberland County Council

COMMITTEE: CABINET

DATE: 11TH JULY 2017

TITLE OF REPORT UNION CHAIN BRIDGE RESTORATION PROJECT

Report of: Paul Jones, Director of Local Services & Housing Delivery

Cabinet Member: Glen Sanderson, Environment and Local Services

Purpose of report:

To seek approval for the submission of a Stage 1 Bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund in respect of the Union Chain Bridge Restoration Project, which seeks to undertake essential restoration works to this important heritage asset that will safeguard its future and status as the world's oldest single span suspension bridge still open to traffic and enhance its contribution to the local tourism economy. The report also seeks a financial commitment of £755,000 from the Council's capital programme over the 3 year period from 2018/19 to 2020/21 as part of the match funding required to support the delivery of this £7.8m project.

Recommendations

That Cabinet approves the submission of a Stage 1 Bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund in respect of the Union Chain Bridge Restoration Project, and gives a firm commitment to a capital contribution of £755,000 towards the successful delivery of the project to be profiled as follows:

2018/19:	£95,000
2019/20:	£400,000
2020/21:	£260,000

Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the following priorities in the NCC Corporate Plan 2013-2017:

- Economic Growth
- Places and environment
- Stronger communities and families

Key issues

- Northumberland County Council (NCC), together with Scottish Borders Council (SBC), has previously made a commitment to supporting the restoration of the Union Chain Bridge through match funding a potential Heritage Lottery Fund Grant.
- The Stage 1 bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund is to be submitted on 31st August 2017 and it will be necessary for both NCC and SBC to demonstrate a firm commitment to the required match funding.
- This match funding commitment needs to be demonstrated either in the MTFP or from future LTP allocations.
- It should be noted that the reasoning for pursuing an HLF grant was that the Bridge did not contribute significantly enough to the NCC Highway Network to be deemed a priority for LTP funding of this scale.

Background

This internationally significant bridge, constructed in 1820 and spanning the River Tweed on the Anglo-Scottish border, 8km from Berwick, requires urgent conservation and engineering repairs to primary structural elements, in order to secure its future as a river crossing.

It has been on Historic England's 'Heritage at Risk' Register since 2013 as Priority Category: C, Condition: Poor, based upon several significant engineering problems.

The bridge comprises a single suspension span of 137m of timber construction supported from wrought iron chains by wrought iron hanger bars. If these vital repairs are not undertaken, the Bridge will close to vehicles, losing its World status as the oldest surviving suspension bridge carrying traffic, causing serious loss to the local community.

The Bridge was formerly included in the Tweed Bridges Trust and subsequent to the dissolution of the trust, the liability for maintenance and repair rests equally between Northumberland County Council and Scottish Borders Council.

There have been engineering and condition issues with the bridge for a number of decades, but given the low usage and minimal contribution to the highway network as a whole, these issues never became LTP priorities.

The condition of the bridge had been of concern to local stakeholders for a number of years resulting in NCC effectively being accused of neglecting the structure. Following the short term closure of the bridge in 2008 due to the repair of a fractured suspension hanger, pressure was increased on NCC by stakeholders and the then English Heritage to formulate longer term proposals for the care of the structure. This pressure was intensified with the advent of the 200th anniversary of the bridges' opening in June 2020.

As a condition of being given listed building consent to carry out the temporary repairs in

2008, the then English Heritage required that a Conservation Management Plan be produced. Such a plan was produced and published in 2010 and indicated that the cost of repairs to address deterioration alone was of the order of £3.4M before any of the engineering issues were dealt with. It was clear that to attend to all the issues in order to carry out a comprehensive restoration would require a funding commitment by NCC and SBC that would effectively be unaffordable given other LTP Priorities.

The Conservation Management Plan proved to be pivotal in starting to draw the various parties together in working towards a common goal. In the years that followed significant local, national and political support was gained mainly through the action of the “Friends of the Union Chain Bridge” group and it was concluded that the best chance of funding the repairs was to make an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the bulk of the costs of repairs.

There was political support for this decision from both NCC and SBC and consequently a figure of £500k was entered into the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to demonstrate a commitment to the project.

The current position represents the culmination of over a decade of involvement with heritage bodies and influential stakeholders, including the “Friends of the Union Chain Bridge” Group, a former MP/MSP, eminent professors of engineering, the Institution of Structural Engineers and the Institution of Civil Engineers.

We are currently preparing a Heritage Lottery Fund stage 1 bid document for submission in August and as such we need to be able to demonstrate a commitment by NCC and SBC for the required match funding. In order to strengthen our chances of a successful bid outcome it is essential that agreement is secured from the Cabinet in July 2017 to NCC’s capital funding contribution, so that this can be evidenced in the HLF bid documentation for submission in August.

This bid document has been prepared after extensive joint working and consultations over the previous 12 months with Historic England, Historic Scotland and independent conservation architects. This has established the extent of work required, the balance between repair of existing fabric and replacement, the methodology for the works to be carried out which has, in turn, led to the ability to estimate the works cost. In addition there has been extensive work undertaken regarding the necessary educational and heritage aspects of the scheme to increase the attractiveness of the bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund and enhance its role as a visitor attraction to support the local tourism economy.

The current estimated total project cost breakdown, including works undertaken to support production of the stage 1 bid document, is as follows:

Activity	Cost
Initial development to establish outline proposals suitable to all parties, including Historic England and NCC Conservation team	£100,000
Development costs (technical, educational and heritage)	£1,700,000

Delivery costs	£6,000,000
Total	£7,800,000

The maximum available grant from HLF is £5M leaving a funding shortfall of £2.8M

It is expected that match funding contributions totalling £800,000 will be secured towards the project from a range of organisations, including Historic Environment Scotland, Historic England and the Friends of Union Chain Bridge. It is proposed that the remaining balance of the match funding contribution of £2m will be met 50/50 by NCC and SBC both contributing £1m each in total. NCC is currently seeking formal confirmation of the match funding contributions to demonstrate the full match funding package is available in support of the HLF bid.

The financial profiling of the NCC contribution is expected to be as follows:

	Financial year					
	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	Total
NCC	£93,759	£151,241	£95,000	£400,000	£260,000	£1,000,000

The NCC spend in 16/17 was funded from LTP and the ongoing work in 17/18 is currently being funded from LTP also. Therefore the future commitment required in the MTFP is £755K distributed as shown in the table, an increase in 255k over the existing MTFP budget allowance. The scheme will only proceed to construction if contributions are in place from the various funders, including the HLF Grant.

Implications

Policy	None at this stage.
Finance and value for money	There would be a revenue cost associated with funding an MTFP commitment (unlike an LTP commitment) should the project be awarded the HLF grant and proceed to construction.
Legal	None at this stage.
Procurement	None at this stage.
Human Resources	None at this stage.
Property	Successful delivery of the scheme would ensure that this important heritage asset was removed from Historic England's 'at risk' register.
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached)	None at this stage.

Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
Risk Assessment	None at this stage.
Crime & Disorder	None at this stage.
Customer Consideration	Successful delivery of the project would ensure this important heritage asset was safeguarded for the future, continued to be open to traffic for the benefit of the local community and supported the local tourism economy.
Carbon reduction	None at this stage.
Wards	Norham and Islandshires

Consultation

The Director of Local Services & Housing Delivery, Head of Technical Services and Portfolio Holder for Environment and Local Services have all been consulted on the contents of this report.

There have also been significant consultations and engagement with SBC, stakeholders, Heritage Bodies and the HLF in the development of the project to date.

Background papers:

None.

Report sign off.

Finance Officer	AM
Monitoring Officer/Legal	N/R
Human Resources	N/R
Procurement	N/R
I.T.	N/R
Director	PJ
Portfolio Holder(s)	GS

Author and Contact Details

Simon Rudman - Technical Services Design Manager

simon.rudman@northumberland.gov.uk

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