

**TITLE OF REPORT:** Tyne Bridge Restoration

**REPORT OF:** Peter Udall, Strategic Director, Economy, Innovation and Growth  
Colin Huntington, Strategic Director, Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities

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### **Purpose of the Report**

1. This report updates Cabinet on progress with plans for the Tyne Bridge restoration and major maintenance scheme noting the submission of a full business (FBC) case to government. Approval of the FBC by government will enable the release of the funding award.
2. It sets out the proposed approach and programme.

### **Background**

3. The Tyne Bridge is an iconic, Grade II listed structure spanning the Tyne between Newcastle and Gateshead and carries up to 70,000 vehicles per day. The Tyne Bridge is jointly owned by Newcastle City Council (NCC) and Gateshead Council (the Council).
4. The bridge is showing clear signs of deterioration, particularly the breakdown of the paint system and visible corrosion of the steelwork, there is also localised deterioration of the carriageway and footway surfacing.
5. NCC, as the highway authority for the bridge, submitted an Outline Business Case (OBC) bid to the Department for Transport (DfT) Major Road Network and Large Local Majors Fund in 2019.
6. In June 2022 ministers approved the OBC for the Tyne Bridge and Central Motorway Major Maintenance scheme within the Major Road Network/Large Local Majors programme. As part of this approval government will provide a maximum capped funding contribution of up to £35.3 million towards the estimated total scheme cost of £41.48 million, subject to approval of the Full Business Case by government. The balance of the funding, £6.18m, will be provided from local contributions by NCC and the Council from existing Highway Maintenance Block funding. The costs of the local contribution for

the bridge. is funded jointly by NCC and the Council pro rata based on population.

## **Proposal**

7. Cabinet is asked to agree to the recommendations below.

## **Recommendations**

8. It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (i) Notes the submission of the Full Business Case by Newcastle City Council to the Department for Transport.
- (ii) Notes the allocation of the Council's proportion of local funding contribution to the Tyne Bridge element required above the capped DfT amount from the existing Highways Maintenance Block funding allocation from the DfT during 2023/24 and then from subsequent maintenance funding allocations.
- (iii) Notes that preliminary works will commence in September 2023, prior to approval of the Full Business Case by government.

For the following reason

- (i) To carry out works that are essential to maintain the Tyne Bridge so it is safe to use and fit for purpose and secure the long-term availability of the Tyne Bridge for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles without the need to impose weight or lane restrictions.

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**CONTACT:** Anneliese Hutchinson ext 3881

### Policy Context

1. The Tyne Bridge plays a key role as an enabler to the success of the region. Transport links between the Gateshead and Newcastle centres provide the essential connectivity to support the economy of the region. This programme of works aligns with Thrive and the North East Transport Plan. As a multi-modal link it provides a key multi-modal for buses, pedestrians, and cyclists along with vehicular traffic.

### Background

2. The Tyne Bridge is an iconic structure often seen as representing Tyneside and a key transport link between Newcastle and Gateshead carrying around 60,000 vehicles per day. It is not only important for general vehicles but forms the main northbound route for buses and an essential link for pedestrians and cyclists travelling between the centres. It forms part of the National Cycle Network.
3. The Tyne Bridge opened in 1928 and is approaching its centenary year, it is now in need of significant maintenance. The work is planned to be complete prior to the centenary of the bridge and will be carried out as part of a programme including the Newcastle Central Motorway (CME) A167(M). The last major Tyne Bridge Major Maintenance works were completed in 2001.
4. In 2022/23 NCC carried out a detailed inspection and investigation works, to develop the works programme, phasing and works costs. The inspection and investigation works are now complete and the methods of repair. The areas of deterioration of the Tyne Bridge identified were as anticipated at scheme development stage however the number and extent of repairs required has increased as it is now four years since the scheme development stage. Additionally, since the OBC submission there has also been a significant increase in construction prices due to inflation.
5. Due to the increase in the Tyne Bridge element costs, NCC have consulted with the DfT. The DfT's contribution towards the Tyne Bridge element of £35.3M, is capped, and the Central Motorway A167(M) element works cannot be omitted. NCC have amended the FBC bid comprising £32.2M for major maintenance of the Tyne Bridge and £9.2M for a programme of maintenance works on the Central Motorway A167(M) in Newcastle.
6. The local funding contribution for the Tyne Bridge element will be £4.8M. The cost will be shared pro-rata to population and the Council's proportion of the local

funding contribution will be £2.0M at the FBC submission stage. It is envisaged the local funding contribution would be spread over four financial years.

7. As the DfT contribution will be capped, any cost increases following the FBC submission stage would be funded as part of the local funding contribution.
8. It is also proposed to undertake preparatory works under the existing contract for the Tyne Bridge, prior to the funding agreement from the DfT, to allow scaffolding works to commence in September to steelwork below the bridge deck after the kittiwake breeding season and the Great North Run.
9. The provisional programme duration is currently 36-48 months.
10. To carry out the work safely and to protect the workforce, lane closures will be required, this will see the main carriageway over the Tyne Bridge reduced to one lane in each direction during certain phases of the works expected to start in early 2024, with additional night-time closures to allow for the erection and dismantling of the scaffolding to the main arch. Lane restrictions and night-time closures will also be required on the road network spanned by the Tyne Bridge on the Newcastle and Gateshead quaysides.
11. Officers have been developing plans to mitigate the impact on traffic of the highway works. The impact is expected to be significant but the lane closures are an essential element of the restoration. These mitigations will be publicised and will encourage the public to change their travelling habits. This may mean changing to public transport, walking or cycling, taking a different route, or even opting not to make the same journeys as currently.
12. In Gateshead, the mitigation plans include investigating improvements on public transport corridors to make bus journeys less impacted by delays; park and ride; cycle hubs and bike hire. Funding is being sought with help from Transport North East, by bringing forward Bus Service Improvement Plan funding and investigating other options. More information will come forward as these plans evolve. A joint communication plan is being developed and is being led by Newcastle.

## **Consultation**

13. Consultation has taken place with the Leader, Environment and Transport Portfolio and Bridges ward members. Consultation on proposed mitigation measures will be addressed as part of detailed design stages.

## Alternative Options

14. If the major maintenance works is not carried out the bridge would continue to deteriorate to such an extent that weight and/or lane restrictions would be required.

## Implications of Recommended Option

### 15. Resources:

- a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms there is sufficient allocation within the existing Highways Maintenance Block funding allocation from the DfT to meet the local funding contribution as set out in the full business case.
- b) **Legal implications** – The highway authority has a statutory duty to maintain the highway. The Council has an obligation to contribute towards the maintenance costs of the Tyne Bridge.
- c) **Human Resources Implications** – There are no human resources implications.
- d) **Property Implications** - There are no property implications.

### 16. Risk Management Implication: –

**Structural failure** – the intention is to carry out the works as soon as possible. In the meantime, continue to inspect and monitor the structure. Failure to carry out the work could lead to consideration of weight and/or lane restrictions.

**Funding** – A funding bid has been submitted to government. Works will not progress without funding having been secured. Project expenditure will be monitored and reported to the project board led by Newcastle with participation from Gateshead officers. This will seek to mitigate the risk of increase in costs.

**Environmental** – the FBC has considered environmental impacts. NCC will obtain statutory approvals and carry out works to minimise any impact on the environment. Kittiwake nesting has been accommodated in the programme of works.

**Economic and social**– maintaining the bridge will mitigate the impact on the economy and jobs. As an iconic structure there will be a high degree of public interest in the Tyne Bridge works, especially with the centenary being in 2028. Carrying out the works will protect the viability of the region and ensure the future of the structure.

**Health and safety** – NCC will ensure that works are designed, supervised and carried out in accordance with health and safety legislation

**Communications** – Customer awareness of the works and need to restrict traffic is important to ensure the vitality of the economy and everyday life. A strong joint communications plan has been developed to mitigate this risk.

**17. Equality and Diversity Implications** – There are no equality and diversity implications identified. An equalities impact assessment forms part of the FBC. An EIA screening has been carried out by NCC and is appended for information.

**18. Crime and Disorder Implications** – There are no crime and disorder implications identified

**19. Health Implications** – Air quality may be affected by the works, either positively or negatively; it will be monitored in accordance with legislation and monitoring will take account of the work.

**20. Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** – The scheme will be developed with sustainability in mind and will support the Council's environmental, social and economic objectives. Supporting measures during the programme of work will encourage use of more sustainable modes of travel and may result in longer term change to travel behaviour.

**21. Human Rights Implications** – No implications have been identified.

**22. Ward Implications** – The Bridges ward will be directly affected. There will be increase in vehicles queuing and traffic delays on the surrounding road network during the works. Traffic impacts may extend to the wider area also, mitigations and communication plans are under development.

## **Background Information**

**23.** Further background information is contained in:

- Joint Bridges Committee report dated December 2019
- Joint Bridges Committee report dated December 2020
- Joint Bridges Committee report dated December 2021
- Joint Bridges Committee report dated December 2022

Newcastle City Council Equality Impact Analysis

## Equality Impact Analysis Screening Tool

### Section 1: Background information

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) requires Newcastle City Council to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people from different groups. Assessing impact on equality and recording this is one of the keyways in which we can show due regard.

**Name of completing officer:**

Alastair Swan

**Date of screening:**

20/06/2023

**Service area and Directorate responsibility:**

Transport, Place.

**Approved by (Director/Head of Service):**

Pamela Holmes

**Date of approval:**

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### Section 2: Summary of proposal being screened

('proposal' refers to a policy, function, strategy, or project).

**Name of proposal:**

- Submission of Full Business Case
- Preparatory scaffolding works to the Tyne Bridge.

**The aims/objectives of the proposal:**

The submission of the Full Business Case meets the funding bid requirements of the Department for Transport to allow the award of their funding contribution towards the Tyne Bridge and Central Motorway major maintenance works.

The preparatory erection of the scaffolding below the road deck to the Tyne Bridge reduces the risk associated with the return of kittiwakes in early 2024 delaying the progression of the planned works.

### Section 3: Equality Impact Analysis screening

Is there any actual or potential negative or positive impact on the following protected characteristics?	Negative Impact Indicate: Y = Yes N = No ? = unsure	Positive Impact Indicate: Y = Yes N = No ? = unsure	Comments
<b>Sex (Male or Female)</b>	N	N	
<b>Age</b>	N	N	
<b>Race</b>	N	N	
<b>Religion or belief</b>	N	N	
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	N	N	
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	N	N	
<b>Disability</b> (Physical, learning difficulties, mental health, and medical conditions)	N	N	
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b> status	N	N	
<b>Pregnancy/maternity</b>	N	N	
You should also consider: <b>Parents and Carers</b> <b>Socio-economic status</b>	N	N	