

**Joint Tyne Bridges Committee**

19 December 2019

(2.30 - 3.15pm)

Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8QH

**Present:**

Councillor: A Ainsley (Chair)

Councillors: S Fairlie, P Allen, J McElroy and J McClurey

**In attendance:**

Alastair Swan	- Engineer, Newcastle City Council
Nigel Burn	- Engineer, Gateshead Council
Brenda Joyce	- Democratic Services Officer, Newcastle City Council

**1 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Allison, Eagle and Ferninand.

**2 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

Councillor Ainsley was moved and seconded as Chair.

**RESOLVED** – That Councillor Arlene Ainsley be appointed Chair of the Joint Bridges Committee for the 2019/20 municipal year.**3 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

Councillor McElroy was moved and seconded as Vice Chair.

**RESOLVED** – That Councillor John McElroy be appointed Vice Chair of the Joint Bridges Committee for the 2019/20 municipal year.**4 MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEE**

The membership of the Joint Committee for the 2019-20 Council Year was noted as follows:

Representing Newcastle City Council:

- Councillor Arlene Ainsley

- Councillor George Allison
- Councillor Stephen Fairlie
- Councillor Pauline Allen
- Councillor Gareth Kane – Substitute member

Representing Gateshead Council:

- Councillor John McElroy
- Councillor Katherine Ferdinand
- Councillor John McClurey
- Councillor John Eagle

## 5 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 DECEMBER 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## 6 **JOINT TYNE BRIDGES REVENUE BUDGET**

Submitted: Report of Assistant Director Transport, Newcastle and Strategic Director, Communities & Environment, Gateshead detailing the expenditure for 2018/2019, reviewing the expenditure for 2019/2020, and recommending a budget for expenditure on the Joint Tyne bridges for 2020/2021 (previously circulated and copy attached to the official minutes).

The year-end expenditure in 2018/2019 was £27,810 compared with a budget provision of £50,410 (Tyne £10,000, Swing £10,000, Redheugh £14,885, Scotswood £10,525, Newburn £5,000).

At the meeting on 5 December 2018, the budget provision for 2019/2020 was set at £39,900. The current estimated outturn was £29,070.

During discussions the following points were raised:

- With regard to the lights on the Tyne Bridge, the lights were within the superstructure of the bridge itself so would require lane closures and a large 'cherry picker' would need access to do the repairs. Works would be done separately through SEC and there were no concerns about that company doing the repairs again.

The lights were included in the light replacement programme and the capital works for the Tyne Bridge.

- The underspend shown in the outturn would go back into the budget for the joint Tyne bridges.
- A concern was expressed about the experience for pedestrians using the High Level Bridge. As an important gateway and a major thoroughfare, it was unfortunate that it was in such a poor state with graffiti and lighting. It would be a shame for it to deteriorate further and it could be a lot nicer.

The local authorities had responsibility for lighting and surfacing on the bridge. SEC would be asked to advise what was required from a maintenance perspective on the lighting to see if a scheme could be developed to improve it.

It was considered that bridge use had increased with the introduction of new cycle lanes and the opening-up of the new bridges quarter in Gateshead.

When Network Rail carried out major maintenance works the Councils had entered into a new agreement with them. Although it was Network Rail's responsibility to carry out certain duties such as graffiti cleansing, as the bridge was a listed building this was not as simply as it first appeared. There was also two different types of lighting on the bridge – the architectural and the footway lighting and this came under the highway budget. Members asked for this to be looked at as further pedestrian and cycle traffic linked into the air quality and wellbeing agendas as well as trying to increase 'active travel'. The footway lighting would be looked at and a report would be brought back to Committee.

The condition of the architectural lighting on the High Level Bridge would be investigated.

- There was a claim in with NWL to get the money back that was spent on Newburn Bridge repairs. A lot of work had been undertaken on the back of the burst watermain and a recent issue on the south side of the bridge was being picked up by NWL.

**RESOLVED** – That Joint Bridges Committee agreed to:

- i Note the expected expenditure for 2019/2020 is £29,070 compared with a budget provision of £39,900.
- ii Recommend the programme of maintenance and repair works to be carried out in 2020/2021, as detailed in paragraph 6, to the appropriate committee of each authority.
- iii Recommend a budget provision of £39,900 for 2020/2021, as detailed in paragraph 6 and Appendix A of this report, to the appropriate committee of each authority for inclusion in that committee's budget for 2020/2021.

## 7 **JOINT TYNE BRIDGES CAPITAL BUDGET**

Submitted: Report of Assistant Director Transport, Newcastle and Strategic Director, Communities & Environment, Gateshead outlining the progress made on the planned 2019/20 capital works programme for the Newcastle and Gateshead Joint Bridges, unplanned works which were required during the year and recommending a capital budget to be expended on the Joint Bridges in 2020/21 (previously circulated and copy attached to the official minutes).

Capital works undertaken on the Newcastle and Gateshead Joint Bridges was funded from the LTP Maintenance Block allocation. The maintenance costs were shared on a population basis. In 2019/20 a sum of £375,000 was allocated to the planned works as set in the report, together with a programme of proposed capital works to be carried out in 2019/20.

During discussions the following points were raised:

- The budget provision of £375,000 for work to the Redheugh Bridge expansion joints programme to commence in February 2020 was raised. The original estimate had been prepared based on DfT recommendations although safety inspections had subsequently revealed further deterioration. There were also some traffic management cost included in the budget provision.

The increase illustrated that extensive work was needed, and this would have an impact on traffic. The work had last been undertaken in 2004 and the joints were now nearing the end of their serviceable life. It was anticipated the work would be carried out over two weekends and the bridge would need to be closed in both directions. Issues which could impact on traffic flow such as Chinese New Year, fixture lists, ECML replacement buses, weather and potential Metro disruptions etc. would all be factored into to the work programme.

- It was confirmed that the Tyne Bridge, Swing Bridge, High Level Bridge and Newburn Bridge were listed buildings. The Swing Bridge was a 'scheduled ancient monuments' and therefore had a higher level of listing.

A member asked if there was any possibility of Heritage Lottery Funding. Officers advised that they tried to tap into any additional funding possible but specific criteria had to be met for the bidding process.

- The A167 Tyne Bridge was the only bridge categorised as a major road; the A695 Redheugh Bridge was not.

**RESOLVED** – That Committee agreed to: -

- Note the progress made on the planned capital works programme funded by the Department for Transport's Local Transport Plan (LTP) for 2019/20.
- Recommend the programme of planned capital works to be carried out in 2020/21, as detailed in paragraphs 5 to 9, to the appropriate committee of each authority.
- Recommend a budget provision of £200,000 for 2020/21, as detailed in paragraphs 5 to and 9 of this report, to the appropriate committee of each authority for inclusion in that committee's budget for 2020/21.

## 8 **JOINT TYNE BRIDGES - TYNE BRIDGE MAJOR MAINTENANCE**

Submitted: Report of Assistant Director Transport, Newcastle and Strategic Director, Communities & Environment, Gateshead providing (previously circulated and copy attached to the official minutes).

The report updated Members on the proposals for the major maintenance of the Tyne Bridge and identified the works to be undertaken, the budget costs and the anticipated programme for delivery. It also identified the proposed method of funding the works and the governance involved with the delivery of the project.

A combined bid had been successful in the first stage and the DfT had granted the authorities £100,000 to develop the projects to Outline Business Case for a combined £40 million project for the Tyne Bridge and Central Motorway. It was anticipated that the bid submission would go to DfT early in the new year and if successful it was hoped that there would be an announcement by the end of this financial year with a view to having the funding in place from 2021.

There would be at least one year's preparatory work before the project would be on site and the intention would be to carry out the programme of works over a three-year period to minimise disruption.

During discussions the following points were raised:

- The condition of the Tyne Bridge towers was raised along with the possibility of making better use of the space. Currently work to the towers was to secure and reinforce the doors and deal with water and bird ingress issues.

The Property Section had been in talks with various organisations with regards to utilizing the space and some proposals had been brought forward but not in any great detail. Pop up events had been suggested but there was possibly some reticence due to proposed major maintenance works.

The towers were originally built as warehouses. However, although the inside was in skeleton form only, the towers did offer opportunities.

Members considered that it would be a positive move if the use of the towers could be maximized.

- Before the DfT allocated any funding, it had to be satisfied that any works were appropriate, provided value for money and met their various criteria. The business case had been developed over a couple of years and because of the scale of the works there had not been a suitable fund to bid against up until the last budget announcement.
- Part of the overall package being looked at was improving accessibility and the possibility of reintroducing lifts from the Quayside to the road deck level. A challenge would be that additional lift shafts would need to be installed compared to the existing one. Again, this would be looked at subject to funding being made available. There was a slight concern around the security on the bridge if lifts were in use and this would need to be considered.

The consideration of bringing the lifts back into use was welcomed. It was hoped that the Tyne Bridge would be in prime condition for the centenary in 2028.

**RESOLVED** – That Committee: -

- i Noted the contents of the report.
- ii Recommended the proposals for the major maintenance of the Tyne Bridge, as detailed in paragraph 4 of this report, to the appropriate committee of each authority.