

To:

David T C Davies MP  
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Our Ref: CC/sj

Your Ref:

Date: 17 June 2019

Dear David,

**RE: Western Gateway Sub-National Transport Body; Chepstow bypass**

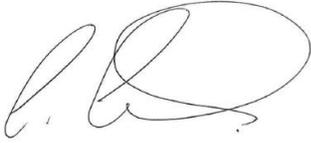
Thank you for your letter dated the 6<sup>th</sup> June regarding the Chepstow Bypass. I can assure you that Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) fully recognises the existing environmental issues in Chepstow resulting from its constrained transport network. GCC are actively working with Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) to establish a robust transport solution to mitigate the forecasted increase in travel demand resulting from the removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls earlier this year and planned residential growth in the area. Both issues are likely to contribute towards additional congestion within the town and a further deterioration of local air quality. GCC and MCC jointly funded the Stage 1 WeITAG report and we are engaged both at an officer and member level through working groups.

GCC did promote the Chepstow Bypass to the Western Gateway Sub-national Transport Body (STB) with the aim of the scheme being funded through the Department for Transport's Large Local Majors delivery programme. However, the Western Gateway STB considered the scheme proposal not sufficiently developed to provide assurance of a construction start date before 2025 (a requirement of the funding stream). The STB recognised the complexity of the scheme in terms of achieving planning permission within the funding window and securing a joint funding package with Transport for Wales. A minimum of 15% local match funding was a further requirement of the funding stream. On a more positive note through this process GCC has achieved recognition of the need for a scheme at Chepstow at a Sub-National level and it has been identified within a future pipeline of schemes for funding consideration post 2025.

Continual progression of the scheme through the WeITAG process can only help the development of the scheme and increase the opportunities for future funding. However, at this stage GCC is unable to financially contribute towards the costs of the stage 2 study. Despite GCC recognising the importance of the scheme it is not our main priority. As an authority we are prioritising major scheme improvements for M5 Junction 10 and M5 Junction 9 to enable delivery of the County's Joint Core Strategy and Local Plans. The significant costs associated with developing Business Cases for these schemes has resulted in no funding being available to progress the Chepstow Bypass scheme at this current time.

That said, I must stress that GCC is very supportive of the scheme and will continue to engage at both an officer and member level to support the process of identifying a robust transport solution for Chepstow.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colin Chick', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Colin Chick  
Strategic Advisor – Communities and Infrastructure

Cc – Mark Harper MP, Forest of Dean