



POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday 9 November 2022

REPORT TITLE:	DEVELOPMENT FUNDING FOR TRANSPORT PIPELINE – BIRKENHEAD CENTRAL GATEWAY
REPORT OF:	HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES (MONITORING OFFICER)

REPORT SUMMARY

This report seeks approval to amend the Capital Programme 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. The report also notes the approved slippage of £1,092,129 from 2021/22 development funding grant award. The development funding will support key regeneration projects including Argyle Street, Dock Branch Park, Hind Street and Woodside.

The acceptance of the development funding will support all five themes of the Wirral Plan 2021-26: Inclusive Economy, Safe & Pleasant Communities, Sustainable Environment, Brighter Futures and Active & Healthy Lives.

This matter affects the Birkenhead and Tranmere Ward and the Rock Ferry Ward.

This matter is a Key Decision.

The associated Report of the Director of Regeneration and Place and the full minutes of the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee of 19 October 2022 are appended to this report. The minutes of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee of 20 October 2022 are also appended to this report for information.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Policy and Resources Committee is recommended to approve the amendment to the Capital Programme 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.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To enable the development of the transport projects to continue which will 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.
- 1.2 To ensure that the Council achieves development and delivery of transport and regeneration schemes within the Borough as part of a Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) wide programme of schemes and interventions.
- 1.3 To ensure that the Council supports schemes which will deliver increased levels of sustainable travel as set out in the emerging Local Plan and to support actions required to address the Climate Emergency and the target in the Cool2 Strategy to 'a complete transition to fossil fuel free local travel by around 2030'.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Other options have been considered and are included within the minutes of the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee and the appended report.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

LCRCA Transport Pipeline and City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement

- 3.1 Pool 1 of the Transport Pipeline was agreed by the LCRCA in March 2021. This consisted of 20 projects across the City Region which align with strategic priorities, were considered to deliver significant benefits for the city region and are deliverable between 2022/23 and 2026/27. The pipeline of schemes was developed using an evidence led approach and the schemes were commissioned with the intention of supporting their development and delivery, subject to the availability of funding. This agreed pipeline helped shape both the priorities in the LCRCA City Region Sustainable Transport (CRSTS) bid and LCRCA LUF submission.
- 3.2 From April 2021, the LCRCA has been in discussions with the Department for Transport (DfT) regarding the transport capital funding and as part of this process, £5.6m capacity funding was allocated to the LCRCA from the DfT to develop the pipeline projects and a further £11.1m was made available by the LCRCA to meet the total development requirements. In September 2021, the LCRCA submitted a prospectus to the DfT as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review. After reviewing this document, the LCRCA was awarded, subject to business case, an indicative £710m from CRSTS in October 2021 to fund capital transport interventions between 2022/23 and 2026/27.

3.2 The LCRCA has allocated development funding to constituent Local Authorities to support the development of projects within the approved programme. In 2021/22 the Council was awarded and accepted £1,460,900 of development funding. The Council has now been allocated a further £1,582,500 for 2022/23 to support the delivery of the Birkenhead Central Gateway Programme. £1,092,129 of slippage has been approved from the 2021/22 programme. Within the wider Birkenhead Central Gateway programme the key regeneration projects include Argyle Street, Dock Branch Park, Hind Street and Woodside.

Birkenhead Central Gateway Programme

3.4. In summary the projects for which the grant relates are set out below;

Argyle Street

Argyle Street is part of the LCRCA Levelling Up Fund Programme and the aim of the projects is to deliver connectivity and public realm improvements at Argyle Street including the Argyle Street/Conway roundabout.

Dock Branch Park

Dock Branch Park is an iconic, catalytic and transformational project for Birkenhead’s regeneration included in the Birkenhead Central Gateway programme and involves the creation of a new active travel corridor linking three key developments areas being Wirral Waters, Birkenhead Town Centre and Hind Street.

Hind Street Movement Strategy

The development of a movement strategy to support the removal of the Birkenhead flyovers is a critical project to enable the development of the Hind Street Urban Village development, supporting the delivery of the Local Plan.

Woodside

Woodside is part of the CRSTS programme and the aim of the project is to deliver connectivity and public realm improvements including;

- Reconfiguration of the Woodside Gyratory;
- Realignment/Relocation of Bus Turnaround;
- Investment in Public Realm and Wayfinding; and
- Delivery of New and Improved Walking and Cycling Infrastructure.

Placemaking

This project sees funding to support the delivery of a behaviour change campaign and to support the further development of the Birkenhead 3D model to be used to support public and stakeholder consultation on regeneration and transport schemes.

Scheme Outputs

3.5 The conditions of the Grant Funding Agreement specify that the funding needs to be spent by no later than the 31st March 2023. The Council will be expected to achieve the outputs set out in Table 1;

Table 1: Scheme Outputs

Scheme Name	Outputs
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Argyle Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of RIBA 2 design for Argyle Street • Completion of RIBA 2 design for Argyle Street/Conway Street roundabout
Dock Branch Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of RIBA 3 design for Dock Branch Park North • Completion of RIBA 3 design for Dock Branch Park South
Hind Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update to Wirral Traffic Model and building of detailed junction models using LINSIG software
Woodside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of RIBA 2 design
Placemaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour change campaign advertisements • Flythrough for 3D model
Resourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argyle Street Project Manager Resource • Dock Branch Park Project Manager Resource • Hind Street Project Manager Support • Cross Programme Highways Resource <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) 0.5 FTE Traffic Engineer (ii) 0.5 FTE Structures (iii) 0.5 FTE Maintenance

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.4 In accordance with the Council's Constitution the Policy and Resources Committee is charged by full Council to provide a co-ordinating role across all other service committees and retain a 'whole-council' view of performance, budget monitoring and risk management, which includes responsibility for a decision on any virement between Budget funds (capital) or any amendment to the Capital Programme requested by a Committee or officer in excess of £500,000.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 In accordance with Part 3B of Constitution (Committee Terms of Reference), the Policy and Resources Committee has two main areas of responsibility, which is to provide strategic direction to the operation of the Council, including making decisions on policies and co-ordinating spend not reserved to full Council, and to maintain a strategic overview of outcomes, performance, risk management and budgets.

5.2 The Policy and Resources Committee is charged by full Council to provide a co-ordinating role across all other service committees and retain a 'whole-council' view of performance, budget monitoring and risk management, which includes responsibility for a decision on any virement between Budget funds (capital) or any amendment to the Capital Programme requested by a Committee or officer in excess of £500,000.

5.3 As part of the matter of business that was the subject of the report to Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee falls under that responsibility reserved to the Policy and Resources Committee, the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee's resolution is presented as a recommendation.

5.4 As the decision in this matter is the subject of a recommendation from another Committee, the Policy and Resources Committee must take into account the resolution of that Committee and give due regard to the guidance and comments made by its members. The Policy and Resources Committee must not, however, consider itself bound by that Committee's recommendations or otherwise fetter its discretion; its Members must come to their own decision. In doing so, the Committee must satisfy itself that it has been provided with all relevant information or a suitable précis to enable it to comply with its duties and make a lawful decision.

5.5 Other legal considerations are as set out in the appended report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 This report is for information only and does not contain any direct resource implications.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The relevant risks are covered in the original report submitted to the Committee.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Engagement and Consultation were covered in the original report submitted to the Committee.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

9.2. Whilst there are no equality implications arising from this report, the associated actions arising from the delivery may need to assess any equality issues and mitigate any negative impact that may emerge.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 This report has no direct environmental implications.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Community Wealth Implications are covered in the original report submitted to the Committee.

REPORT AUTHOR:

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Minute Extract
Appendix 2 Full Report

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Valuation Advice Negotiated Heads of Terms

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee	19 October 2022