

## Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING:	<b>Cabinet</b>	
MEETING DATE:	<b>13<sup>th</sup> June 2012</b>	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		<b>E 2426</b>
TITLE:	<b>Saltford Station Business Case</b>	
WARD:	Saltford	
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>		
<b>List of attachments to this report: None</b>		

### **1 THE ISSUE**

1.1 The potential for reopening Saltford Station has been highlighted recently by a local campaign and the response to the GWR franchise from the West of England. In order to develop the business case for this project funds are required in the order of £250,000 over the next three years. This report seeks funding for an initial £100,000 to take the initial phase of this work forward.

### **2 RECOMMENDATION**

The Cabinet agrees that:

2.1 To agree a budget of £100,000 to undertake a High Level Option Assessment as set out in the report, to be funded from the Council's Revenue Budget Contingency. Any further requests for funding will be considered following completion and consideration of this Assessment.

### **3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The early estimated costs for the initial phase of this project is £100,000 (revenue) to undertake a 'High Level Option Assessment' of a re-opened Station at Saltford.
- 3.2 Once the High Level Option Assessment has been completed further approvals will be sought. These approvals will include estimates of cost of design, capital costs of the station and annual revenue costs associated with supporting train services using the station. A report to Cabinet will be prepared once the initial work has been completed.
- 3.3 For further stages of development of the project, funding will need to be identified as part of the medium term service and resources planning in 2013/14 - 2015/16. At this point the project would then be required to pass through the Council's capital approval process, starting with a Project Initiations Document, which is part of the Council's internal project management arrangements.

### **4 CORPORATE OBJECTIVES**

- *Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone*
- *Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live*

### **5 THE REPORT**

- 5.1 Saltford Station was closed in 1970 at which time the platforms and station buildings were removed. The site of the station has not been redeveloped since and has been used for a variety of building and storage purposes. A campaign to reopen the station was started by local residents last year and has been pressing for this project in the local media and with well supported petitions.
- 5.2 The site of the station is located 8km west of Bath Spa Station on the line towards Bristol Temple Meads some 11km further. Trains stopping at a new Saltford Station would have to fit into with those services which stop at Keynsham and/or Oldfield Park Station. These two stations currently enjoy an hourly service. It is unlikely that the rail industry would wish to or could afford to stop other regional services at a Saltford Station. The new 15 year franchise for Great Western Service represents an opportunity to press for the re-opening of the station.
- 5.3 The West of England, as part of its representations to the Department of Transport on the replacement Great Western Franchise Consultation, has shown that one additional station could be provided between Bristol and Bath within the service pattern provided as part of the 'Greater Bristol Metro' project which aims to provide ½ hourly clock face service across the conurbation. This increase in local services could provide a service to stop at a new Saltford Station. We are awaiting the publication of the Invitation to Tender for the Great Western Franchise on which 4 train operators will bid. Saltford Station could be included in this franchise as a priced option i.e. a budget would be required to provide the facility and fund the train services using it. There has been ambiguous advice from the rail industry on the prospects of Saltford Station being re-opened in the next few years.
- 5.4 The Council has recently commissioned Halcrow to undertake a study into the feasibility of re-opening Saltford Station. This report suggests that the station

might attract some 200 new passengers to rail services (400 trips/day). However they highlight that the size of the car park available to these users might be a critical constraint on station usage.

- 5.5 In order to develop the business case for the new station the Council would need to engage experts to work with Network Rail and the new operator for Great Western Franchise. An initial £100,000 is required to develop the business case to the next stage, 'High Level Option Assessment' (GRIP - Governance for Rail Investment Projects stage 2) with a further £150,000 to £200,000 (for which approval will be required) to take the project to Detailed Design (GRIP 4). This latter work will be dependent upon the support and engagement of Network Rail. The initial requirement is therefore to identify funding for the GRIP 2 work.
- 5.6 In the event of the GRIP 2 work being successful a further report to Cabinet and approval will be needed to identify the emerging cost of the further GRIP work and the capital cost of the station and any on-going revenue support that might be identified.
- 5.7 The Halcrow report estimates that an indicative capital cost of building the station might be £5.5m, with a running cost of between £35k to £140k per annum. No specific work has been undertaken by Halcrow at Saltford to verify this estimate which is based on their industry experience. Some funding for the capital cost might be available from Major transport Scheme funding soon to be devolved to the LEP who would have to prioritise funds for this project. The report estimates that the revenue generated by the patronage illustrated above might be between £100k to £250k.

## **6 RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 6.1 The report author and Lead Cabinet member have fully reviewed the risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

## **7 EQUALITIES**

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has not been completed at the present time. An assessment will be undertaken as part of the development of the Business Case for the re-opening of the station and will be more informed at that time.

## **8 RATIONALE**

- 8.1 There is wide spread support for the re-opening of Saltford Station which would provide a quick means of traveling into both Bristol and Bath allowing interchange to longer distance services. Transfer of car users to train use would reduce pressures on existing road and reduce congestion.

## **9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 9.1 None.

## **10 CONSULTATION**

- 10.1 Cabinet members; Section 151 Finance Officer; Chief Executive; Monitoring Officer

10.2 Officers have commented and agreed the report.

## **11 ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION**

11.1 Social Inclusion; Customer Focus; Sustainability;

## **12 ADVICE SOUGHT**

12.1 The Council's Monitoring Officer (Divisional Director – Legal and Democratic Services) and Section 151 Officer (Divisional Director - Finance) have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

<b>Contact person</b>	Peter Dawson 01225 395181
<b>Sponsoring Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Roger Symonds
<b>Background papers</b>	<b>Salford Railway Station Feasibility Investigation – Halcrow</b> <b>Technical note – Salford Station GRIP Advice - Halcrow</b>
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	