



EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION

REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Growth & Development
LEAD OFFICERS:	Strategic Director of Growth and Development
DATE:	Thursday 12 th December 2024

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:	Growth and Development
WARD/S AFFECTED:	Audley & Queens Park; Blackburn Central; Blackburn South and Lower Darwen; Blackburn South East; Ewood; West Pennine;
KEY DECISION:	N

SUBJECT: South East Blackburn – Active Travel Project Update

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report follows on the approved report “Blackburn Growth Axis Transport Package (South East): M65 Junction 5 and Active Travel Project Update & Approvals” to seek the Executive Board’s approval for the drawdown of capital funding and approvals required to undertake the various activities to support the delivery stage of Project 1 – South East Blackburn Active Travel. This report also provides an update to the work completed to date since the publication of the mentioned Executive Board Report dated December 2023.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:

- 1) Approves a capital budget of £5.25m capital budget for Project 1 (profiled as set out in the report), in addition to the prior approved £0.75m, of which £0.3m has been spent to date
- 2) Approves the procurement strategy identified within section 4 of this report
- 3) Approves the spending profile of Project 1
- 4) Delegates authority to the Strategic Director of Growth and Development, in consultation with the Executive Member for Growth and Development, to seek and accept tenders within the budget provision approved above.

3. BACKGROUND

In January 2023 the Council secured £20m of LUF funding for its Blackburn Growth Axis Transport Package (South East). The funding supports the Council's strategic Growth Axis ambitions, as outlined in the emerging Local Plan, and will support growth in Southeast Blackburn through the implementation of key two projects.

Project 1 Update – South East Blackburn Walking and Cycling Network The Walking and Cycling project will provide around 16 km of improved walking and cycling routes throughout South East Blackburn, giving residents better access to local amenities and opportunities, increasing levels of physical activity and reducing the number of vehicular trips required 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 improvements include the following:

- Route 1 - Blackburn Town Centre to Guide (3.6 km)
- Route 2 – Eanam to Walker Park (3.0 km)
- Route 3 - Ewood to Royal Blackburn Teaching Hospital (3.8 km)
- Route 4 – Greenbank to Copy Nook (1.1 km)
- Route 5 - Hollins Bank to Royal Blackburn Hospital (2.6 km)
- Route 6 - Haslingden Road to School Lane (via the Arran Trail) (1.7 km)

Preliminary designs have now been completed, alongside a public involvement and engagement event which gained valuable feedback and comments about the proposed routes from residents, business owners and other stakeholders. All feedback and comments were logged and, where applicable, have influenced the detailed design stage which is currently in progress and anticipated to be completed April 2025.

Key milestones of the delivery programme are identified in section 4 of this report.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

Procurement Strategy

A hybrid delivery model will be implemented across the entire programme of works, consisting of more than 50 individual projects, to procure the construction work required. A hybrid delivery model utilises mixed resources, internal and external. This model will offer value, quality and better cost control, whilst also being considerate to the availability of internal resources that are utilised year-round to undertake statutory highway duties.

Project specific deliverables and the complexity of key elements will determine whether projects are procured using internal (DLO) resources or will be tendered onto the approved Surfacing and Civils Framework which is built on the NEC suite of contracts.

Detailed Design

All works are designed in accordance with the Manual Contract for Highways Works, Specification for Highway Works, LTN 1/20, TSRGD, DMRB and other relevant standards and legislation. Similar to that of the construction delivery model, a hybrid model has also been implemented on the detail design stage. External design resources from WSP are supporting with Route 1 utilising a call-off arrangement. An internal design resource has been allocated to developed Routes 2 to 6. This method enables a reliable phasing of design work to feed into the construction programme.

Construction Delivery

Route	Start Date	Target Completion Date
Route 1	February 2025	December 2025
Route 2	January 2025	September 2025
Route 3	December 2025	October 2025
Route 4	November 2024	June 2025
Route 5	April 2025	June 2025
Route 6	October 2024	January 2025

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, Highways Local Transport Plan ('LTP') and Growth Programme.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

In addition to the existing £0.75m, an additional drawdown of £5.25m capital funding is proposed to cover all future design and construction activities to meet the deliverables of Project 1.

As approved in the December 2023 exec board report:

- £300,000 budget was allocated in 2023/2024
- £450,000 budget is allocated for Q2 in 2024/2025

The required additional drawdown for budgets per financial year is as follows:

2024/25: £610,000

2025/26: £4,640,000

The breakdown of spending profile within the project is provided in the table below:

	2023 to 2024		April 2024 to March 2025				April 2025 to March 2026				Total
	23/24	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4		
Spend to Date	300,000			10,000						310,000	
Future Spend				50,000	1,000,000	1,740,000	1,400,000	1,200,000	300,000	5,690,000	
Total	300,000	0	0	60,000	1,000,000	1,740,000	1,400,000	1,200,000	300,000	6,000,000	

The cost of this project is funded entirely from the Levelling Up Fund allocation of £20m provided to the Council for the Blackburn Growth Axis Transport Package (Southeast).

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

All schemes within the programme will be designed and implemented in accordance with relevant

highway, transport, traffic and equality legislation; and will need to be procured in accordance with the Council's constitution, procurement law and; where relevant, European directives; and any grant conditions.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

All internal and external design fees will be met from within the project budget allocations identified within the programme within appendices. External contractors will be procured through approved frameworks to deliver projects greater than £30k value and/or 5 days duration typically. Projects under the £30k value and/or 5 days duration will be delivered through internal resources (DLO) typically. This hybrid approach to delivery will offer best value and minimises the impact and risk to the council's internal resource's ability to undertake statutory duties and other projects within the Highways Capital Programme.

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

A public involvement and engagement event was widely advertised through letter drop and social media channels. The engagement event was held on 12th August 2024 which provided a high-level view of the project to residents, business owners and other stakeholders. The feedback was overall very positive, and all feedback was collated and will be integrated, where appropriate and relevant, at the design stage ahead of construction.

All individual projects within the overall programme will be the subject of detailed individual consultations with the emergency services, stakeholders and the wider community.

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

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.

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

VERSION: 1

CONTACT OFFICER:	Carmel Foster-Devine
DATE:	27/09/2024
BACKGROUND PAPER:	Appendix A – Project 1 Blackburn SE Active Travel Programme