

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

2 JUNE 2011

SUBJECT:	TENDER REPORT FOR TOWN LINK VIADUCT REFURBISHMENT
WARD/S AFFECTED:	BIRKENHEAD & TRANMERE
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	STREETSCENE & TRANSPORT SERVICES
KEY DECISION?	YES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet Members of the nature of works proposed to refurbish the Town Link viaduct and that the Director of Law HR and Asset Management has accepted a tender for the works under delegated authority. The report also seeks approval of technical variations to the contract in excess of 10% of the tender total and for the slippage of the available funding.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Members note the contents of this report and the nature of the works proposed.
- 2.2 That Members note that the lowest tender in the sum of £483,915, submitted by Balvac Ltd, has been accepted by the Director of Law HR and Asset Management under delegated authority pursuant to Contract Procedure Rule 14.4, which will be reported to the next meeting of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.3 That approval be granted for the variation of the works pursuant to Contract Procedure Rule 16.2 in order to fully utilise the available DfT grant funding.
- 2.4 That approval be granted for the slippage in the Technical Services capital programme of £1,088,000, as described at paragraph 9.5, from 2010/11 to 2011/12 and that the £220,000 not required for this scheme be retained for other projects in the LTP bridge maintenance programme.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Following the announcement in June 2010 by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), providing details of local government savings proposals, Cabinet approved a revised Local Transport Plan (LTP) Programme on 22 July 2010, based on a reduced settlement (minute 93 refers). The refurbishment of the Town Link viaduct was included as a key priority named scheme within the agreed programme.
- 3.2 The acceptance of a tender and award of a contract will enable essential maintenance works to proceed that will help preserve the structural integrity of the Council's highway network which is a statutory duty under the Highways Act 1980 (as amended).
- 3.3 The preparation of contract documentation including land access negotiations delayed any prospect of works implementation beyond 2010/11. The Department for Transport (DfT) have now authorised the Director of Finance to draw down their 2010/11 grant allocation in full during 2011/12.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Town Link Viaduct is a steel box girder structure carrying the A5227 two-way single carriageway road over minor roads; a disused railway and mixed-ownership land, connecting the A41 New Chester Road to the A552 Borough Road in central Birkenhead (refer to Location Plan at Appendix A). The highway carried by the viaduct forms part of the Wirral Primary Route Network (PRN). The structure was built in circa. 1967 as part of a complex of high level flyovers designed to reduce traffic congestion around the Birkenhead Mersey Road Tunnel access.
- 4.2 The works included in the tender invitation comprise: concrete deck repairs; replacement bridge deck expansion joints; localised steel maintenance painting; pier bearing refurbishment; installation of movement monitoring equipment and safety-related highway improvements.
- 4.3 Road closures will be required for certain activities and the contractor will be required to follow the Council's procedures for the application of closures and diversions and to liaise appropriately with stakeholders and local businesses.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 In common with all bridge maintenance schemes there is a risk that unknown defects could be uncovered leading to additional essential works being added to the contract which may result in increased costs or works duration.
- 5.2 To help mitigate the risk of additional works a number of provisional items have been included in the contract, prices for which are included in the tender total reported. Should these items be expended by the Engineer for the works, an

extension of time for completion may be awarded to the contractor in accordance with the contract.

- 5.3 The traffic management will be co-ordinated by Technical Services Department with other concurrent schemes in the area to help minimise the effects on road users.
- 5.4 Risks will be managed appropriately and all critical project risks will be identified and monitored on a regular basis by the project team.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 The long-term future of this viaduct is uncertain as a number of town centre highway strategy studies have been, and continue to be, considered by the Technical Services Department, which may eventually result in alternative highway networks rendering the structure redundant. Hence, a more comprehensive refurbishment involving a complete repainting of the steel box girders and bearing replacement was not considered to be warranted at this stage for financial reasons.
- 6.2 However, a 'do-nothing' option was discounted as there is currently evidence of significant deterioration to certain structural elements which, if not addressed, could present a safety risk to the public. The works specified in the tender invitation are based on consideration of Principal Bridge Inspection reports prepared by the Council's consulting engineers in 2009/10 which included essential and high-priority maintenance items only. The estimated cost of the tendered works, based on rates extracted from similar works contracts was £672,000.
- 6.3 The procurement process which has been followed and the form of contract selected are fully compliant with the Council's Constitution and Contract Procedure Rules.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The design proposals have been discussed with a range of stakeholders, including: officers in Technical Services Department; Network Rail and land owners, all of whom will continue to be consulted throughout the construction process.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 8.1 There are no implications in this report for voluntary, community or faith groups.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

9.1 The Department of Law, HR and Asset Management will provide all professional services.

9.2 The Director of Technical Services in accordance with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 will carry out the role of CDM Coordinator.

9.3 There are no additional staffing implications with these proposals.

9.4 The total estimated cost of the project, based upon the lowest tender submitted by Balvac Ltd, is:

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|---|-----------|
| • Construction works: | £ 483,915 |
| • Departmental charges, including:
Professional fees
Clerk of Works salary
CDM Coordinator salary
Other charges (Traffic Regulation Orders, ancillary works etc.) | £ 120,000 |

Total **£ 603,915**

9.5 The scheme is intended to be funded from the following sources:

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| • PRN Bridge Strengthening
(DfT grant 2010/11) | £ 868,000 |
| • LTP Capital Programme 2010/11 | £ 220,000 |

Total **£ 1,088,000**

9.6 The original DfT grant funding was £1,088,000 which was reduced by 20% as part of the public spending review in 2010. The original grant had been based on estimated costs submitted by the Council as part of the PRN funding application process in 2008/09, which had been based on more extensive works than those subsequently tendered. The project budget was supplemented by LTP funding under the Cabinet resolution described in paragraph 3.1 above.

9.7 Because of the highly favourable tender price that has been received in the current competitive climate it is proposed that, if necessary, the works be varied to include additional maintenance items and works quantities which will secure the structural viability of the viaduct for the medium term, pending any decision on the future traffic and development strategy for Birkenhead. Thus the current DfT grant of £868,000, which is ring-fenced funding approved for expenditure on this structure, will be fully utilised in 2011/12. This would result in an increase in the contract sum in excess of 10% of the tender total. The available LTP budget of £220,000 will be transferred to other schemes in the 2011/12 bridge maintenance programme as determined by the Director of Technical Services.

- 9.8 The proposals include a web-based monitoring system to verify that the pier base bearings are operating within expected movement tolerances. The contractor will be responsible under the contract requirements for managing this system and providing reports for twelve months post completion, after which the Council may choose to take over the system. This could result in a modest annual revenue implication for IT system access and support which is yet to be determined.
- 9.9 The Technical Services Department bridges asset database will be updated on completion of the contract to reflect all works undertaken on the structure under the contract.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no specific legal implications associated with this report. The Legal and Member Services Section within the Department of Law, HR and Asset Management will arrange for the completion of the contract.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no specific implications in this report for equal opportunities, including women, ethnic minorities or the elderly. The design has followed the principles of the Council's generic Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for Highway Design.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 Improvements in road surface quality and accident records by the introduction of road safety-related measures could lead to a potential reduction in carbon emissions from vehicles. However, specific estimates have not been quantified. There is no specific carbon budget for the highway asset operated by Technical Services, which includes the Town Link viaduct.
- 12.2 The contractor will be encouraged to employ local labour and source materials from local suppliers as far as possible in accordance with Council procurement procedures.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 Highway maintenance works of the nature proposed under this scheme are exempt from planning consent requirements.
- 13.2 A Roads Local Safety Scheme designed by Technical Services Department, which was planned for construction in 2011 on the A5227, has been incorporated into the contract requirements.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Location Plan

REFERENCE MATERIAL

The information used in the preparation of this report was obtained in consultation with Technical Services Department and with reference to their asset database and register information. No other background papers have been used in the preparation of this report.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet report – Reduction in LTP Grant 2010/11	22 July 2010