

REPORT TO: COUNCILLOR STUART WHITTINGHAM CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT	CABINET MEMBER REPORT 29 MARCH 2019 NEW CHESTER ROAD (ROCK FERRY ROUNDABOUT TO NEW FERRY VILLAGE) PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE IMPROVEMENTS – APPROVAL OF ADDITIONAL FUNDING
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REPORT SUMMARY

This report seeks approval for the allocation of £150,000 of Transport Plan for Growth Capital funding to enable the delivery of a series of measures to improve facilities for pedestrians and cyclists on New Chester Road between Rock Ferry roundabout and New Ferry Village. The Cabinet has previously approved the delivery of the New Chester Road STEP scheme, following award of a £550,000 Sustainable Transport Enhancements Package (STEP) grant allocation, and this additional funding is now required to enable the scheme, which will support the delivery of the Connecting Wirral Transport Strategy, to proceed to Contract award stage of the procurement process.

The report recommends that, under delegated authority, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, in consultation with the Interim Director for Highways & Streetscene Services approves the adjustment to the priorities of the Transport Plan for Growth programme to enable the additional funding to be allocated to the New Chester Road scheme. Budget has been identified from unspent resources in the 2018/19 programme which has arisen due to financial and other factors.

This funding is required to enable the award of Tender subject to Contract for the procurement of those works as shown on the attached drawing (Appendix 1).

This decision is not subject to Call-In by reason of urgency. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the Call-In process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interest.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport is requested to authorise the Interim Director for Highways & Streetscene Services to approve the reallocation of £150,000 Transport Plan for Growth Capital funding (unspent resources from 2018/19) to enable the award of Tender (subject to Contract) for the procurement of the New Chester Road Pedestrian and Cycle Improvements Scheme as shown on the attached drawing (Appendix 1).

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 Following the conclusion of a select list Tender process to procure the civil engineering works outlined in 3.0 below, the potential winning Tender bid submitted has resulted in a projected total scheme spend of £150,000 in excess of the current STEP grant funded allocation of £550,000.
- 1.2 Failure to carry out the proposed improvement works (with the subsequent loss of amenity to the local community) will risk the potential claw back of expended funds / committed funding by the Combined Authority for non-delivery as outlined in the funding agreement.
- 1.3 Failure to implement the delivery of the scheme could also result in a reputational loss of confidence in Wirral Council as a partner to deliver schemes and could jeopardise future funding opportunities at city region level.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Seek funding from other sources to cover the additional scheme cost:
 - a) The STEP programme is currently in the 2nd year of delivery with all funding currently allocated to projects across the City Region. Underspends may occur on the STEP project as a whole, which may release some funding but not until the end of the project in the 4th year. There is no option at this time to ask for additional funding from the STEP Programme.
 - b) No other sources of funding have been identified.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Proposals to introduce an extensive range of highway improvement measures aimed at improving safety along the busy New Chester Road have been made possible through the award of Grant funding received via the Liverpool City Region (Sustainable Transport Enhancements Package - 'STEP') for schemes that support the delivery of sustainable transport infrastructure to bring about further growth in our economy, reduce carbon emissions and support residents to increased levels of active, healthy travel.
- 3.2 These proposals include for the introduction of on-road mandatory cycle lanes in each direction along New Chester Road between Rock Ferry roundabout extending through to New Ferry 'Village'.
- 3.3 Traffic signal control arrangements will be introduced at the junction of both New Ferry Road and Grove Road providing the opportunity to remove the two existing pedestrian 'Puffin' crossings (north of New Ferry Road and Grove Road) and incorporate much improved controlled pedestrian crossings facilities across each leg of both signalised junctions resulting in much safer and convenient access to local shops and amenities.

- 3.4 Works will also be undertaken to improve existing pedestrian refuge islands, controlled crossing points at existing traffic signal junctions, the puffin controlled crossing adjacent to Proctor Road and minor kerb realignment works at the junction of Esher Road.
- 3.5 Extensive footway improvements will also be undertaken to address areas where the nature or condition of the footway presents a barrier to pedestrians with access or mobility issues.
- 3.6 Extensive carriageway resurfacing works will form part of the proposals and an additional £100,000 has been identified within the Structural Maintenance programme to further extend the limits of those surfacing works.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The estimated total cost of this scheme will be £700,000 with £550,000 funded from the 2017/18 Sustainable Transport Enhancement Package (STEP). This report recommends the reallocation of £150,000 of Transport Plan for Growth Capital funding from unspent resources in the 2018/19 programme to provide sufficient budget to carry out the works.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no known specific implications under this heading arising from the recommendation of this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

- 6.1 Existing staff resources would be utilised to complete the procurement and delivery of this scheme.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The risks arising if this issue cannot be satisfactorily resolved may include:
- a. Failure to carry out the proposed improvement works and the subsequent loss of amenity to the local community.
 - b. Potential claw back of expended / committed funding by the Combined Authority for non-delivery.
 - c. Failure to implement the delivery of the scheme could also result in a loss of confidence in the Council as a partner to deliver schemes and could jeopardise future funding opportunities at the city region level.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 As part of the consultation exercise for this scheme letters were delivered to over 600 local residents, numerous businesses and developers in the vicinity of the scheme, informing them of the proposals. In addition, consultation was undertaken with Party Spokespersons, Ward Councillors, Merseytravel,

Merseyside Police and other partner consultees and interested parties. No objections to the proposals were received.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

Yes - As part of the development of LTP3, a comprehensive Integrated Assessment (IA) was carried out in accordance with Government LTP Guidance. The IA included a number of assessments, including an Equality Impact Assessment that can demonstrate that there are no negative implications associated with the implementation of these activities on the 'protected characteristics'. The proposed works includes measures to assist the transport needs of all sections of the community.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – scheme plan

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet – Approval of STEP Years 3- 6 Programme	19th June 2017