



12 December 2018

CECA North West

NEWS DIGEST FROM CECA NORTH WEST

Welcome to this round up of news from CECA North West. If there are any items you wish to include, please let me know. If you would like to contact me, or wish to arrange a meeting, I can be reached via email: guy.lawson@cecanw.co.uk or mobile 07703 585027.

Civil Engineering Contractors' Association North West news

Contact details

The office address is: CECA North West, The White House, Wilderspool Business Park, Greenalls Avenue, Warrington WA4 6HL Email: guy.lawson@cecanw.co.uk; Tel: 07703 585027. Although the office is not manned full time, I can be contacted on the above email and mobile number. We are also on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CECANW>

Free and discounted services for members - what can we do for you?

CECA NW always wants to make sure it delivers the services that members want. So, please tell us what your priorities are. We are always looking for ways to enhance the services CECA NW offers to members, which currently include:

- Legal services (see below)
- Training
- Tendering support
- Market intelligence
- Lobbying

But, please contact Guy Lawson if there are any specific areas where we can be of assistance.

CECA NW Legal Advice Service

Willow Contracts has provided very high quality advice to CECA NW members over the last year - and their support and expertise for legal and contractual matters is highly recommended. The email address exclusively for members is CECAsupport@willowcontracts.co.uk and this will automatically contact Chris Hutchinson and his colleague. For the telephone service, the dedicated number is 01924 919392. In the event that the call cannot be taken any voicemail left is automatically routed to Chris's mobile phone. Call costs I am advised are at standard rates.

Tendering workshops

Members are invited to contact Guy Lawson for 1-2-1 tendering workshops, where he will advise on PQQs and ITTs, eg on how to present socio-economic and CSR data as effectively as possible. This is a free service to CECA NW members. Please contact him at the above number or email.

CECA NW - the NEW video!

Please find a link to the 2018 CECA NW video - aimed at promoting careers in the industry. It is now available on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/r6ieFJ2LAPQ>

We will be producing a new video in 2019, so please send any video footage that you would be willing to let us include.

CECA NW in the news:

Comment on the report for CECA on the social benefits of infrastructure

<https://bdaily.co.uk/articles/2018/12/04/infrastructure-can-create-new-industrial-heartlands-across-the-uk>

<https://www.businessupnorth.co.uk/infrastructure-can-create-new-industrial-heartlands-across-the-uk/>

Working Rule Agreement

Hard copies or a pdf version of the new edition of the Working Rule Agreement are available to CECA NW members free of charge. Please contact Guy Lawson to order your copy.

Three early dates for your diary:

CECA North by NW Dinner, Penrith, Thursday 23 May 2019

CECA NW Annual Golf Day, Leigh Golf Club, Thursday 27 June 2019

CECA NW annual awards dinner, Manchester, Friday 11 October 2019

Sponsoring the Civil Engineering Challenge

We are sponsoring resource packs to enable scouts and guides to achieve the Civil Engineering badge, developed by Pippa Higgins of Vinci. Please let me know if you would like more information. We are now funding over twenty groups to undertake the civil engineering challenge.

Training & Development

CECA NW/Driver Trett Legal Seminars

CECA NW 2019 legal and commercial seminars (free for CECA NW members)

Breakfast seminars:

- Brexit 15 January, Warrington
- Collateral warranties 30 April, Warrington
- Payment update 5 March, Preston
- NEC compensation events 11 June, Penrith

Half day seminar:

- NEC update - the changes between NEC3 and NEC4 26 February, Preston

Interested parties should book their places with Jemma Carmody: Jemma.Carmody@ceca-yorks.co.uk

CECA Training & Development Survey 2018

Key messages from the CECA Training & Development Survey, carried out between May and October.

- The approach taken was both online and telephone survey. Now in its third year, the response rate is regrettably again lower in 2018 (56 responses compared to 70 in 2017).
- In total, 21% of CECA member companies responded to the survey, with over 15,000 employees represented (2017: 27,000). Year on year, members report static employment levels between 2016 and 2017.
- In part due to the Apprenticeship Levy, large firms are forecasting a significant increase in apprenticeship recruitment in 2018, with a corresponding decrease in the number of graduate roles.
- While CECA members continue to report that their ability to access affordable high-quality training locally is valued, feedback on CITB's grant reforms show high levels of frustration with the system, but more importantly, an actual or expected reduction in the level of grant members will be able to claim. This is very likely to lead to reduced levels of training activity, especially in hitherto high take up areas such as short duration seminars where reduced number of courses will be grant eligible. This year, 45% report not being able to find or claim for this type of course.

<https://www.ceca.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/CECA-Training-Survey-Report-2018-1.pdf>

NW Contractors' Training Group - free for all CECA NW members

The Group provides access to CITB funding to support training, and its members receive free or substantially discounted training. If you are interested in joining the Group, please let Gill Steele know: mgtpsteele@hotmail.co.uk Please could CECA NW members advise their Training Managers of this opportunity. Please contact Gill to book your place at the next meeting (January 2019).

CITB Employer Update

<http://elink-eu.azure.send.com/m/023a3170cc3440b2b5de2b317aba2411/610813C4/A6E289F7/102018n>

Fairness, Inclusion and Respect Programme (FIR) update

More introduction to FIR workshops are being run, plus Ambassador training session, and Ambassador coaching sessions. If any of this is of interest and you want your organisation to get involved or build on its existing activity then please do get in touch: Tolu Oke, T: 020 7697 1985; M: 07469 159 788

FIR Training and Project Manager, E: Tolu@supplychainschool.co.uk

FIR Toolkit: <https://www.supplychainschool.co.uk/default/fairness-inclusion-and-respect/fir-toolkit.aspx>

GoConstruct

A campaign by CITB to attract more entrants to the industry: <https://www.goconstruct.org/en/>

GoConstruct has also produced a new infrastructure video which can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98rc8Ac-mF4>

Policy & Industry Affairs

MPs demand end to late payment and retentions reform

MPs are calling for maximum 30-day payment terms in construction to become law. A report from the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee also demanded an end to early payment schemes which charge suppliers a fee to get their cash.

The report states: "We recommend that the Government moves as soon as possible to require all medium and large companies to adopt a statutory limit of paying within 30 days. This statutory limit must exclude the use of early repayment schemes or discounts to bring companies within compliance." The committee also demanded an overhaul of the retentions system to include project bank accounts. It said: "Big companies have a vested interest in holding on to owed money for as long as possible to maximise interest. More disturbingly, as the collapse of Carillion demonstrated, there is a concern that many large companies at the top of the supply chain are building this into their business models and if they go bankrupt this money is lost to other creditors. This could be addressed by the introduction of independently managed project accounts, to hold retention money. We recommend that the Government should bring forward proposals as soon as possible to introduce compulsory project accounts so that retention money can be held independently and its release subject to fair and timely oversight."

Rachel Reeves, Chair of the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee said: "Many SMEs are placed in a stranglehold by larger companies deliberately paying late and ruthlessly taking advantage of their suppliers, causing these firms financial instability. Unless the Government levels the playing field and acts to bring in a tougher regime for poor payment practices then we choke-off the opportunity for SMEs to invest and grow in the future."

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmbeis/807/80702.htm>

Network Rail awards first CP6 contracts

Story Contracting and AmcoGiffen have been awarded the first major contracts to be let by Network Rail for the CP6 control period from 2019 to 2024. The contracts are the first of three that will be let for Scotland and North East structures and building renewals and enhancements, worth together £645m. Story Contracting picked up the £135m deal for renewals and enhancements work in Scotland, while AmcoGiffen has secured work on the London North East route valued at around £190m. The remaining and most significant work-bank 'Lot 1', will be announced later this year and is valued at £320m.

Local Industrial Strategies to drive growth across the country

The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy has announced that they will work in partnership with communities to develop Local Industrial Strategies to "drive growth across the country". These Local Industrial Strategies - "long-term plans based on clear evidence and aligned to the national modern Industrial Strategy" - will be led by Mayoral Combined Authorities or Local Enterprise Partnerships. The strategies will enable the "entire country" to benefit from local consultation with business, public partners and civil society. Each strategy will promote coordination of local economic policy and establish new ways of working between national and local government, in and the public and private sectors, according to BEIS.

BEIS has created an interactive map which illustrates the "modern Industrial Strategy in action".

The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Greg Clark said: "We know that growth does not happen in the abstract, it happens in the cities, towns and counties of our country, all with their own unique strengths and heritage. Local Modern Industrial Strategies, designed by local businesses and people, will capture the strengths and opportunities of an area and provide the long-term plan for how we ensure we seize those opportunities".

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/local-industrial-strategies-to-drive-growth-across-the-country>

<https://story.mapme.com/industrial-strategy-uk-innovators/overview>

Calls for clarity on future of £20bn Wylfa Newydd

Reports in Japan have raised questions over the future of the £20bn Wylfa Newydd nuclear plant on Anglesey with claims that the project's main backer Hitachi could be set to back out.

In a second major blow to the North West's new nuclear programme, after fellow Japanese company Toshiba pulled out of Moorside in Cumbria, reports in the Japanese press claim Hitachi is set to scrap its investment in Wylfa Newydd.

Negotiations between the UK Government and Hitachi are still ongoing and business secretary Greg Clark signalled his backing for the proposals in June this year. Since then, Hitachi has moved the project forward after the Planning Inspectorate backed Hitachi's development consent order, which would allow construction to begin. In August, global construction and engineering firm Bechtel was named as project manager for the £20bn scheme, which is expected to require 9,000 workers on site during peak construction in 2023.

Long-awaited rail sector deal hopes to encourage industry to embrace digital

A reduction in infrastructure costs, increased innovation and attempts to double the industry's exports by 2025 are all central themes in the rail sector deal. Part of the modern industrial strategy, the government is hoping to encourage a move to digital and an exchanging of ideas between the rail industry and other sectors.

Ministers believe the details of a new deal should go a long way in enabling the rail sector to deliver more for passengers, create jobs and drive economic growth across the country. By paving the way for the development of new customer products, it should improve passenger experience with the introduction of better journey planning apps.

Plans also include significantly reducing digital signalling costs by 2025, supporting sector apprenticeships and increasing awareness of the opportunities available and to establish a data sharing platform to support further innovation.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rail-sector-deal>

Doing business with Sellafield (LINC and CTM update)

LINC with Sellafield Ltd has now transitioned over to the CTM system. In order to qualify for LINC in CTM please either login with your existing details or if you are new to CTM register as a 'new supplier' and navigate to RFQ 10536 - LINC Qualification.

<https://shredsystems.eu-supply.com/login.asp?B=SELLAFIELD>

Survey shows public support for infrastructure investment

The latest Global Infrastructure Index on "Public satisfaction and priorities" for 2018 has revealed a strong public support for investment in infrastructure.

In Great Britain, the survey revealed a 29% overall satisfaction with national infrastructure; 33% said they were dissatisfied. In Europe more generally 37% said they were dissatisfied, and this was a higher percentage than the two previous years. The overall level of satisfaction in Great Britain was rated against the Global Competitiveness Index, in comparison with other G8 countries, demonstrating a slight underperformance in delivery of infrastructure.

Different infrastructure sectors were also rated separately. In Great Britain the sectors with the lowest perceived quality in comparison with other countries were rail and housing supply, followed closely by energy. Across the sectors, Great Britain tended to sit around the middle in comparison with other countries. Interestingly, in Great Britain only 21% of people felt that their local area got its fair share of the country's infrastructure.

http://giia.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Global-Infrastructure-Index-2018-Global_V3_embargo-00.01-GMT-29-Nov-2018.pdf

£40 million national thermal hydraulic facility planned for Anglesey

The UK Atomic Energy Authority has announced its plans for a "£40 million advanced nuclear reactor technology centre" in North Wales. The plans have previously been flagged in the UK's 'Nuclear Sector Deal' and will facilitate the "development of Small Modular Reactors and Advanced Modular Reactors" according to the UKAEA. The UKAEA's role at the new testing facility will be to "work with UK companies to identify how their requirements can be met by the thermal hydraulics facility". The details will then be used to "produce a design with a detailed costing and operational model, which will enable the UK and Welsh Governments to develop business cases for the funding and decide during 2019 how best to proceed with construction, commissioning and eventual operation".

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ukaea-to-design-national-thermal-hydraulic-facility--2>

CECA: Infrastructure Can Create New Industrial Heartlands Across The UK

Companies that build and maintain the UK's infrastructure predict a revival of former industrial towns and cities as hubs to manufacture and assemble components for transport and infrastructure projects. Working with economic consultancy Cebr, the Civil Engineering Contractors Association publishes a research report that highlights the social impact of investment in infrastructure.

The report - The social benefits of infrastructure investment - highlights the positive impact that investing in infrastructure has on the lives of people in the UK, supporting creation of new homes, improving health and rebalancing the economy away from London.

One of its key recommendations relates to the opportunities to revive former industrial areas as hubs for manufacturing and logistics to support major infrastructure projects.

Such areas tend to already have good transport links, and an experienced engineering workforce. By looking to site new factories and logistics centres in these locations, there is an opportunity to reinvigorate them, creating new jobs and growth. This would mean that the benefits of investment in major infrastructure projects could be felt far away from the areas where projects are being delivered.

The report contributes to a better understanding of the different ways in which various forms of infrastructure investment affect people's lives and includes a series of recommendations for Government to consider as it considers its long term spending plans.

The report also recommends:

- Northern English cities collaborating with one another to increase their global competitiveness.
- UK Government continuing to fund infrastructure at 1.2 per cent of the GDP fiscal remit and examine the case for higher social and economic outcomes.
- Recognising that investment outside London supports growth in London and vice versa.

<https://www.ceca.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Cebr-CECA-report-The-Social-Benefits-of-Infrastructure-Investment-FINAL-December-2018-compressed.pdf>

CITB sells CPCS

CITB has confirmed it is selling its Construction Plant Competence Scheme (CPCS) to awarding organisation NOCN Group. The move is part of CITB's Vision 2020 programme to "take on a more strategic and influential role focusing on securing the right training mix, high standards and quality assurance building employer confidence in the market." The programme has already seen CITB announce plans to exit direct training.

PR19 Review

Ofwat has come up with 4 key themes or 'pillars' for AMP7:

- Customer service
- Long term resilience
- Affordable bills
- Innovation - e.g. water companies' attitude to risk and reward and intention to 'do things differently'

Hunt for smart motorway trio to deliver £7bn plan

Highways England is advancing plans to deliver all the smart motorway programme through a single alliance arrangement. Radical plans to adopt a full alliance model for all smart motorway work are now underway with bids being invited to find three tier one contractors, two designers and a new production manager specialist to create a production hub. This promises a major shake-up in the motorway industry where around eight contractors are presently engaged.

The entire 10-year spend is expected to be around £7bn with the new 'on-site assembly partners' sharing out £5.95bn across three new operating regions in the north, midlands and south.

The arrangement will also include two design partners allocated to the north or south and a single production management partner, accountable for the programme-wide management activities within the production hub. Further documents will soon be available on the website, with submissions due back on **18 January**: <https://highways.bravosolution.co.uk/web/login.shtml>

New consultation on the draft NPS for Water Resources Infrastructure begins

Defra has published its consultation on the draft National Policy Statement (NPS) for Water Resources Infrastructure. The deadline for responses is **31 January 2019**. Defra has said that it is looking for views and responses on "whether the draft NPS provides an appropriate and effective framework for the examining authority (the Planning Inspectorate) and the Secretary of State to examine and make decisions on development consent order applications for nationally significant water resources infrastructure projects in England". It is also looking for comments on sustainability assessments and Habitats Regulations Assessments that accompany the NPS.

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/water/draft-national-policy-statement/>

'Planning 2020' - the Raynsford Review's final report

The final report of the Raynsford Review of the planning regime in England has been published and sets out 24 recommendations for reform. It builds on the nine propositions set out in the May 2018 interim report. The report concludes that there are "big problems with our current planning system, but equally there is a major opportunity to reimagine the system so that it can help make people's lives better by driving effective change". This will require "cross-sector political consensus", according to the report. Those involved in construction and infrastructure delivery will reap the benefits, as certainty will provide "greater hope of investment and innovation in the supply chain and in new construction techniques and design skills - productive activities that can help strengthen our economy".

<https://www.tcpa.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=30864427-d8dc-4b0b-88ed-c6e0f08c0edd>

10-year government pledge sets out £600bn of infrastructure investment by 2028

Ministers have reiterated their commitment to developing major infrastructure projects with £600bn worth of investment over the next decade. The mass investment programme within national infrastructure and construction pipeline include the £28 billion national roads fund, as well as other flagship projects like East West Rail, upgrading the M6 to a smart motorway and Hornsea Project One - the world's largest offshore wind. Planned projects in the north include: Up to £37m additional development funding for Northern Powerhouse Rail; Transforming Cities Fund additional funding including £16.5m for Tees Valley transport projects, £38.5m for Liverpool, and £69.5m for Greater Manchester; A5036 Princess Way - Access to Port of Liverpool (part of Liverpool Local Growth Deal).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/759222/CCS207_CCS1118987248-001_National_Infrastructure_and_Construction_Pipeline_2018_Accessible.pdf

Safe use of forward tipping dumpers

Please find details of the current Construction Plant-hire Association consultation on forward tipping dumper guidance. A link for the guidance can be found at: www.cpa.uk.net/sfpsgdumpers/

Industry unites for largest ever poll on skills shortages

Companies from across the UK construction sector are being invited to take part in the largest ever research project on skills shortages. As the UK prepares for the departure from the EU next year, construction's leading trade and professional bodies have joined forces to build a picture of those occupations that are in greatest demand. The survey - which will go out to more than 20,000 companies nationwide - will ask respondents to indicate which roles they are finding it difficult to recruit now, and which they expect to be challenging post-Brexit.

The survey is supported by:

- Association for Consultancy & Engineering
- Build UK and member trade bodies
- Chartered Institute of Building
- Civil Engineering Contractors Association
- Construction Plant-hire Association
- Construction Products Association and member trade bodies
- Federation of Master Builders
- Highways Term Maintenance Association
- National Federation of Builders

In order to ensure that the survey has as wide reach as possible, companies that are not members are also invited to take part in the survey, which can be found at

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/shortoccupations>

CECA: Retentions

In 2013, following consultation with members, CECA signed up to support the delivery of Construction 2025. This included delivering on a commitment to the complete abolition of cash retentions by 2025. CECA is now working with other industry representatives to deliver these objectives and we would like to form a short working group to generate updated evidence to feed into this workstream. If you would like to be part of this then please email marieclaudhemming@ceca.co.uk

A46 Stage One Corridor Study

This summary outlines Midlands Connect's 20-year improvement plan for the A46 - one of the country's most important trade routes. Midlands Connect has released the first ever improvement plan for the entire A46 corridor, with a 20-year vision to future-proof the route and boost the national economy. The A46 corridor stretches for 155 miles from Gloucestershire to Lincolnshire, is home to 5.5 million people and 2.9 million jobs, with an economic output of £115 billion a year, equivalent to 9% of the English economy.

https://www.midlandsconnect.uk/publications/a46-stage-one-corridor-study-summary-report/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=November%20Newsletter&utm_content=November%20Newsletter+CID_d7274f507aa28a7033b20c2aaab5a899&utm_source=Campaign%20Monitor&utm_term=here

MoD £15bn defence estate pipeline

The Ministry of Defence plans to spend £4bn optimising its defence estate as part of its latest £15bn five-year procurement pipeline. The MoD's estates management arm the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) has announced schemes covering the next five financial years. Among these is the defence estate optimisation programme, which aims to help deliver a 30 per cent reduction in the MoD's built estate by 2040. The programme will also release surplus land to support wider government targets, and see £1bn of capital disposals by 2021.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/748581/20180808-Procurement_Plan_FINAL.pdf

Homes England launches Strategic Plan 2018/19 - 2022/23

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/752686/Homes_England_Strategic_Plan_AW_REV_150dpi_REV.pdf

New 'employer toolkit' to support EU staff

The Home Office have launched an official 'employer toolkit' aimed at helping HR teams support their EU staff. Its purpose is to arm employers with practical information on how EU citizens will be able to apply for 'settled status'. This is so HR teams are better equipped to answer potential questions and directly help their EU employees over the next few years.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-employer-toolkit>

Skills and Training Fund - up to £10k grant for members with less than 100 employees

CITB established an annual fund of £3m to support small businesses with their training and development needs. Few CECA members have applied for this funding which is worth £10k a year to a business with 99 employees - there's a sliding scale. According to the records, more than half CECA members would be entitled to apply. The closing date is: **March 2019**. To be eligible for funding companies must:

- Have fewer than 100 PAYE staff
- Be up to date with CITB Levy payments and Levy Returns
- Be CITB registered

<https://www.citb.co.uk/funding/types-of-funding/skills-and-training/>

...and launches new £5m fund

CITB will welcome applications from organisations that work with one or more of these groups, to help them find work in construction:

- Young people not in education, training or work, particularly where existing networks are already in place
- Long-term unemployed
- Service Leavers who left the military at least 12 months ago
- Women wishing to join construction
- Full-time learners (focussed on CBE diploma students)

[http://elinkeu.clickdimensions.com/m/1/84168655/p1-b18302-](http://elinkeu.clickdimensions.com/m/1/84168655/p1-b18302-5dc525a607fc4285a3030f4aecca751/1/99/e9e62d1f-0534-4dc5-83cc-83b9be75c79b)

[5dc525a607fc4285a3030f4aecca751/1/99/e9e62d1f-0534-4dc5-83cc-83b9be75c79b](http://elinkeu.clickdimensions.com/m/1/84168655/p1-b18302-5dc525a607fc4285a3030f4aecca751/1/99/e9e62d1f-0534-4dc5-83cc-83b9be75c79b)

Court of Appeal: entitlement to a second adjudication for clients

The Court of Appeal has confirmed, in S&T (UK) Ltd v Grove Developments Ltd, an employer is entitled to run a second adjudication to determine the 'true' value of an interim application for payment, even if the employer's payment notice and payless notice were invalid.

ACAS performance management guidelines

<https://acasnational.cmail19.com/t/r-l-jtzity-ujwykhdtk-j/>

Lockton November Health & Safety briefing

<http://emailcc.com/rv/ff00441865eae876b0830fe8ac4ebf4c56d4fdc8>

North West - and the North

Transport for the North: £60bn plan to cut rail times between Liverpool and Newcastle

Work on a new rail network to transform the North of England could begin by 2024. Transport for the North, which is overseen by the North's council leaders and mayors, is to submit plans to the Department for Transport within weeks. If they get the green light, then construction would begin in 2024 and continue for 15 years.

Lancashire bypass clears planning hurdle

The building of a dual carriageway between Windy Harbour and Skippool near Poulton-le-Fylde has edged closer, after the Planning Inspectorate agreed to examine Highways England's plans. HE's £100m proposal, to bypass the existing A585, has been put forward as part of the Government's £15bn Road Investment Strategy. The Planning Inspectorate will now scrutinise the idea and invite formal public responses before letting the Secretary of State decide if the new road can be built.

Plans revealed for latest Airport City development

Icon Industrial has revealed plans to build a new industrial unit at its £100m Manchester Airport site. The proposed 102,500 sq ft development will include a single 95,000 sq ft industrial/warehouse building and 7,500 sq ft of integrated office accommodation, with 141 car parking spaces. Icon Industrial, a strategic joint venture by Stoford Developments and TPG Real Estate, has submitted a reserved matters planning application to Manchester council for the building.

Anderson quits Northern Powerhouse Partnership

Mayor of Liverpool Joe Anderson has quit George Osborne's Northern Powerhouse Partnership, accusing the Chancellor Philip Hammond of being "determined to poison kill off" his predecessor's legacy.

Liverpool showcases Lime Street public realm

Liverpool City Council will outline proposals for revamped public realm including a new square outside Lime Street station. Part of a wider £45m connectivity programme announced in 2016, the public realm works will see St George's Plateau significantly widened. Beginning in 2020, this work will see Lime Street reduced to single carriageway for northbound traffic only, with access into the city centre via St John's Lane. The proposals for Lime Street also include a water feature at the southern end of the plateau, within the city's World Heritage Site. A new bus park and layover is also proposed on Old Haymarket; this will include the repositioning of the Queen Square bus station for northbound bus routes, and the Liverpool One bus station for southbound buses.

Businesses back case for Northern Powerhouse Rail ahead of DfT submission

Businesses from across the North have come out in support of Bradford's ambitions to better connect its city centre through Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR). This month, the submission of Transport for the North's (TfN) strategic case for NPR to the Department for Transport (DfT) will be made, in which Bradford has been calling for city centre station on the new line between Manchester and Leeds. Northern business leaders are backing this call and stressing the importance of a Bradford city centre station to ensure NPR has the greatest impact on the region and the country.

Overhaul of Tees Valley's two biggest stations gets £45m boost, but DfT help still needed

Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) has approved a £45m investment to "dramatically overhaul" Darlington and Middlesbrough stations as part of improvements which mayor Ben Houchen told RTM would be "central" to the celebrations of the region's bicentenary of transport heritage. A total of £25m has been earmarked for Darlington station - the 'gateway' to Tees Valley, according to Houchen - and £20m to redevelop Middlesbrough station, with the money coming from the £75m Transforming Cities Fund which has been devolved to the combined authority.

Land sale paves way for £50m Warrington PRS scheme

Proposals to build 362 apartments alongside 6,400 sq ft of retail and a multi-storey car park are set to start on a 2.1-acre site on the A49, next to Central Station, after Ram Properties completed a £3m land sale to allow the project to go ahead.

Consultation underway on second solar NSIP

Consultation is now underway on INRG's proposals for the Little Crow Solar Park in Scunthorpe ahead of a formal application for development consent being submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) which is expected in the second quarter of 2019. The second round of consultation on the scheme is due to end on 4 March 2019 and the proposals include 150MW of solar PV and 90MW of energy storage. Little Crow Solar Park scheme is the second solar Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) in the pipeline: <http://www.littlecrowsolar.co.uk/>

Report calls on government to prioritise infrastructure investment and narrow north-south divide

The Government should champion investment in regional infrastructure to support economic growth and help eradicate the north-south divide. That's according to a new report, Investing in the Future, published by the economic consultancy, Metro Dynamics, and backed by The Peel Group.

<https://www.peel.co.uk/government-urged-to-prioritise-infrastructure-spending-to-grow-and-rebalance-the-economy/metro-dynamics-investing-in-the-future-november-2018/>

£250 million Merseytravel framework announced

Merseytravel has announced a new £250 million multi-party framework to deliver a range of schemes across Britain's fifth-largest metropolitan area. The four-year framework will cover a variety of projects across Merseytravel-owned sites, which include offices, bus stations, ferry terminals, the Kingsway and Queensway Mersey Tunnels, and several visitor attractions such as the Spaceport and U-boat Story experience. The framework is divided into 14 lots, and teams chosen for the agreement will have the opportunity to work with both Merseytravel and other major public bodies within the wider city region on projects such as libraries, housing, depots, municipal offices, health centres and schools.

Merseytravel requires a multi-party Framework Agreement with suitably experienced consultants in the following areas: tunnels engineering consultancy; rail engineering consultancy; marine-naval architectural services; civil and structural engineering consultancy; mechanical and electrical engineering consultancy; architectural services; transport policy and planning consultancy; quantity surveying; safety, quality and environmental consultancy; programme/project management; highways infrastructure consultancy; business case development; and topographical surveys. The deadline for applications is **11am on 2 January**.

<https://ted.europa.eu/TED/notice/udl?uri=TED:NOTICE:528107-2018:TEXT:EN:HTML&src=0>

Langtree sets out Parkside plans

The group has increased its focus on local authority joint ventures in recent years, with projects including Sci-Tech Daresbury - a joint venture with Halton Council - and at Hollinwood, where the company has partnered with Oldham Council. Other large projects include the Parkside Colliery regeneration in St Helens, which is again being delivered in a joint venture with the council. A link road to connect this site with the M6 has recently secured £24m of funding. Plans are already in for the first phase, totalling 1m sq ft of logistics space, while Langtree said an application for the second phase is expected in the second quarter of next year.

Eden Project North unveiled

The Eden Project has unveiled the design for a new £80million major attraction that may be built in Morecambe Bay. Two artist's impressions show what the giant seafront pavilions, inspired by the shape of a mussel, would look like in what has been dubbed 'Eden Project North'.

Plans to regenerate Birkenhead town centre move one step closer

Plans for a £150 million overhaul of Birkenhead town centre are one step closer after draft proposals and recommendations were approved. Wirral Council's cabinet approved the proposals for the Birkenhead Commercial District draft business case. The draft case proposes new Grade A commercial offices, an improved leisure and retail offer and the creation of a new Birkenhead Market.

21st century trams could be part of new mass transit system for West Yorkshire

A mass transit system for West Yorkshire could involve "21st century trams" which would link to the proposed high speed Northern Powerhouse Rail, according to a council report. Senior councillors in Bradford will meet to discuss the first steps towards a Leeds City Region transit network which officials say "would have significant benefits for the Bradford district".

Chris Boardman's £13.4m vision unveiled for Manchester

Plans for a 5km cycle route through Greater Manchester are being hailed as one of the UK's most ambitious cycling and walking schemes as a British Olympian attempts to ensure drivers make way for cyclists and pedestrians.

Chris Boardman, who won gold for Great Britain at the 1992 summer Olympics, is now the region's cycling and walking commissioner, and is central to now putting greener, more sustainable methods at the heart of Greater Manchester's future transport decisions.

The latest proposals are integral to the cycling advisor's 1,000-mile cycling infrastructure plan with the 5km cycle route to run from Manchester to Chorlton, giving cyclists and pedestrians priority over cars at key junctions along the route, if given the go ahead.

Back in June, Boardman and Greater Manchester mayor Andy Burnham revealed plans to invest £150m in walking and cycling infrastructure for the region. This £13.4m route is just one of the 'Beelines' - interlinked bike and walking lanes - that was proposed earlier this year.

GMCA identifies station development opportunities

The Greater Manchester Combined Authority has earmarked areas around a number of the region's railway stations for development with 87 acres of land potentially up for grabs. As part of the combined authority's station partnership programme, the GMCA alongside its Rail Station Alliance partners - Network Rail, Transport for Greater Manchester, London Continental Railway, Northern Rail, and Transpennine Express - has identified development opportunities around railway stations across Greater Manchester. So far, 87 acres of potential development land has been identified, with 14 stations singled out as having significant opportunities with an average site size of around 5 acres. These stations are:

- Ashton-under-Lyne
- Atherton
- Bredbury
- Cheadle Hulme
- Hale
- Hazel Grove
- Heald Green
- Lostock
- Marple
- Mills Hill
- Navigation Road
- Rochdale
- Rose Hill Marple
- Stalybridge

The Rail Station Alliance will look to work alongside local authorities to deliver feasibility studies for each of these sites in 2019, which will identify "potentially investable opportunities" including homes and job-creation.

Department of Transport to invest £53m in North West roads

The Department of Transport have revealed that some £53m is set to be invested in the North West's roads, with Lancashire to receive the fourth-highest amount of funding per 1,000 people in the region. Following the announcement of the Budget, drivers and cyclists will be encouraged to see that the extra £53m from the DfT will be committed to road repairs across the North West counties of Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Cheshire, and Lancashire, with the Roads Minister keen to "keep drivers and cyclists safe."

New platform to be delivered at Leeds Station as part of £161m investment

A new platform is set to be developed at Leeds Station as part of a £161m investment programme. Network Rail announced that 'platform zero' will form part of the major investment in the station's rail infrastructure that will also see improvements to the track alignment for more efficient journeys into platforms 1-6, as well as an upgrade to the signalling across the entire station, in a boost to train service reliability. Platforms 1-6 will also be lengthened to cater for longer trains with more seats.

New TalkTalk company to build broadband network in north of England

TalkTalk has created a new company to invest in expanding its full fibre network despite an agreement with financial investor Infracapital falling through. The broadband company has formed a new company called FibreNation that will own its full fibre network in York. It will expand that network to nearby towns Harrogate, Ripon and Knaresborough to grow its footprint to 100,000 houses within 18 months.

Cumbria local government shake-up talks planned

Council leaders have agreed to start talks with the government about Cumbria becoming a unitary authority. A restructure could see seven existing authorities replaced by either one or two new councils. The county council was told that having just one authority could save an estimated £24.6m a year.

£12.4m cash injection for pothole repairs in Greater Manchester

Greater Manchester will get an extra £12.4m cash injection to tackle potholes after a freezing winter and scorching summer have left many roads in a crumbling state. The funding will come from the £420m announced by the Chancellor in the Autumn budget, with Manchester, Stockport and Bolton to benefit from the biggest shares.

Sefton loses judicial review on A5036 route

Sefton Council has lost its legal fight to order Highways England to re-consult on proposals to ease traffic on the A5036 Dunning's Bridge Road by building a dual carriageway through Rimrose Valley country park. Dunning's Bridge Road is the main route from the motorway network through South Sefton to the Port of Liverpool, and its congestion has long been a point of contention. But when consulting on its port access project, HE only considered two options, the £250m Rimrose route and a revamped Dunning's Bridge Road. Following a High Court hearing in Manchester on October 23, a judgement has been issued dismissing the application, with Mr Justice Kerr ruling that he would not order Highways England to re-open consultation.

Green light for Surf Snowdonia expansion

Plans for an activity centre and 106-bedroom hotel at the Surf Snowdonia Adventure Parc can proceed after Conwy Council's planning committee gave a "minded to approve" verdict.

DCO submitted for Preston Western Distributor

Robertson Group and the Tom Barron Pension Fund have submitted a development consent order for Preston's £190m Western Distributor link road directly to the Secretary of State after discussions with Lancashire County Council broke down.

Lancashire County Council approved a planning application for the road, which is due to link the M55 with the A583 Riversway to the west of the city, in October last year, and a business case was signed off in January this year, despite costs on the project rising by around £60m.

The compulsory purchase order and land assembly process was signed off in February this year.

The Manchester Lecture 2019: Trains, planes & automobiles, 17 January 2019

<https://www.cices.org/news/events/manchester-lecture/>

Work Experience

A 17 year old student, currently studying Architectural Engineering at Cronton College, is seeking work experience. His course includes an Industry Placement module on which requires him to complete 45-60 days of work experience, working Thursdays and Fridays every week. In his GCSEs, he achieved an A in Level 2 Design Engineer Construct and he is continuing with Level 3 as part of the course. He also achieved an A* in ICT.

If you are able to offer a placement in the Halton, Warrington and Frodsham areas, please let me know.

Tenders

Woodbank Park Multi User Bridge

Expressions of interest close on 21/12/2018.

Contact: Stockport MBC, Email: michael.fanning@star-procurement.gov.uk

Register via The Chest: <https://www.the-chest.org.uk/>

Mossley Road East Retaining Wall

Expressions of interest close on 04/01/2019.

Contact: Michael Fanning, Tameside MBC, Email: michael.fanning@star-procurement.gov.uk

Register via The Chest: <https://www.the-chest.org.uk/>

Hard Ings Road Improvement Works

Expressions of interest close on 16/01/2019.

Contact: Richard Bruce, Bradford MDC, Email: richard.bruce@bradford.gov.uk

Register via YOR Tender: <https://www.yortender.co.uk/>

....and finally

60th anniversary of the UK's first motorway

It's been 60 years since the opening of Britain's first motorway, the Preston bypass. Hundreds gathered on a cold morning on 5 December 1958 to celebrate this asphalt-clad symbol of progress, opened by prime minister Harold MacMillan. It would barely be recognised as a motorway by modern standards. A test-bed for both technology and design, the eight-mile stretch had two lanes in each direction with soft shoulders and a broad central reservation complete with a hedge to reduce dazzle from headlights. It's perhaps little wonder that drivers were initially cautious. While the road opened with no speed restrictions, the average recorded during its first month of operation was a modest 38mph.