



**DORSET**

Local Enterprise Partnership

**Port of Poole –  
Poole Bridge**

**End of Project Report**

**December 2018**

## **Port of Poole Programme Summary**

The Port of Poole and surrounding area is an important business region in Dorset and one of the county's key assets.

£23,310,000 million from Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership's Growth Deal fund is being invested into major transport schemes to improve access into and around the Port of Poole. The investment will help drive local economic growth and bring an anticipated £500 million of leveraged private investment in to the area.

- Darby's Corner
- Dunyeats
- Gravel Hill
- Hatch Pond
- Poole Bridge
- Townside Access

These schemes would help:

- Support the regeneration of Poole delivering around 2,500 new homes around the Port of Poole.
- Unlock regeneration sites to create business opportunities and help to make Poole an attractive place for businesses to invest in
- Drive local economic growth and bring an anticipated £500 million of leveraged private investment in to the area.

The Port of Poole Programme was launched in April 2016; it highlighted the work that would be completed through an infographic and a map.



Poole Bridge is the older of the two bridges which provide vehicular access to the Port of Poole. The lifting bridge was opened in 1927. It spans the busy, narrow Backwater Channel between Poole Harbour and Holes Bay to the north. It forms part of the A350 and provides a direct road link between Poole town centre and the suburb of Hamworthy. It is a critical element of the local road network providing access to the busy and growing commercial port.

In 2012, a second bridge was opened: the Twin Sails Bridge, which provides direct access to a major regeneration area, and was designed from the start to operate in conjunction with Poole Bridge (the 'two-bridge system'). Together the two bridges provide good access to Hamworthy and the Port of Poole, relieve congestion and add much needed resilience to the local road network.

The Port of Poole Programme investment covers:

- Demolish the existing reinforced concrete decks and their supporting steel beams. These will be replaced by new decks and their supporting infrastructure.
- The approach roads and spans will be widened to accommodate a wider carriageway, allowing wider vehicles to pass each other more easily.
- Footway/cycleways will be provided on either side to aid the safe movement of pedestrians/cyclists.

Project start date	February 2015
Project construction start date	September 2016
Project completion date	December 2017

## Governance

Funding for the Port of Poole Infrastructure programme was allocated to Borough of Poole Council (BoP). The Borough of Poole and Dorset LEP established a Programme Delivery Board aligned with best practice guidance on project management. The Delivery Board is chaired by the Dorset LEP Chair, and is attended by a BoP Cllr and officers from within BoP and Dorset LEP. The Programme Delivery Board's primary function is review of the individual projects and to make recommendations to the Dorset LEP Board. A technical project team was also established to deal with day to day planning and delivery of the project.

## Review of Poole Bridge Business Case

Borough of Poole submitted their Full Business Case to Dorset LEP in February 2015. This outlined the need for the work due to the bridge failing and gave the project a BCR of **123.72** which is very high value for money. It set the estimated cost for the scheme at £4,197,529. This was a contribution of **£3,810,000** from Dorset LEP through the Local Growth Fund and a 10% contribution to the scheme from Borough of Poole. The construction element of the project started on time in September 2016 and although provisionally scheduled to complete within 9 months (by June 2017) actually completed in January 2018.

Dorset County Council carried out an audit of the Business case in June 2015 to assess whether the Business Case meets the Dorset Local Transport Board (DLTB) Assurance Framework eligibility regarding current guidance for business cases and value for money assessments. Dorset County Council concluded that it does meet the criteria and that the benefit-cost ratio showed very high value for money.

It did pick up the following, which was addressed through governance process:

- SMART targets have not been set for the scheme objectives.
- 'Output based specification' summarising the requirements in terms of outcomes and outputs do not appear to have been included.

- The Assurance and Approvals Plan does not appear to have been included.

### **Planned Outputs and Outcomes**

The improvement works at **Poole Bridge** approved at Transportation Advisory Group in January 2016, were designed to:

- Demolishing the existing reinforced concrete decks and their supporting steel beams;
- Replacing new decks and their supporting infrastructure;
- Widening the approach roads and spans to accommodate a wider carriageway (6.5 metres), allowing wider vehicles to pass each other more easily;
- Creating 2.5-metre-wide footways on either side to aid the safe movement of pedestrians.

Interserve were appointed as the contractor for this scheme.

### **Change Request & Exception Report**

#### CHANGE REQUEST, Change in scope and increase in budget, approved March 2016

It was identified that the lifting mechanism will need to be replaced. This is because it is a very old system and although it still works, the spare parts will no longer be manufactured, meaning significantly increased future maintenance costs. Replacing the mechanism would mean closing the bridge for 3 months.

The bridge will be closed for 9 months for the delivery of the scheme so request to change the scope of the project to include these additional works at the same time. There is an impact on the cost of delivery as a result of this scope change, the revised costs for Dorset LEP contribution to Poole Bridge is **£5,730,000**. This can be offset with the savings made from the Dunyeats scheme and will not impact on the overall programme.

#### CHANGE REQUEST, Increase in budget, approved January 2017

The works commenced on site on 12 September 2016 as planned and there has been a major issue with a utility company (BT) apparatus where a BT route was not in the position shown on their records and BoP pre-works survey did not identify a significant bend in the duct at a pile location. The extent of the problem and the options to resolve a likely clash is currently being assessed. This potential clash with the BT duct has caused a 2 week delay and is likely to cause further prolongation of the project. This has resulted in an increase in Dorset LEP's contribution to **£6,111,000**. This can be offset with savings made from the Gravel Hill scheme and will not impact on the overall programme.

#### EXCEPTION REPORT, Delay

Poole Bridge site works are running behind schedule by six to eight weeks. Despite the best efforts of BoP Project Managers working closely with contractors to address issues and find resolutions, unforeseen complications have resulted in a delay to the scheduled completion date of approximately six to eight weeks

#### CHANGE REQUEST, Delay and increase in budget, approved July 2017

Construction issues arising from the complex nature and uncertainty associated with carrying out underwater works at Poole Bridge have created additional delays of approximately four weeks compared to the revised programme approved in March 2017 and resulted in significant increases to the cost of the overall scheme. The BoP Project Team continues to work closely with the contractor to address issues and find resolutions.

These unforeseen complications have resulted in additional delays to the original scheduled completion date of approximately 20 weeks, and the project is now due to complete in October 2017 and incurred additional costs, resulting in an increased contribution from Dorset LEP to **£7,346,000**.

#### CHANGE REQUEST, Delay and increase in budget, approved July 2018

BoP has now completed an extensive mediation process with Interserve, facilitated by an approved NEC expert and undertaken with independent legal support. Agreement on final contract value has now been reached based on justifiable, legitimate increases in spend incurred on the scheme, and is legal and robust; resulting in a total project value of £10.049m.

Approval to reprofile £1.57m (£0.67m Dorset LEP and £0.9m Poole LTP committed Dorset LEP contribution) from the remaining allocation for the Port of Poole programme to cover the increase to the contract value for construction of Poole Bridge. This increased the contribution from Dorset LEP to **£8,016,000**.

### Achievement of Outputs

- The project delivered wider approach span carriageways to assist the movement of large vehicles.
- Reduced risk of large vehicles being unable to pass each other will improve journey time reliability to/ from the port.
- Wider and improved footways provided with enhanced facilities for cyclists.
- Inclusion of a replacement control system removes the risk of falling reliability from the existing system and removes the need for a further closure of the bridge.

### Audit

A review was undertaken by the internal audit team at Borough of Poole at the request of the Chief Executive and Dorset LEP. The overarching purpose of the review (Phase 1) was to seek to provide answers to the following key questions:

1. Did Council (and the Council's partners) procedures, policies and governance arrangements contribute to the delays in the bridge opening?
2. Were appropriate procedures, policies and governance arrangements followed to manage cost variations?
3. Were communications with the press and public adequate?

The review sought to answer these broad questions in the context of 'lessons learnt' to apply to future capital scheme planning and delivery. The review did not seek to apportion blame or recommend any form of disciplinary action. It was found that:

1. Did Council (and the Council's partners) procedures, policies and governance arrangements contribute to the delays in the bridge opening?

The Council's (and the Council's partners) policies and governance arrangements did not contribute to the delays in the bridge opening.

It is possible that had some different pre-tender site investigation surveys / trial holes / slip trenches taken place (operational procedures) then these may have revealed some of the issues leading to delays and additional costs. However this is speculation and it is equally possible they would have revealed nothing.

2. Were appropriate procedures, policies and governance arrangements followed to manage cost variations?

Appropriate procedures, policies and governance arrangements were followed to manage cost variations (escalation).

Inadequate contingency provision was allowed for; whilst this would not have led to a lower eventual financial cost, the variance between estimated costs (setting unrealistic expectations) and eventual costs would have been less stark.

3. Were communications with the press and public adequate?

The Council (and the Council's partners) went to great length to consult with and inform the public and press about the works to Poole lifting bridge. When delays (and cost escalation) became apparent, communications (of these delays) tended to feature very specific dates provided largely by the contractor. Whilst the Council did test and challenge these dates to a certain degree it did not sufficiently take into account factors such as:

- Natural optimism by the contractor (best case scenario);
- Cumulative impact of several factors causing delays;
- Applying expert in-house professional judgement;

Consequently, and acknowledging good communication should be open and honest, some of the communications, particularly from about July 2017 onwards, was often overly detailed and optimistic and did not sufficiently take into account presenting risks.

## Outcomes

Poole Bridge schemes have all contributed to the outcomes of the Port of Poole Programme. The following outcomes have been achieved from 2015-18.

Outcome	Number
Jobs	151
Homes	155
Leverage	£120.1m

Outcomes continue to be monitored on a quarterly basis and reported through our Local Government Lead to Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

## Benefits Realised to date

- **Protection of a key highways asset** – preventing the failure of the Poole Bridge approach spans by dealing with their known structural weaknesses;
- **Support for the local and regional economy** – maintaining full access to the Port of Poole from the Strategic Road Network, especially for freight vehicles;
- **Supporting regeneration and accommodate planned growth** – by preserving the existing 'two-bridge' system;
- **Resilience in the local road network**, including the ability to accommodate a planned or unplanned closure of either bridge whilst maintaining access to Hamworthy and the Port of Poole;
- **Safeguarding economic benefits**
- **Improved safety** for all road users;
- **Encouragement of sustainable modes of transport** by improving conditions for pedestrians, cyclists and users of public transport; and
- **Enhancement of the built environment** by maintaining a prominent local structure in good condition.

## Review of Project Objectives

RAG Review of Objectives	Status	Comments
<b>Time</b>		Poole Bridge completed 7 months after original forecast due to a number of delays set out above.
<b>Cost</b>		Poole Bridge cost £4.206m more than originally set out. Although this increase in cost is high, this overspend was covered within the Port of Poole Programme.
<b>Quality</b>		
<b>Scope</b>		The scope of the project changed at an early stage to include the lifting mechanism.
<b>Benefits</b>		
<b>Risk</b>		There were a number a risks highlighted throughout the project, as outlined above.

## Lessons learned

- Consideration should be given to the need for greater scrutiny of advice/proposals received from external sources (e.g. BT) to ensure accuracy of information provided and de-risk associated works.
- Consider increasing the scope of ground investigations
- Use of Hampshire CC GEN 3 Framework Contract saved several weeks and significant staff time during the procurement process.
- Assess future scheme requirements for the inclusion/integration of a QS into the BoP Team (to more robustly track & challenge scheme activity)
- Dedicated Project Managers were integral to provide management continuity and scheme oversight
- Review the overall time to deliver projects (including design and construction elements)
- Develop a more rigorous process for greater scrutiny related to build-ability (design, access, closures etc)
- Acknowledging good communication should be open and honest, some of the communications, particularly from about July 2017 onwards, were often overly detailed and optimistic and did not sufficiently take into account presenting risks.

## Conclusion



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