

Cabinet
Council

13 August 2013
10 September 2013

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member (Public Services) – Councillor Lancaster

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of City Services and Development

Ward(s) affected:

Henley and Wyken

Title: A4600 Congestion Relief Scheme

Is this a key decision?

Yes

The report seeks approval for spending in excess of £0.5m which affects the Henley and Wyken Wards of the City.

Executive Summary:

This report outlines proposals to deliver a comprehensive access improvement scheme which will reduce congestion, support new bus services and provide new facilities for pedestrians and cyclists on the A4600 and routes accessing the University Hospital in Walsgrave. The scheme will be funded by £3.92m of new government grant funding from the national 'Local Pinch Point Fund' and supported by £2m of funding from the hospital. This is a partnership scheme between Coventry City Council, University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire and the Department for Transport and would be complete by mid-2015, with work commencing in Autumn 2013.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to recommend that Council:

- (1) Approve the delivery of the A4600 Congestion Relief Scheme totalling £5.92m as outlined in the report.
- (2) Approve capital expenditure of £3.92m funded by external grant from the Department for Transport.
- (3) Delegate authority to sign legally binding funding agreements with the Department for Transport and University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire, including section 151 officer sign-off, by the Director of Finance and Legal Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member (Public Services) for the grant funding.

Council is recommended to:

- (1) Approve the delivery of the A4600 Congestion Relief Scheme totalling £5.92m as outlined in the report.
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List of Appendices included:

None

Background papers:

None

Other useful documents:

A4600 Congestion Relief Scheme application

http://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/download/2487/local_pinch_point_funding_bid_document

Local Transport Body 2015-2019 Priority Major Scheme submission

<http://democraticservices.coventry.gov.uk/documents/s10029/Local%20Transport%20Body%202015-2019%20Priority%20Major%20Scheme%20Submission.pdf>

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

Yes – 10th September 2013

Report title: A4600 Congestion Relief Scheme

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 The roads around the University Hospital Coventry & Warwickshire suffer serious congestion at peak times. As well as delays to all road users, this leads to missed appointments at the hospital and problems for people wanting to access the hospital. Bus service reliability is also seriously affected.
- 1.2 In January 2013 the Government announced an opportunity to apply for funding from a national Local Pinch Point Fund. Bids required a minimum of 30% local match funding. Consequently an opportunity was identified to work with the hospital to address congestion as action is required both within the hospital and on the surrounding road network. The bid comprised £2m of funding from the hospital for improvements to its internal road network, parking and bus interchange, and £3.92m for improvements to local roads funded by the grant from the Local Pinch Point Fund.
- 1.3 This report outlines the positive outcome of the funding bid which has secured new grant funding of £3.92m. This presents the City Council with the opportunity to address traffic congestion in the Walsgrave Area which is a major concern for both local residents, users of the hospital and commuters.
- 1.4 The bid has been undertaken and the project will be delivered in partnership with University Hospital. As well as enabling the creation of a total funding pot of £5.92m, the engagement process with the hospital enables both on-site and highway issues to be tackled in an integrated and planned way, thus providing the best possible outcome for the surrounding area, general users of the road network and visitors to the hospital.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 The hospital and Coventry City Council jointly appointed a consultant to develop the bid to ensure the works proposed for the hospital's internal roads complement the changes to the surrounding road network.
- 2.2 The overriding objective of the project is to reduce congestion, and this will improve:
 - the speed and reliability of journey times for local residents, hospital users and commuters using the A4600 and routes to the hospital site and avoid the need for an additional access off residential roads.
 - the reliability of bus services which will make public transport more attractive, and support the viability of new services.
 - road safety for vulnerable road users through the introduction of safe crossing points on busy roads (this includes linking into the route being built as part of Cycling Coventry)
 - reliability for blue light vehicles accessing the hospital
 - conditions for economic growth by improving access to major employment sites
 - access to the strategic road network including the M6 and M69.
- 2.3 The package of highway improvement schemes can be seen in Figure 1 – Scheme Locations, below.

2.4 These works can be summarised as:

Location	Measure
Brade Drive	Enlarged roundabout to reduce delays and improve safety (preferred option) or re-engineered signal junction (final scheme dependant on the outcome of land acquisition negotiations)
Woodway Lane	Widening of Woodway Lane approach to the junction to 2 lanes and an improved alignment and right-turn facilities from the A4600 into Woodway Lane.
Clifford Bridge Drive / Anstry Road Gyratory	Signalisation of the junction with the creation of additional lanes and pedestrian / cycle crossing facilities.
Clifford Bridge Drive / UHCW Access	Enlarged junction with bus & blue light vehicle access lane and increased right-turn lanes into hospital site.

2.5 The Council's new Shared Professional Services Contract will be used to procure the design team for these works. The design will be worked up in consultation with the local community and stakeholders.

2.6 The package of transport measures within the hospital site include:

- the decking of two car parks to increase car parking capacity
- improvements to the bus interchange to increase capacity
- changes to the on-site road layout and additional traffic management measures to improve traffic flows and to reduce queuing traffic.

2.7 The scheme will also support the Cycle Coventry and the Cycle Safety Fund, two other successful grant funded projects. These projects will be delivered in a fully coordinated way to maximise efficiency and minimise disruption during the construction phase. Additionally works to reopen the banned right turn at Norton Hill Drive will be delivered as part of this project.

2.8 The scheme will be delivered in close partnership with the University Hospital. The programme consists of two distinct elements, one to deliver works on the public highway and the other delivering works within the hospital site and it is imperative that both operate as a single integrated package. The success of the overall project will be heavily dependent upon both schemes being delivered as one will not operate effectively without the other.

2.9 Grant funding from the Pinch Point Fund will be received in accordance with the grant agreement and the profiled cash-flow. The City Council's net expenditure will not exceed £3.92m. However, in order to manage cash flow and coordinated scheme delivery a significant element of the grant received in 2013/14 will be transferred to the hospital. This money will be returned in 2014/15 which, in combination with the 2014/15 grant, will be used to deliver the bulk of the highways works.

Pinch Point Fund Cash-flow

2013/14	2014/15	Total
£1.456m	£2.464m	£3.92m

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1 Several stakeholders were involved during the development of the application and all were very supportive of the proposals. This included letters of support from the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce, Coventry University, The Federation of Small Businesses and Warwickshire County Council, Bob Ainsworth MP, Centro, National Express Coventry and Travel De Courcey.
- 3.2 The appropriate Cabinet Members were involved during the application process. Members will also be aware of the A4600 scheme which was reported to Cabinet in April 2013 as part of the Local Transport Body Major Scheme prioritisation process (See "other useful documents" above).
- 3.3 The detailed design process will include liaison with the local community, neighbourhood forums and other stakeholders. A structured information and awareness exercise will be undertaken in Autumn 2013.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 A framework for the delivery of the project is currently being developed, and subject to approval of this report, recruitment of a project manager and delivery team will commence immediately.
- 4.2 The construction phase will commence Autumn 2013 with works within the hospital site and at Norton Hill Drive. The programme will be completed by mid-2015 in accordance with the grant conditions.

5. Comments from Director of Finance and Legal Services

5.1 Financial implications

The full cost of the capital expenditure to be incurred by the City Council will be funded by external grant received from the Department of Transport (Local Pinch Point Fund) shown in paragraph 2.9. Capital expenditure will be incurred in the years 2013/14 – 2014/15. No additional City Council resources are required to deliver this scheme. In order to accord with the DfT's specified grant funding profile, cash-flow will be managed in partnership with the hospital. The details of this will be subject to a legally binding agreement which is to be agreed with the hospital. It is anticipated that a significant element of the grant for 2013/14 will be paid to the hospital on a temporary basis to cash-flow the delivery of on-site works. Any grant funding paid to the hospital in 2013/14 will be returned to the Council in full in 14/15 for use on the highways element of the programme.

5.2 Legal implications

The funding from the Department of Transport will be subject to grant conditions which the Council will be obliged to fulfil. The Council will also complete a legally binding agreement with University Hospital for their contribution in acceptance of supporting the grant conditions from the Department of Transport and to manage shared financial risks. The contract will be let in accordance with the Council's Rules for Contracts and comply with the Public Contracts Regulations 2006.

6. Other implications

- 6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?**

Transport plays a huge part in supporting the economy and peoples everyday lives. The impact of congestion on local businesses, the environment and on people's health and wellbeing is well documented. The delivery of this Programme of Highway Schemes will have a significant positive impact on many of the City Councils core aims.

The scheme will:

- reduce congestion thereby supporting the needs of local businesses and workers and consequently the local economy
- create safe crossing points for pedestrians making the environment safer, more attractive and more enjoyable, particularly for young and vulnerable people
- support the reliability, viability and range of bus services available in the Walsgrave Area which will help people who rely on public transport
- support improved access and linkages between local communities and major employment sites and the hospital
- have a positive impact on the local environment in terms of air quality and climate change. Further details can be seen in paragraph 6.5 below.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

A costed Programme was developed during the application process and thus neither cost reductions, nor cost overruns are expected. Legal agreements will be put in place between the University Hospital and the City Council in order to manage the financial implications of risk sharing. A high level assessment of project risks has been carried out and it is considered that these can be managed with the scope of the project. A Project Manager will be recruited to lead delivery and will be responsible for managing risk.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

None

6.4 Equalities / EIA

No equality impact assessment has been carried out as the recommendations do not constitute a change in policy or service.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

The delivery of the A4600 Congestion Reduction Scheme will help reduce carbon emissions to address climate change, and improve air quality. This will be achieved through the introduction of the proposed junction enhancements which will smooth traffic flows, reduce congestion and make sustainable forms of transport such as walking cycling and public transport more attractive to users.

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

The scheme will have a very positive impact on the operation and efficiency of the University Hospital, local businesses and public transport operators by reducing congestion on the A46000 and around the hospital entrance.

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