

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure
DATE	21 January 2014
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Communications Strategy for the Third Don Crossing
REPORT NUMBER:	ESPI/14/002

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Construction of the Third Don Crossing will inevitably impact upon the surrounding area. There is therefore a need to ensure that elected members, frontagers, local communities and public services are kept apprised of construction activities that may impact upon them. This report outlines a communications strategy that seeks to achieve this.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee approve the communications strategy outlined within this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.2 Funding for the Third Don Crossing has been provided within the Council's capital budget. The recommended communications strategy can be accommodated within the budget that has already been allocated to the project.

3 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Planned construction activities may be disrupted at short notice by factors such as adverse weather. In such circumstances it may not be possible to fully implement the communications strategy.

4 BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 4.1 Construction activities are programmed by the contractor in advance of project commencement in order to minimise the construction period and optimise the use of time and resources. Construction projects are complex and alterations to the programme may be necessary to reflect changes in circumstance e.g. due to the impact of adverse weather. The following potential communication issues need to be addressed to keep stakeholders updated on progress:

- a) how Local Members, Community Councils, affected landowners, the general public and the media are advised of any works required in advance of the main construction contract;
- b) how Local Members, Community Councils, affected landowners, the public and the media are advised of the commencement of the main construction contract;
- c) how emergency services, transport operators and other services are advised of the issues that will affect them during construction;
- d) who Local Members, Community Councils and affected landowners should contact with regard to any issues that arise during construction;
- e) how frontagers directly affected by individual operations are advised, and;
- f) how Local Members and Community Councils are updated on the progress of the scheme.

4.2 It is proposed that the following strategy be adopted to address the issues identified in 4.1 above :

- a) Local Members, Community Councils and affected landowners will be directly contacted by the Aberdeen City Council roads team. This will most likely take the form of an email or letter drop. Members of the public will be advised through the use of the media. This shall include, but not be limited to newspapers, twitter, website and radio notices. Where possible at least two weeks' notice shall be provided of the start of advance works contracts. All notices to the media will come from the Aberdeen City Council Media Team. Members of the Media Team will liaise closely with officers in the roads team throughout the construction process to ensure that they are fully aware of all issues of public interest. The Media Team will proactively issue media releases and posts on Twitter to inform the media of important milestones reached in the project. The Media Team will also respond on behalf of Aberdeen City Council to all media enquiries regarding the project, in consultation with officials in the roads team. The City Council Administration and, where appropriate, Local Members will be kept informed of all media enquiries and proposed responses.
- b) Prior to the commencement of the main construction contract, Local Members, Community Councils and affected landowners will be directly contacted by the Aberdeen City Council roads team or construction site staff. This will most likely take the form of an email or letter and will inform them of the start date of the construction works and include contact details for the contractor and the Aberdeen City Council Resident Engineer. Members of the public will be advised through the use of media including, but not limited to newspaper, twitter, website and radio notices. Briefings on the implications of the works will be offered to Local Members, Community Councils. All notices to the

media will come from the Aberdeen City Council Media Team. Members of the Media Team will liaise closely with officers in the roads team throughout the construction process to ensure that they are fully aware of all issues of public interest. The Media Team will proactively issue media releases and posts on Twitter to inform the media of important milestones reached in the project. The Media Team will also respond on behalf of Aberdeen City Council to all media enquiries regarding the project, in consultation with officials in the roads team. The City Council Administration and, where appropriate, Local Members will be kept informed of all media enquiries and proposed responses.

- c) Emergency services, public transport operators and other services will be advised of any part of the contract that may affect them. These services shall be informed through the usual consultation procedures for traffic management and traffic orders that are in place during the design and construction processes. During construction the above services will be invited to attend regular meetings with roads officers and the contractor to review and comment on the scheme traffic management procedures.
- d) For the duration of the construction of the Third Don Crossing, there will be local site offices which will be manned by both Aberdeen City Council staff and members of the contractors' staff. Members of the public may contact either the Aberdeen City Council site staff locally or the Roads Projects Unit in Marischal College regarding any issue encountered. The issue will normally be passed to a member of the Aberdeen City Council site staff to handle and liaise directly with the relevant parties.
- e) Residents and businesses with frontages adjacent to areas of construction will be advised of works that may affect them. Letter drops shall be used to inform those affected, in advance of the construction works. If the construction works have a significant impact on the ability to access premises or property Aberdeen City Council site staff will liaise directly with owners / residents to minimise disruption.
- f) Local Members and Community Councils will be informed of progress on the scheme by monthly progress reports issued by Aberdeen City Council site staff. Personal briefings will also be offered to Local Members and Community Councils where major changes take place in the temporary traffic management arrangements.

5 IMPACT

- 5.1 Delivery of the Third Don Crossing links to the Community Plan vision of creating a "sustainable City with an integrated transport system that is accessible to all".
- 5.2 The project will contribute to delivery of the Smarter Mobility aims of *Aberdeen – The Smarter City*: "We will develop, maintain and promote road, rail, ferry and air links from the city to the UK and the rest of the

world. We will encourage cycling and walking”, and “We will provide and promote a sustainable transport system, including cycling, which reduces our carbon emissions.”

- 5.3 The project is identified within the Local Transport Strategy (LTS) and Regional Transport Strategy (RTS).
- 5.4 The project will also assist in the delivery of actions identified in the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA), in particular the delivery of elements of both the Local and Regional Transport Strategies which will contribute directly and indirectly to outcomes 10, 12 and 14.
- 5.5 The project supports the 5 year Corporate Business Plan which includes an aim of delivering of a fully integrated transport network to support movement and economic growth which the proposals support.

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

7 REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Tom Rogers
Team Leader (Roads Projects)



01224 523484



tomr@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Stuart Andrew
Senior Engineer (Roads Projects)



01224 522188



standrew@aberdeencity.gov.uk