
CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. To consider the proposals of the Executive regarding certain amendments in the Capital Programme and matters associated therewith.

2.0 Background

- 2.1. The Executive, at its meeting held on 27th October 2004 considered the proposals below regarding amendments to the Capital Programme. The proposals of the Executive are set out in Section 3 below.

2.2 Urban Environment

2.2.1 A458 Halesowen to Stourbridge Bus Showcase Route No.9

At its meeting on 24th September 2004, the West Midlands Planning & Transportation Sub Committee approved proposals to designate the A458 Halesowen to Stourbridge section of Route No. 9 as Bus Showcase standard and also approved initial funding for the necessary bus priority measures (junction improvements) and for bus-stop upgrade works as follows.

- Bus priority measures scheme development and design work at a number of junctions, including acquisition of land, at a total projected cost of £376,000, of which £50,000 is available this year.
- Implementation of the initial tranche of bus stop boarders and related highway works, amounting to £174,000 in 2004/5 and £51,000 in 2005/6.

Completion of these works at a total cost of around £3.8m will have the effect of providing a Showcase standard over the whole length of Route No. 9 (Birmingham to Stourbridge). The works would be subject to any necessary consultations and statutory procedures.

It is proposed that the A458 Halesowen to Stourbridge Bus Showcase Route and associated scheme development for which funding is now available, be approved and included in the Capital Programme; and that the Director of the Urban Environment be authorised to commence the statutory procedure involved in securing Highway Improvement Lines to protect the junction improvement schemes along the route as and when they are developed.

2.2.2 Foster Street Subway, Stourbridge

This subway provides a vital pedestrian link between the busy bus station and the town centre. However, it is perceived as an intimidating environment to the public, particularly at certain times. Whilst further studies are currently

being undertaken as regards the possibility of providing a surface level crossing to the Ring Road adjacent to Foster Street, such a facility continues to give rise to potential concerns over road safety and traffic congestion.

Centro are keen to improve the safety and comfort of the subway and has agreed funding of £90,000 towards the following beneficial improvements, at an estimated total cost of £120,000 - £130,000.

- CCTV cameras at all approaches with additional concealed cameras within the subway itself. These would be linked to the existing town centre cameras and represent added value to town centre CCTV coverage.
- New lighter coloured easy-clean flooring, and painting of walls and ceilings in a lighter colour.
- Improved lighting and drainage.

In view of the quick benefits of such improvements, it is therefore proposed that funding of up to £40,000 of savings from the Pedestrian scheme allocation within the current Highways Capital Programme be made available to support this initiative, and that it be included in the Capital Programme.

This proposal will not prejudice completion of the approved programme of Pedestrian schemes.

2.2.3 Highways Facilities for Disabled People

In order to reduce the current backlog of requests it is proposed that £25,000 be redirected to the above budget from the Cycling Facilities allocation within the current year's Highways Capital Programme.

This redirection will not prejudice completion of the approved programme of Cycling Facilities works.

2.2.4 Landfill Gas Venting & Monitoring

A recent survey of the venting and monitoring installations on Council owned former Landfill sites as part of the risk management process has identified an essential need to install 46 new monitoring boreholes in the light of problems with the identification of existing boreholes and uncertainty with regard to their condition.

It is proposed that the estimated cost of £28,000 be funded from the resources set aside within the Capital Programme for emerging priorities.

2.2.5 Halesowen Leisure Centre

It is necessary to undertake essential works to the electrical installation at the Leisure Centre including the replacement of a sub mains, distribution board, switch board, and lighting in the plant room to both pool halls and the Lutley suite. The estimated cost of this work is £85,000 which can be met from the Leisure Centres (rates refund) reserve.

It is proposed that this project be approved and included in the Capital Programme.

2.2.6 Coseley Swimming Pool

It is necessary to provide emergency lighting in the plant room and remedial electrical work throughout the above building at an estimated cost of £25,000. This can also be met from the Leisure Centres (rates refund) NNDR reserve.

It is proposed that this project be approved and included in the Capital Programme.

2.2.7 Brierley Hill Sustainable Access Network

A request had been received from the Brierley Hill Regeneration Partnership (BHRP) to use all of the funds received through the Local Transport Plan (LTP) and other public and private sector sources for the Brierley Hill Sustainable Access Network, as match funding for existing and future BHRP bids and projects.

The government has provisionally accepted the Sustainable Access Network for funding of £17m (of a total cost of £24m) subject to satisfactory completion of all outstanding statutory procedures. Formal approval is anticipated during 2005/6.

Since no government funding has, as yet, been approved, it is therefore impossible to formally agree what, if any, amount may be used as match funding for any project delivered by BHRP or any other organisation. More importantly, the Council itself submits bids for a wide range of economic regeneration activities which also require match funding. It is therefore imperative that the Council makes maximum use of the LTP and any associated funds as match funding for its own schemes and has priority in the use of such funds.

As members will be aware, the Council was the applicant for the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Waterfront 2 project that was approved a year ago by the Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM). The Council also acts as the Accountable Body for the project and monitors its delivery and spend together with submitting claims to GOWM to draw down the grant funding. The project contains 4 elements, namely:

- Public Realm enhancements
- Level Street junction improvements
- Development of Daniels Land
- BHRP element

There is currently a shortfall of around £1m of public sector match funding for the BHRP element of the Waterfront 2 project. This is due primarily to the inability to use anticipated Job Centre Plus funding as match funding and the limited level of AWM funding approval received to date.

It is therefore proposed that:

- “In principle” approval is given for BHRP to utilise up to £1m of the LTP funds as match funding for the Waterfront 2 project, as and when formal ministerial approval is received;
- Any future requests to use the LTP funds as match funding for external bids be considered by the Executive on a project by project basis.

2.2.8 Street Lighting

As reported to the Executive in July, net savings totalling £79,000 had been identified within the Highways Capital Programme, enabling a contingency to be retained for subsequent allocation.

It is now proposed that this sum be added to the Street Lighting capital budget to accelerate the programme of replacement of deteriorated steel street lighting column installations.

2.2.9 A4123/A461 (Burnt Tree) Junction Improvement

In response to the recommendations of the West Midlands Area Multi Modal Study, of 9th July 2003, the Secretary of State for Transport (SoS) offered to support a number of new major local transport schemes in the period to 2010/11 of a total value up to £1bn, including improvements to the strategic road network of which the A4123 is an integral part.

An opportunity has arisen to take advantage of this additional funding offer of the SoS to address the acute problems of congestion currently found at Burnt Tree junction. This congestion greatly affects access to and from the national motorway network and overshadows the image of the gateway to Dudley Town Centre upon which much effort has been recently expended with the construction of Castle Gate roundabout and the Dudley Southern Bypass. Addressing the congestion problem at Burnt Tree will complement and help sustain the continued successful regeneration of the Castle Hill Area ensuring that any existing and forthcoming proposals achieve their full potential.

The borough boundary with Sandwell MBC runs along the central reservation of the New Birmingham Road and Birmingham New Road and bisects Burnt Tree junction. Forming part of the trunk road network, these roads are currently under the jurisdiction of the Highways Agency. However, it is anticipated that they will be “detrunked” in April 2005 at which point they will revert to the control of the local Highways Authority, in this case the Council and Sandwell MBC. To simplify maintenance it is likely that an agreement will be made under section 8 of the Highways Act 1980 for Sandwell MBC to maintain the junction in its entirety.

Following a joint feasibility study carried out by the Council and Sandwell MBC, officers are now confident that a practical and affordable solution that would have a minimal effect on frontagers whilst bringing a significant reduction in congestion and benefiting the immediate environment is achievable at this location.

It is therefore proposed:

- That following consultation with the public and statutory bodies, a joint scheme be developed with Sandwell MBC to address the problem of congestion at Burnt Tree for submission in the 2005 West Midlands Local Transport Plan.
- That the Council, notwithstanding any maintenance agreements, enters into a further agreement with Sandwell MBC under section 8 of the Highways Act 1980 to facilitate the development of the scheme and to share the development costs.
- That the Council protects any land potentially required for highway re-alignment from development.

The costs of developing the scheme are estimated to be £75,000 to each authority and will be met from the Demand Management/Advancing Network Improvements budget within the Highways Capital Programme.

2.2.10 Transforming Your Space

The following additional resources have become available to support the Lottery-funded Transforming Your Space project already included in the Capital Programme to bring physical improvements to a number of the Borough's parks and open spaces.

	£'000
Developers' Section 106 Agreements	
- including £17,000 for additional children's play facilities at Priory Park and £10,000 for improvements at Buffery Park.	37
Revenue contribution to management costs	
- particularly liaison with Friends groups	18
Contribution from routine Repairs & Maintenance budget for lighting at Grange Park	2
Steps to Health funding from Beacon & Castle PCT towards signage	5
Neighbourhood Renewal Fund allocation to Friends groups for signage & fencing at Netherton and Buffery Parks	3
Total	65

It is therefore proposed that the Capital budget for the Transforming Your Space project be increased by this sum.

2.2.11 Compulsory Purchase of Land at the Junction of High Street, Amblecote and Vicarage Road

In approving the making of a Compulsory Purchase Order for the acquisition of land at the above location and ancillary issues in relation to the Order, for the purpose of securing the comprehensive redevelopment of the Corbett Hospital site, and to help achieve the strategic allocation of housing provision as set out in the emerging Unitary Development Plan, the Executive, at its meeting held

on 27th October 2004, resolved to recommend the Council that the proposal be included in the Capital Programme.

The report to the Executive, which was considered in private session, is available to Members on request to Richard Sanders, Democratic Services, Directorate of Law and Property on (01384) 815236 or email richard.sanders@dudley.gov.uk. The report indicated that the developer would be required to enter into an undertaking to reimburse all the Council's costs in relation to the Compulsory Purchase Order negotiations and the cost of the purchase of the land.

2.3 Finance

2.3.1 Halesowen Magistrates Court

The Council has been notified by the Lord Chancellor's Department (LCD) of a further funding allocation of £12,000 to cover increased costs associated with the scheme of remodelling & replacement of fire alarms at Halesowen Magistrates Court.

It is proposed that these resources be noted and the Capital Programme be amended accordingly.

2.4 Social Services

2.4.1 Learning Disability Development Fund (LDDF)

The Council, at its meeting held on 8th March 2004, approved in principle acceptance of LDDF monies of £300,000 for capital works relating to supported accommodation. A report was submitted to the meeting of the Executive held on 27th October 2004, confirming proposals for expenditure from the Fund. A copy of the report, which was considered in private session, may be obtained from Richard Sanders, Democratic Services, Directorate of Law and Property on (01384) 815236 or email richard.sanders@dudley.gov.uk. The proposals of the Executive are set out in paragraph 3.1.13 below.

3.0 Proposals

3.1. That the Council:

- 3.1.1. Agrees that the A458 Halesowen to Stourbridge Bus Showcase Route and associated scheme development for which funding is now available, be approved and included in the Capital Programme; and that the Director of the Urban Environment be authorised to commence the statutory procedure involved in securing Highway Improvement Lines to protect the junction improvement schemes along the route as and when they are developed, as set out in paragraph 2.2.1.**

- 3.1.2. Agrees that funding of up to £40,000 of savings from the Pedestrian scheme allocation of the current Highways Capital Programme be made available to support the Foster Street Subway improvement scheme, and that it be included in the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 2.2.2.
- 3.1.3. Agrees that £25,000 be redirected from the Cycling Facilities allocation within the current year's Highways Capital Programme to the budget for Highways Facilities for Disabled People, as set out in paragraph 2.2.3.
- 3.1.4. Agrees that the estimated cost of £28,000 for new Landfill Gas monitoring boreholes be funded from the resources set aside within the Capital Programme for emerging priorities, as set out in paragraph 2.2.4.
- 3.1.5. Approves the project for essential electrical works at Halesowen Leisure Centre and its inclusion in the Capital Programme as set out in paragraph 2.2.5.
- 3.1.6. Approves the project for electrical works at Coseley Swimming Pool and its inclusion on the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 2.2.6.
- 3.1.7. Agrees that in respect of Brierley Hill Sustainable Access Network resources, "in principle" approval is given for BHRP to utilise up to £1m of the LTP funds as match funding for the Waterfront 2 project, as and when formal ministerial approval is received; and that any future requests to use the LTP funds as match funding for external bids be considered by the Executive on a project by project basis.
- 3.1.8. Approves the addition of £79,000 to the Street Lighting capital budget, as set out in paragraph 2.2.8.
- 3.1.9 Agrees that following consultation with the public and statutory bodies, a joint scheme be developed with Sandwell MBC to address the problem of congestion at Burnt Tree for submission in the 2005 West Midlands Local Transport Plan; that the Council, notwithstanding any maintenance agreements, enters into a further agreement with Sandwell MBC under section 8 of the Highways Act 1980 to facilitate the development of the scheme and to share the development costs; and that the Council protects any land potentially required for highway re-alignment from development, as set out in paragraph 2.2.9.
- 3.1.10 Approves the increase in the budget for the Transforming Your Space project by £65,000, as set out in paragraph 2.2.10.
- 3.1.11 Notes the further funding allocation for the capital project at Halesowen Magistrates Court, and agrees that the Capital Programme be amended accordingly, as set out in paragraph 2.3.1.

3.1.12 Approves the inclusion in the Capital Programme of the proposal for the Compulsory Purchase Order for land on the corner of Amblecote High Street and Vicarage Road, as set out in the report to the meeting of the Executive held on 27th October 2004 and referred to in paragraph 2.2.11 above.

3.1.13 Approves that, subject to Strategic Health Authority confirmation, the sum of £300,000 from the LDDF be used towards accommodation needs, that the Director of Law and Property be authorised to negotiate and agree any associated acquisition and that the expenditure be included in the Capital Programme, all as set out in the report to the meeting of the Executive held on 27th October 2004, and referred to in paragraph 2.4.1 above.

4.0 Finance

4.1 This report is financial in nature and information about the individual proposals is contained within the body of the report.

5.0 Law

5.1 The Council's budgeting process is governed by the Local Government Finance Acts 1988 and 1992, the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, and the Local Government Finance Act 2003.

6.0 Equal Opportunities

6.1 These proposals comply with the Council's policy on Equal Opportunities.

7.0 Recommendation

7.1. That the proposals set out in Section 3 be approved.

8.0 Background Documents

8.1 Various internal e-mails relating to individual schemes and proposals.
Relevant resource allocation notifications.

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LEADER OF THE COUNCIL