

Meeting on: Monday 19 June 2017

Meeting with: Slough Borough Council and Transport for Bucks

Topic: Communications for M4 J3-12 Smart Motorway Project

Location: Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Depot, Tinkers Lane, Windsor, SL4 4LP

Attendees:

Name	Initials	Organisation & role
Chris Tooth	CT	Highways England (Project Lead)
David Pilsworth	DP	Ch2mArcadis JV (Deputy Project Manager)
Amelie Treppass	AT	CH2MArcadis JV (Stakeholder Manager)
Barry Grimes	BG	CH2MArcadis JV (Stakeholder Manager)
Matt Orchard	MO	BBV JV (Public Liaison Officer)
Tony Blackmore	TB	Transport for Bucks (Lead ITS and liaison on bridges)
Rosemary Bryant	RB	Transport for Bucks (Communications Manager)
Richard Wells	RW	Bucks County Council (Media Officer)
Jacqui Wheeler	JW	Slough BC (Public Rights of Way Officer)
Emma Warren	EW	Slough BC (Communications Officer)

Apologies

Name	Initials	Organisation & role
Sarika Varma	SV	RBWM (Project Lead)

Ref	Action/Note	Owner	Deadline
1	<p>Introductions and Safety Moment</p> <p>AT played two videos explaining how variable speed limit and red cross signs work on smart motorways. The group agreed the communications around the M4 J3-12 scheme should raise awareness of the benefits of smart motorways as well as informing people about the impacts from construction.</p> <p>Scheme Overview</p> <p>CT gave an overview of the M4 J3-12 scheme, explaining the history of smart motorways, what makes a motorway 'smart' and the benefits this provides (see attached PowerPoint presentation, Doc Ref: HA514451-CHHJ-GEN-SZ_ZZZZZZZZZ_Z-PP-ZH-0011).</p> <p>CT explained the scheme has taken longer than other smart motorway projects as it required a Development Consent Order (DCO) approved by the Secretary of State. A DCO was required because the scheme entails the demolition of 11 overbridges, the widening of 10 underbridges and a land take of over 15 hectares to convert the hard shoulder to a permanent running lane along the full</p>		



Working on behalf of Highways England

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	<p>route from J3 to J12.</p> <p>The DCO application was submitted in March 2015 and required over three years of engagement, consultation and hearings led by the Planning Inspectorate.</p> <p>An outcome of the DCO process is the requirement for low noise surfacing along the entire route and the construction of acoustic barriers at certain points. TB noted this was a key message for the public.</p> <p>CT explained that advanced works, including wildlife surveys and relocation, had begun in March 2017. The main works are due to being in Winter 2017/18 with a scheduled completion date of 2021/22. It is currently envisaged that construction will take place in phases, spreading west and east from J8/9, so as not to have works on the whole route at once.</p> <p>The group discussed Parish Council involvement with the scheme so far. CT noted that presentations had been made to several Parish Councils throughout the design process including Iver, Taplow, Bray and Dorney. Some parishes seem more interested in construction management, than the proposed scheme.</p> <p>CT and DP said the level of interest in the scheme from residents has been low so far. The public information exhibitions held in 2014 and 2015, attracted low numbers despite invitations being sent to over 26,000 properties.</p> <p>TB suggested the Local Area Forums were a good way to brief several Parish Councils at the same time. AT noted that communications are mainly reactive at the moment until details of construction have been confirmed. Engagement is currently focussed on detailed design and discharge of the DCO Requirements.</p> <p>CT confirmed that discussions were taking place to arrange the necessary land purchase. The scheme will not need permanent acquisition of any buildings or private homes but one business premises will need to be acquired temporarily.</p> <p>RB asked if there would be any construction compounds in Bucks. There will not be, but e.g. Sutton Lane compound borders Bucks.</p> <p>The group discussed the Animal Sanctuary at Orchard Herbs Farm, on Lake End Road. Some of the land will be acquired to build the scheme. It was noted that a large pile of concrete has recently been placed on this land.</p>		

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	<p>The group discussed the various bridges that would need to be demolished or widened as part of the scheme. Some bridges will not be demolished until a new bridge has been built alongside but for others a diversion route will be put in place until the new bridge is complete.</p>		
2	<p>Communications Approach</p> <p>AT and BG explained the high-level communications strategy for the scheme in the run-up to construction.</p> <p>RB commented that they would like to receive key dates and key messages when they are available.</p> <p>TB said that Bucks CC has a consultee list of local stakeholders and would be able to forward on messages on behalf of the M4 J3-12 team.</p> <p>TB commented that Bucks has a relatively low population, but lots of non-local road users. The group discussed the importance of getting messages out to road users, particularly commuters who use the route daily. RB felt road users would be one of the most difficult stakeholder audiences to reach.</p> <p>The group agreed one of the best ways to reach this group would be a short URL promoted on VMS signs along the route. CT and DP noted that the Highways England (HE) may be constrained by internal branding protocols. The current approach is to show the HE customer contact phone number.</p> <p>The local authority communications leads said they had access to their own VMS signs and they would be happy to use these to display messages about the M4 J3-12 scheme.</p> <p>The group discussed targeting communications to major employers along the route so they could pass messages onto any staff who commute along the M4.</p> <p>The local authority communications leads also offered to help with highlighting high footfall events coming up in their area which could be suitable for roadshows.</p> <p>The group discussed how social media could be used to raise awareness of the scheme. The local authority communications leads said they would be happy to share and retweet content from Highways England when required.</p> <p>The group recognised the importance of coordinating the messaging across all the local authorities affected by the scheme.</p> <p>Action 2.1: AT to propose a workshop of communications leads from all the authorities to plan how information would be cascaded to local</p>	AT	Autumn 2017

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	<p>stakeholders.</p> <p>The group discussed the use of videos, live feeds, camera still and time lapse photography as a hook to attract people to the scheme website. TB recommended the Crossrail webcam live-feed on their website. He also commented that Highways England's current practice of switching off traffic cameras when a scheme is under construction, makes imagery less accessible.</p> <p>The group noted that the scheme could attract spectators who are interested in following the construction work. It was suggested that an official viewing platform for e.g. bridge demolition, could be popular. A video of an overnight bridge demolition on the M1 was shown at the end of the meeting and is available here. It is likely a similar demolition process will be used for the M4 bridges.</p> <p>TB noted that the Institute of Advanced Motorists and the Association of Driving Instructors would both be interested in receiving more information about the scheme and smart motorways in general.</p>		