

ECONOMY REGENERATION & HOUSING COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 19 October 2022

Present: Councillor T Jones (Chair)

Councillors P Martin L Rennie
G Wood J Grier
G Davies D Mitchell
D Burgess-Joyce M Booth
I Lewis J Williams

19 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair opened the meeting and reminded everyone that the meeting was being webcast and a copy is retained on the Council's website for two years.

20 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Andrew Hodson who was deputised by Councillor Max Booth and Councillor Jean Robinson who was deputised by Councillor Jerry Williams.

21 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item on the agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

22 MINUTES

The Chair presented the minutes of the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee held on 13 June 2022 and the minutes of the Housing Committee held on 2 March 2022. As part of changes to the Constitution in May 2022, the Housing Committee was incorporated into the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee.

Resolved (by assent) –

- (1) That the minutes of the meeting of Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee held on 13 June 2022 be approved and adopted as a correct record.
- (2) That the minutes of the Housing Committee of 2 March 2022 be approved and adopted as a correct record.

23 **PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

No questions, statements or petitions from the public or Councillors had been received.

24 **DOMINICK HOUSE, LISCARD**

The Chair requested that this report be withdrawn in order that a revised report may be brought back to a future meeting of this Committee.

Resolved – That the report be withdrawn.

25 **LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN (LCWIP) - BIRKENHEAD TO NEW BRIGHTON**

The Lead Commissioner, Strategic Transport Infrastructure, presented the report of the Director of Regeneration and Place. The report provided an update regarding the work undertaken to progress the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) Birkenhead to New Brighton Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) project.

Members were informed that their approval was sought to continue to work with the LCRCA to undertake the development of the LCWIP project in two phases;

- LCWIP Phase 1 – Birkenhead to Liscard
- LCWIP Phase 2 – Liscard to New Brighton

Approval was also sought for Wirral Council to undertake consultation and engagement regarding LCWIP Phase 1 in line with the proposed LCWIP Public Consultation and Engagement Strategy.

Members were advised that further reports would be brought back to the Committee for approval prior to the implementation of Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the LCWIP scheme. Other active travel schemes would be subject to separate reporting to this Committee.

A summary of the work currently underway was provided and it was reported that the LCRCA LCWIP had been developed in line with the Department of

Transport's "DfT's" Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (2015) and the DfT's supporting technical guidance document, 'LCWIP Technical Guidance for Local Authorities' (2017). The methodology for Phase 1 consultation was contained within the report and detailed in Appendix 5.

In response to concerns raised in respect of the consultation processes, it was confirmed that the consultation would be undertaken by the Council and that it would be wide ranging and would include face-to-face consultation, the 'have your say portal' and visual and 3D images. A report on the outcome of the consultation of phase 1 would be brought back to the Committee.

A further discussion was had regarding issues surrounding the consultation process for previous schemes. Members were assured that any lessons learnt from the Phase 1 consultation would influence the consultation process of phase 2. Questions were also raised about the cost and timescales associated with the scheme.

On a motion by Councillor D Mitchell and seconded by Councillor P Martin, it was -

Resolved (7:4) - That

(1) the Director of Regeneration and Place be authorised to:

(a) undertake the further development and consultation of the Birkenhead to New Brighton Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plan ("LCWIP") as 2 separate phases – Phase 1 Birkenhead to Liscard, and Phase 2 Liscard to New Brighton (as set out in Appendix 3 to the report);

(b) consult with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and the Chair and Spokespersons of the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee and the Environment, Transport and Climate Change Committee, the extent, alignment and design of the Phase 1 Birkenhead to Liscard route, to be the subject of the stakeholder and public consultation.

(c) in consultation with the Chair and Spokespersons of the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee and the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee, the content or timescales of the LCWIP Engagement Strategy be amended prior to implementation if required.

(2) the LCWIP Phase 1 Engagement Strategy (as set out in Appendix 5 of the report) be approved.

26 **ACTIVE TRAVEL FUNDING - TRANCHE 3**

The Lead Commissioner for Transport presented a report which sought approval to accept grant funding of £2,225,000 from the Department for Transport's Active Travel Fund Tranche 3 Programme, and allocated the funds to the proposed Conway Street / Europa Boulevard Movement Scheme.

The budget was secured from the Tranche 3 Programme would enable the scope of the proposed Conway Street / Europa Boulevard Movement Scheme, currently funded via the Future High Street fund to be extended as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

The Lead Commissioner for Transport informed Members of the design implications and modifications involved within the programme.

Resolved –

- (1) the Director of Regeneration and Place be authorised to accept grant funding of £2,225,000 allocated to Wirral Council by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority from the Active Travel Fund Tranche 3; and**
- (2) that recommendation be made to Policy and Resources Committee that the Capital Programme be amended so that the £2,225,000 grant funding allocated to Wirral Council by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority from the Active Travel Fund Tranche 3 be allocated to the Conway Street/Europa Boulevard Movement Scheme**

27 **FUTURE HIGH STREETS FUND MOVEMENT SCHEMES**

The Lead Commissioner, Strategic Transport Infrastructure, presented the report of the Director of Regeneration and Place which provided Members with an update regarding the work undertaken to progress the Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) Movement Schemes in Birkenhead. The schemes were:

- Charing Cross / Grange Road, Birkenhead; and
- Conway Street / Europa Boulevard, Birkenhead

Members were requested to note the progress made in the development and design of the schemes and approve the undertaking of public and stakeholder consultation and engagement in relation to both schemes.

Details of the proposed designs and the proposed approach in respect of the consultation were provided within the report. Members were advised that further reports regarding the outcome of the consultation would be brought to a future meeting of the Active Travel Members Working Group for consideration. Subject to the outcomes of the consultations, construction of the FHSF Movement Projects were expected to commence late summer 2023 with completion in early 2024.

Resolved – That the Director of Regeneration and Place be authorised to:

(1) agree, in consultation with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and the Chair and Spokespersons of the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee and the Environment, Transport and Climate Change Committee, the extent, alignment and design of the Future High Street Movement Schemes at Charing Cross / Grange Road, Birkenhead and Conway Street / Europa Boulevard, Birkenhead which will be the subject of the stakeholder and public consultation and engagement; and

(2) approve and implement the approach to consultation as set out in paragraph 3.8 of the report.

28 **DEVELOPMENT FUNDING FOR TRANSPORT PIPELINE - BIRKENHEAD CENTRAL GATEWAY**

The Lead Commissioner, Strategic Transport Infrastructure presented the report of the Director of Regeneration and Place, which sought approval to accept grant funding of up to £1,582,500 from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) to support the development of the Birkenhead Central Gateway Programme.

The report also referred to the approved slippage of £1,092,129 from the 2021/22 development funding grant award. The development funding would support key regeneration projects including Argyle Street, Dock Branch Park, Hind Street and Woodside. Members were informed that the development of the transport projects would support the delivery of several key catalyst projects and neighbourhoods identified in Birkenhead 2040, the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) programme and the wider regeneration of the Left Bank. Development would ensure that the Council achieves development and delivery of transport and regeneration schemes within the Borough as part of a LCRCA wide programme of schemes and interventions.

The Committee queried the slippage and resource allocation and were informed that the slippage was caused by projects are still in delivery but where the allocated funding had not been defrayed prior to end of financial year. In regard to resource queries, Members were informed that the

combined authority had secured additional funding to use towards staffing resource allocation.

Resolved – That,

(1) the Director of Regeneration and Place be authorised:

(a) accept grant funding of up to £2,674,629 to support the development of the Birkenhead Central Gateway Programme allocated to the Council by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority; and

(b) commence the necessary pre-development work to achieve the outputs set out in Table 1 of the report.

(2) Policy and Resources Committee be recommended to approve that the Capital Programme be amended so that the £2,674,629 grant funding allocated to Wirral Council by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority be allocated to the development of the Birkenhead Central Gateway Programme.

29 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered the work programme for the municipal year and the report of the of the Director of Law and Governance.

In response to a query from a Member of the Committee it was confirmed that energy efficiency motion passed at Council would be added to the work programme.

Resolved (by assent) – That the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee work programme for the remainder of the 2022/23 municipal year be noted.

30 **EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Resolved – That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test has been applied and favours exclusion

31 **BIRKENHEAD TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION - PROPOSAL TO CONSIDER THE PURCHASE OF A STRATEGIC ACQUISITION**

The Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Place in its entirety.

Resolved - That the recommendations as detailed in the report be agreed.