

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE		
DATE:	23 NOVEMBER 2016	AGENDA ITEM:	12
TITLE:	SOUTH READING MRT PHASE 1B & 2 - DELEGATED AUTHORITY FOR CONTRACT AWARD		
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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform Councillors of the ongoing procurement process for the implementation of Phases 1B & 2 of the South Reading Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) scheme and to seek delegated authority to enter into contract with the most economically advantageous tenderer in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

1.2 Appendix A - Plans of proposals

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 That the Committee gives scheme and spend approval for Phases 1B & 2 of the South Reading MRT scheme, as set out in

2.2 That delegated authority is given to the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport, the Head of Legal & Democratic Services and the Head of Finance to enter into contract for the implementation of South Reading MRT Phases 1B & 2.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 To secure the most effective use of resources in the delivery of high quality, best value public service.
- 3.2 The scheme is included within the Council's Corporate Plan 2016-19 and Local Transport Plan 2011 - 2026, and Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan 2015/16 - 2020/21.

4. THE PROPOSAL

Scheme Overview

- 4.1 South Reading MRT is a series of bus priority measures on the A33 corridor between Mere oak Park & Ride and Reading town centre. The scheme will reduce congestion and journey times, improve the attractiveness of public transport services through enhanced frequency and reliability, and enable sustainable economic and housing development on the main growth corridor into Reading.
- 4.2 Phases 1 and 2 of the scheme, from M4 Junction 11 to Island Road, were granted funding approval from the Berkshire Local Transport Body in November 2015 following completion of the full business case which confirmed that the scheme represents 'very good' value for money in accordance with Department for Transport guidance.
- 4.3 The latest designs for Phases 1B & 2 of the scheme are shown at Appendix A. These phases of work involve the construction of a series of outbound bus lanes between the A33 junction with Lindisfarne Way (Kennet Island) and Imperial Way, where the scheme links with bus lanes currently being constructed as part of the phase 1A works. The scheme will not reduce existing highway capacity along the A33 as additional lanes are being implemented for public transport usage and all existing lanes for general traffic will be retained.
- 4.4 The programme for delivery includes construction of Phases 1B & 2 from February to November 2017. Measures will be taken to reduce disruption to the flow of traffic while the construction works take place, including limiting any necessary lane closures to off peak hours only.
- 4.5 It should be noted that implementation of Phase 1b requires a significant amount of tree clearance on the east side of the A33, between the junctions with Bennet Road and Imperial Way, to create sufficient space to implement the new bus lane. There are no Tree Preservation Orders affected and a landscaping mitigation plan for the A33 corridor is currently being developed. Implementation of the scheme is subject to sign-off of the mitigation plan by the Project Board which is chaired by the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services.

- 4.6 Future phases of the South MRT scheme (Phases 3 & 4) have been included in the LEP's bid to Government for Growth Deal 3, with an announcement on funding anticipated in November. These phases include provision of an inbound bus lane between the A33 junctions with Longwater Avenue and Island Road, and further outbound bus lanes between the A33 junctions with Rose Kiln Lane and Lindisfarne Way (Kennet Island).

Procurement

- 4.7 The total estimated value of the contract for Phases 1B & 2 is £5m.
- 4.8 It is proposed that a single stage open procurement process is undertaken to appoint a contractor to deliver Phase 1B (Southbound) & Phase 2 of the scheme.
- 4.9 In relation to Phase 1B, an additional optional works package has been included in the tender to deliver works to the northbound lane, subject to funding. This work will be competitively priced as part of this procurement exercise and a decision on the award of these additional works may be made prior to the award of contract, or by way of variation during the construction period.
- 4.10 As the estimated scheme costs exceed the "Works Threshold", this procurement exercise is subject to the Public Contract Regulations 2015, and as such the principles of non-discrimination, equal treatment, transparency, mutual recognition and proportionality will be applied.
- 4.11 In accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Council Contract Procedure Rules, the opportunity will be advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) as well as on the Councils electronic tendering portal as well as via 'Contracts Finder'.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 The delivery of this programme will help to deliver the following Corporate Plan Service Priorities:
- Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active.
 - Providing infrastructure to support the economy.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 Informal consultation on the scheme was undertaken as part of the public consultation for the Local Transport Plan 2011 - 2026.
- 6.2 Statutory consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2 The Council has reviewed the scope of the scheme as outlined within this report and considers that the proposals have no direct impact on any groups with protected characteristics.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 As the estimated scheme costs exceed the “Works Threshold”, this procurement exercise is subject to the Public Contract Regulations 2015, and as such the principles of non-discrimination, equal treatment, transparency, mutual recognition and proportionality will be applied.
- 8.2 In accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Council Contract Procedure Rules, the opportunity will be advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) as well as on the Councils electronic tendering portal and via ‘Contracts Finder’.
- 8.3 It is intended to enter into a contract based upon the most economically advantageous tender in accordance with the criteria stated in the specification.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The funding package for the scheme comprises of £4.5m from the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Growth Deal and £1.12 local contribution from the existing Integrated Transport Block and appropriate S106 developer contributions. At this stage, at least £0.57m of S106 receipts from nearby commercial development has been provisionally earmarked for this major investment. The total cost amounts include consultants’ fees associated with design, project management and site supervision.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Major Transport & Highway Projects Update Report, Strategic Environment, Planning & Transport Committee, 13th July 2016.
- 10.2 South Reading MRT Phase 1A, Policy Committee 11th April 2016.
- 10.3 South Reading MRT Scheme Progress Reports, Berkshire Local Transport Body, from March 2013 onwards.

APPENDIX A - SOUTH READING MRT PHASES 1B & 2

[PLANS TO FOLLOW]