



EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION

REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Growth and Development
LEAD OFFICERS:	Strategic Director Growth and Development
DATE:	31 May 2023

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:	Growth and Development
WARD/S AFFECTED:	Blackburn South East;
KEY DECISION	N

SUBJECT: Levelling Up Fund 2 - Blackburn Growth Axis Transport Package (South East)

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks approval of a capital budget and procurement strategies to progress the Blackburn Growth Axis Transport Package (South East).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Member:

1. Notes the award of £20m of Levelling Up Funding (LUF) to deliver the Blackburn Growth Axis Transport Package (South East);
2. Notes the Blackburn Growth Axis Transport Package (South East) LUF scheme comprises 2 projects:-
 - a) Project 1 – South East Blackburn Walking and Cycling Network
 - b) Project 2 – Junction 5 Improvement Scheme
3. Notes that the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed by the Council's Section 151 Officer and returned to the Department for Transport to allow for funding to be drawn down;
4. Approves the appointment of the Council's strategic partner WSP for Project 1 to prepare detailed feasibility studies for the walking and cycling route;
5. Approves the appointment of Balfour Beatty for Project 2 through the Scape Civil Engineering Framework to progress Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) and to procure a design team;
6. Approves the procurement of a Client Side Technical Services team through the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) Framework for Project 2;
7. Approves the procurement of surveys to inform the design for both projects;
8. Approves a capital budget of £500,000 to undertake the identified tasks in point 4,5,&7 above which will be split across the Project 1 and 2;

9. Notes further reports will be prepared for approval to progress the schemes once further information has been obtained and designs progressed.
10. Authorises the Growth Programme Director in liaison with the Deputy Director of Legal and Governance to finalise any terms of the consultant and contractor appointments and to agree the financial drawdown for Project 1 and Project 2

3. BACKGROUND

In January 2023 the Council secured £20m of LUF for its Blackburn Growth Axis Transport Package (South East). The funding supports the Council's strategic Growth Axis ambitions and will deliver two key projects required to support our ambitions for Southeast Blackburn comprising of:

Project 1 - Southeast Blackburn Walking and Cycling Network

The Southeast Blackburn Walking and Cycling Network improvements will provide a comprehensive and cohesive walking and cycling network throughout SE Blackburn. Giving residents better access to local amenities and opportunities, increase levels of physical activity and reduce the number of vehicular trips on the local road network. Building on the existing Weavers Wheel cycle network and the Leeds & Liverpool canal towpath which forms part of the National Cycle Network (Route 6) the proposed walking and cycling network proposals for Southeast Blackburn include the creation of the following routes:

- Blackburn town centre to Guide via Haslingden Road (Route 1 - 3.8km)
- Blackburn town centre to Walker Park via Queens Park (Route 2 - 3.4km)
- West Blackburn to Royal Blackburn Teaching Hospital (Route 3 - 3.5km)
- Leeds & Liverpool Canal to Royal Blackburn Teaching Hospital (Route 4 - 2.1 km)
- Hollins Bank to Royal Blackburn Teaching Hospital via Manxman Rd (Route S - 2.9km)
- Haslingden Road to Weavers Wheel via the Arran Trail (Route 6 - 1.9km)

Project 2 - M65 Junction 5 Improvement Scheme

Capacity improvements at M65 Junction 5 to tackle congestion, address safety concerns and drive prosperity across East Lancashire by releasing the potential for growth. The project provides the following improvement works to the M65 J5 slip roads, circulatory carriageway, and local highway networks (A6077/86232).

- M65 southbound exit slip is to be widened from two-lanes to three lanes increasing the slip roads capacity.
- M65 southbound entry slip is to be widened to allow for the construction of a new free flow (segregated left turn) lane for traffic entering the M65 southbound from the east.
- M65 northbound exit slip is to be widened from two-lane to three lanes increasing the slip roads capacity.
- M65 northbound entry slip is to be widened to the nearside to allow for the construction of a new free flow (segregated left turn) lane for traffic entering the M65 northbound from the west.
- B6232 eastbound approach is to be widened to allow for the construction of a new free flow (segregated left turn) lane for traffic entering the M65 northbound.
- A6077 westbound approach is to be widened to allow for the construction of a free flow (segregated left turn) lane for traffic entering the M65 southbound.
- Roundabout circulatory carriageway road markings to be amended increasing the lane capacity from two lanes to three.
- Intelligent traffic signals with queue flushes on the M65 motorway off-slips and bus priority detection to give greater priority to buses.

The Council's Section 151 Officer has signed the Department of Transport's MoU which allows for the drawdown of funds, sets out the terms, principles and practices that will apply to the working relationship between the Department for Transport and the Council regarding the administration and delivery of the Growth Axis Transport Package (Southeast).

To commence both projects multiple procurement strategies are to be approved for the appointment of consultants and contractors, with a budget of £500,000 required for the initial stage to commence both projects.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

Procurement Strategies

Project 1 - Southeast Blackburn Walking and Cycling Network

The Council will utilise the pre-procured strategic partnership and appoint WSP (Formerly Capita) to prepare detailed feasibility studies for Southeast Blackburn Walking and Cycling Network. WSP has significant experience of designing walking and cycling schemes within the borough and have delivered numerous similar schemes from the inception of the strategic partnership in 2001.

Project 2 - M65 Junction 5 Improvement Scheme

The scheme is to be procured through the Scape Civil Engineering Framework to appoint Balfour Beatty as a Design & Build Contractor. The framework has previously been tendered resulting in the appointment of Balfour Beatty as a sole supplier to deliver major infrastructure schemes in the North West of England, they have significant experience in delivering similar interventions on the motorway network. The framework is open book with Balfour Beatty competitively procured on their overhead and profit percentage. Balfour Beatty will lead the procurement of a design team for the project. The design team will have the appropriate skills and experience to deliver the scheme, with the Project Delivery Team forming part of the evaluation panel.

Client Side Technical Services Team

The Council will procure a client side Technical Services team via a mini-competition or direct award as agreed with Head of Legal and Procurement through the CCS framework to provide support managing Balfour Beatty.

Surveys

The Council will procure and commission surveys as identified by the appointed consultants to support the preparation of design for each project.

Other Procurement Options

Other procurement options have been considered including open tenders and alternative frameworks however none of which is suited the project needs. The Scape framework has a commitment to Local labour and sub-contractors which is a key priority for the Council.

Future Executive Member/Board Reports

Circa £25 to £30 million has been identified as the total funding envelope required for the Blackburn Growth Axis Transport Package (South East). Further reports will be prepared for consideration to progress to the next stage once a detailed understanding of design fees and construction costs have been ascertained.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Blackburn Growth Axis (South East) Transport Package aligns with existing Council Policies and Strategies including the Financial Strategy, Local Plan, Emerging Local Plan and Growth Programme.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Approves a capital budget of £500,000 to commence the projects with capital codes set-up for both Project 1 and Project 2. Advance funding has been received by the Council to cover this initial drawdown to commence work.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The procurement strategies for both Projects are in accordance with procurement best practice and all relevant legal requirements including public contract regulations 2015 and 2020 amendments (post EU exit) and other appropriate legislation.

Project 1 - Southeast Blackburn Walking and Cycling Network

- WSP are to be appointed through a Call Off under the pre-procured Strategic Partnership contract. (Note: WSP acquired the real estate and property business from Capita in 2022)

Project 2 - M65 Junction 5 Improvement Scheme

- Balfour Beatty are to be appointed initially through an NEC4 Professional Services Short Contract (PSSC) to progress ECI and to procure a design team.

The client side Technical Services team will be appointed under an NEC4 PSSC on terms approved by Legal Officers in Contracts and Procurement team.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Council Growth, Highways, Procurement and Legal resources will be used to deliver this project in addition to consultants and contractors.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

10. CONSULTATIONS

Relevant statutory consultation and public engagement has and will be undertaken as these projects progress.

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

Ward Councillors, local businesses and local walking and cycling groups have been consulted with through the preparation of the Southeast Blackburn Transport Study which informed the Council's LUF2 bid.

Project 1 - Southeast Blackburn Walking and Cycling Network

Further engagement and consultation will be undertaken as part of the design process with residents, local businesses and stakeholder groups in addition to any formal consultation through any planning approval process required to implement the works.

Project 2 - Project 2 M65 Junction 5 Improvement Scheme

Council has been in consultation with National Highways throughout the bid process and will continue with this engagement. A formal Planning Application for the project will be required which will ensure the wider public are informed and consulted on.

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an

equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

VERSION:	1.1
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CONTACT OFFICER:	Simon Jones, Growth Programme Director
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DATE:	May 2023
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BACKGROUND PAPER:	None
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