

PAPER NO.7

REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE MEETING OF 4th JULY 2011

Status: **Decision**
Title: **Response to HS2 Consultation**
Originator: **Matthew Bradford, Head of Community Services**
Where from: **Community Services**
Where to
next: **Consultation Response**

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To consider the implications of HS2 on the Harborough District and respond to the Government's consultation on this issue.

2 Recommendations:

2.1 It is recommended that Executive considers its position in respect of HS2.

2.2 It is recommended that the responsibility for drafting a response to Department for Transport is delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Housing Infrastructure and Planning and the Head of Community Services.

2.3 It is recommended that The Executive consider whether it wishes to join the 51m group (see paras 5.10 and 5.11).

3 Summary of Reasons for the Recommendations

3.1 To enable HDC to respond to the Governments consultation on HS2.

4 Impact on Communities

4.1 The environmental impact of constructing and operating HS2 are significant. The HS2 proposal has been designed to reduce as far as possible the visual and noise impacts but, for those living near the line it will have a significant impact.

5 Key Facts

5.1 On 11th March 2010 the Department for Transport published a White Paper setting out the route of the proposed HS2 line between London and Birmingham. Details of the proposals and the suggested route can be viewed at: <http://highspeedrail.dft.gov.uk/>

5.2 The consultation document “High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain’s Future” was published in February 2011 and can be viewed here: <http://highspeedrail.dft.gov.uk/sites/highspeedrail.dft.gov.uk/files/hsr-consultation-summary.pdf> The Department for Transport are seeking responses to 7 questions by the end of the consultation period, 29th July 2011. The consultation questions set out in the table below:

1	This question is about the strategy and wider context	Do you agree that there is a strong case for enhancing the capacity and performance of Britain’s inter-city rail network to support economic growth over the coming decades?
2	This question is about the case for high speed rail	Do you agree that a national high speed rail network from London to Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester (the Y network) would provide the best value for money solution (best balance of costs and benefits) for enhancing rail capacity and performance?
3	This question is about how to deliver the Government’s proposed network	Do you agree with the Government’s proposals for the phased roll-out of a national high speed rail network, and for links to Heathrow Airport and to the High Speed 1 line to the Channel Tunnel?
4	This question is about the specification for the line between London and the West Midlands	Do you agree with the principles and specification used by HS2 Ltd to underpin its proposals for new high speed rail lines and the route selection process HS2 Ltd undertook?
5	This question is about the route for the line between London and the West Midlands	Do you agree that the Government’s proposed route, including the approach proposed for mitigating its impacts, is the best option for a new high speed rail line between London and the West Midlands?
6	This question is about the Appraisal of Sustainability	Do you wish to comment on the Appraisal of Sustainability of the Government’s proposed route between London and the West Midlands that has been published to inform this consultation?
7	This question is about blight and compensation	Do you agree with the options set out to assist those whose properties lose a significant amount of value as a result of any new high speed line?

5.3 The proposal is for a Y shaped network, with a link to Birmingham which then splits, the western arm going on to Manchester and the eastern via the East Midlands and Sheffield to Leeds. The proposed route is in detail as far as Lichfield, with a spur in to Birmingham city centre; the remainder of the “Y” will be published in detail at the end of 2011.

- 5.4 Although the eastern route has not been published, it is highly unlikely that it will pass through the District.
- 5.5 Figure 1 below gives an overview of the route and suggested journey time savings.



Figure 1 Journey time savings to and from London by train (High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain's Future Consultation Summary, Department for Transport, Feb 2011)

- 5.6 Government figures suggest that HS2 would cost £32 billion to construct, and would generate benefits of around £44 billion.
- 5.7 HS2 would slash journey times between cities, bringing London within 49 minutes of Birmingham, and to within 80 minutes or less of both Manchester and Leeds. Travel times between regional centres would be cut even more

sharply, so that Birmingham would be only 40 minutes from Manchester and just over an hour from Leeds.

- 5.8 Key aspects of the proposed route include:
- Speed: A line capable of up to 250 miles per hour but with a maximum train speed of 225 mph assumed at opening.
 - Capacity: Up to 400 metre long trains with as many as 1,100 seats, and up to 14 trains per hour in each direction; developments in train control technology are expected to see that increase to 18 trains per hour on a wider network.
 - Minimising impacts on the environment: For instance, by following existing rail or road transport corridors, using deep cuttings and tunnels, and avoiding sensitive sites wherever possible.
- 5.9 More significantly for the District, A strong case has been made for the upgrading and electrification of the midland main line, which is essential to the economic wellbeing of the area. Although Government has stated that developing HS2 will not compromise these upgrades, stronger reassurances, in the form of detailed commitments and a timetable for delivery are required.
- 5.10 Buckinghamshire County Council are leading a campaign opposing HS2 called 51m. 51m is thirteen local authorities which have joined together in a national campaign to actively challenge the HS2 scheme. They are known as "51m" because that represents how much HS2 will cost each and every Parliamentary Constituency...£51million. The group want to emphasise the impact this proposed scheme will have on every taxpayer in the country for years to come. More information on the 51m group can be found here: <http://www.51m.co.uk/>
- 5.11 The Councils currently involved in 51m are:
- Buckinghamshire County Council
 - Aylesbury Vale District Council
 - Chiltern District Council
 - South Bucks District Council
 - Wycombe District Council
 - London Borough of Hillingdon
 - Cherwell District Council
 - Lichfield District Council
 - South Northants District Council
 - Warwick District Council
 - North Warwickshire Borough Council
 - Warwickshire County Council
 - Stratford-on-Avon District Council
- 5.12 On 14th June, Leicestershire County Council's Cabinet considered a report on whether to join the 51m group. At the time of writing this report the outcome of that meeting is unknown.

6 Legal Issues

- 6.1 None
 - 7 Resource Issues
 - 7.1 None
 - 8 Equality Impact Assessment Implications/Outcomes
 - 8.1 None
 - 9 Impact on the Organisation
 - 9.1 None
 - 10 Community Safety Implications
 - 10.1 None
 - 11. Carbon Management Implications
 - 11.1 Improving the rail network is a key component in the Governments Strategy to reduce carbon emissions.
 - 12. Risk Management Implications
 - 12.1 None
 - 13 Consultation
 - 13.1 The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing Infrastructure and Planning have been consulted on this report.
 - 14 Options Considered
 - 14.1 Option 1: To respond to the consultation.
 - 14.2 Option 2: Not to respond to the consultation.
 - 15 Background Papers
 - 15.1 None
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Previous report(s): None

Information Issued Under Sensitive Issue Procedure: No

Ward Members Notified: No

Appendices: *list any appendices here including title and filename in brackets (e.g. Performance Data 2010 (perfddata.doc)).*

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