

Council – 13th March 2018
Agenda Item 9
Recommendation from Cabinet
6th March 2018

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 6 March 2018

Present:

Members: Councillor G Duggins (Chair)
Councillor F Abbott
Councillor K Caan
Councillor J Innes
Councillor A Khan
Councillor K Maton
Councillor J Mutton
Councillor J O'Boyle
Councillor E Ruane

Deputy Cabinet Members Present: Councillor P Akhtar
Councillor R Ali
Councillor B Kaur
Councillor C Thomas

Non-Voting Opposition Members: Councillor J Lepoidevin (Substitute for Councillor A Andrews)
Councillor G Ridley

Other Members Present: Councillor R Brown
Councillor J Clifford
Councillor G Crookes
Councillor M Mutton
Councillor G Williams

Employees (by Directorate):

Chief Executive M Reeves (Chief Executive)

People P. Barnett, D Ashmore

Place M Yardley (Deputy Chief Executive (Place), M Burn, N Clews, G Griffiths, B Hastie, C Knight, K Mawby, J Newman, M Salmon, A Walster, A Williams

Apologies: Councillor A Andrews
Councillor L Bigham
Councillor McNicholas

RECOMMENDATIONS

141. **Connecting Coventry - Strategic Transport Investment Programme Update**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) that would also be considered by Council at its meeting on 13th March 2018, that provided an update on how the Coventry's Strategic Transport Investment Strategy 'Connecting Coventry' had progressed over the last 14 months, and sought further approvals to take forward to delivery.

Coventry's Strategic Transport Investment Strategy 'Connecting Coventry' aimed to maximise the economic potential of the City through investment in transport infrastructure to support growth and jobs. The Strategy was approved by Council in January 2017 (their minute 100/16 referred). It set out an ambitious £620m Programme over the next ten years to improve the resilience of the road network, ensuring connectivity to HS2 and job opportunities around the new station, expansion of railway capacity and linking key development and employment sites.

This report provides an update on how the Strategy had progressed over the last 14 months, and sought further approvals to take forward to delivery.

The Strategy supported the transport infrastructure and development plans for the wider region, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report. Coventry's Programme was summarised in Appendix 2 to the report, which outlined four key programmes:

- Coventry South – major highway and rail proposals to facilitate growth, especially around Jaguar Land Rover and the University of Warwick and to provide connectivity to HS2 and UK Central;
- City Centre First – a major increase in capacity at Coventry Railway Station, highway improvements around the railway station to facilitate not only growth at the railway station but also unlock the western extent of the Friargate development; and City Centre infrastructure improvements;
- Coventry North – road capacity improvements to the North West of the City and on the A444 and M6 junction 3;
- Very Light Rail – investment in the research and development of Very Light Rail and subsequent implementation.

Investment was sought from a number of sources to fund the Strategic Transport Investment Programme. One of the main sources was through West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Devolution Deal. Coventry's allocation was £284m (including £37m from the HS2 connectivity package), funding from which must be secured through a bidding process via WMCA's assurance framework. Other key funding sources include Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) Local Growth Deal, Department for Transport (DfT), Highways England (HE), developer contributions and prudential borrowing. Excellent progress was being made, with the total funding secured now at £141m and further business cases were awaiting approval or were soon to be submitted.

The award of City of Culture 2021 status to Coventry offered a fantastic opportunity to boost growth for the City and wider sub-region. Having the transport infrastructure in place was critical to facilitate and maximise the benefits of City of

Culture. This had prompted a review of the Programme and it was recommended that the Station Masterplan and City Centre infrastructure improvements were brought forward to be delivered by the end of 2020.

It was important that City Centre infrastructure improvements required to support City of Culture were delivered in time for 2021 and left a legacy for Coventry. The Schemes previously submitted in Spring 2017 to WMCA via a Strategic Outline Business Case for the City Centre included improvements to strategic Ring Road Junctions, to help unlock development land and improve access to cultural destinations. Following the City of Culture award, the City Centre infrastructure and Public Realm Programme was under review to ensure that priority Schemes were delivered in time for 2021. It was imperative all works were completed ahead of the City of Culture to maximise visitor experience.

To showcase the City's position as a world class centre for innovation, it was proposed to bring forward delivery of a section of the first proposed Very Light Rail route in time for the City of Culture in 2021. The feasibility of this was currently being investigated, and a further report would be brought to Council later in the spring 2018 if it was considered both deliverable and financially viable to bring forward.

In order to deliver the Very Light Rail project in time for City of Culture, approval was sought to enter into a Contract for Services with Warwick Manufacturing Group (WMG) develop and deliver a safety certified prototype vehicle and track system. The City Council was also collaborating with Dudley Council and WMG on the creation of the Very Light Rail Innovation Centre in Dudley which would create a facility for testing vehicles and track.

It should be noted that there was a robust governance structure in place for the Programme that captured risk management for each of the projects within the overarching Programme. The budget for each project included contingency to allow for any cost increases and there was some flexibility to manage funding across the Programme, subject to approvals for any variations from funding bodies.

Further to the above, it was imperative that coordination of activities across the road and rail network were managed strategically, given the significant works that were about to commence in the region which would impact on those travelling to Coventry, including HS2, Highways England Smart Motorways Schemes at M6 J2-4, M42 J6 and M40/M42 interchange. Coventry City Council would be required to work closely with Transport for West Midlands and neighbouring authorities in order to co-ordinate activities to support network resilience. Coventry City Council would also be required to work closely with the City of Culture Trust regarding events planning, to ensure that events were co-ordinated around major planned works. The volume of works taking place would influence the ability of the Council to deliver some of the proposed Schemes ahead of 2021, therefore flexibility would be required regarding the timing and approach to delivery.

In order to deliver an accelerated Programme for City of Culture, considerable additional resources would be required, which included project management, financial, legal and procurement support. It was proposed any additional posts were to be funded out of the capital grant secured for the projects.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet recommend that Council:

- 1) Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), following consultation with the Leader, Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration and the Director of Finance and Corporate Services, and in the case of City Centre Public Realm and infrastructure improvements, also the Cabinet Member for City Services to:
 - **Determines the final content of the relevant Outline and Full Business Cases and submits funding bids to the West Midlands Combined Authority in relation to the work packages within the Connecting Coventry Programme.**
 - **Determines the Programme for City Centre infrastructure and Public Realm improvements to be delivered ahead of 2021.**
 - **Determines the final content of the full Business Case to the Department for Transport for the A46/Stoneleigh Junction Improvement scheme.**
 - **Determines resource requirements for delivery of the Programme and supports recruitment of additional posts which are to be capital funded.****

- 2) Notes the addition to the Council's 5 Year Capital Programme, as approved by Council on 20th February 2018, WMCA grant awarded for £12.2m for the Very Light Rail project, including a £4.3m contribution for Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council's Very Light Rail Innovation Centre, which will deliver a facility that the Coventry Very Light Rail system can be tested.**

- 3) Notes the addition of the Housing Infrastructure Fund grant awarded for the A45/Eastern Green (£12.7m) and approves addition of the successful A45/Eastern Green project to the Council's 5 year Capital Programme as approved by Council on 20th February, 2018 and delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), following consultation with the Director of Finance and Corporate Services, to enter into funding agreements as appropriate.**

- 4) Notes the addition of £4m Growth Deal funding for Coventry Station Masterplan highway improvements and £0.95m for improvements to the A45 corridor to the Council's 5 Year Capital Programme as approved by Council on 20th February 2018 and become the accountable body for grant funding, entering into the necessary legal documentations with Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership.**

- 5) Authorises procurement of the necessary resources from grant funding sources as set out section 5 of the report to assist with submission of the bids and the delivery of the Connecting Coventry Programme through the Shared Professional Services Contract or another compliant public sector framework which are to be funded from this programme.**

- 6) Authorises that Coventry City Council enter into a Services Agreement with Warwick Manufacturing Group for up to £10m for research and development up to a vehicle prototype and track solution for the Coventry Very Light Rail project (see note above).**
- 7) Should the bids referred to in this report be successful, authorises officers to enter into the necessary legal documentations to secure the funding required to deliver the Connecting Coventry Programme;**
- 8) Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) and the Director of Finance and Corporate Services (following consultation with the Leader, the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration and the Monitoring Officer), to enter into necessary legal agreements in order to deliver the Connecting Coventry programme, including property, legal, commercial and collaboration agreements with partners and contractors.**
- 9) Approves that the Council acts as the accountable body, and delegates authority to the Section 151 Officer to enter into the appropriate funding agreements with the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership, West Midlands Combined Authority and Department for Transport and partners who will be recipients of grant funding, including Warwickshire County Council, Transport for West Midlands and Warwick Manufacturing Group.**