

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Cabinet	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	6 <sup>th</sup> December 2017 Cabinet Meeting	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E3017
TITLE:	Approval to accept WECA Funded Schemes into the Councils Programme	
WARD:	Keynsham North, Cllr Gerrish and Cllr Simmons  Bathavon North, Cllr Miller, Cllr Veal and Cllr Ward  High Littleton, Cllr Kew  Paulton Cllr Bull, and Cllr Hardman  Midsomer Norton North, Cllr Evans and Cllr Macrae  Midsomer Norton Redfield, Cllr Myers and Cllr Watt	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
None		

## **1 THE ISSUE**

- 1.1 The Council's Transport Strategies for Bath, Keynsham and Somer Valley have identified the transport improvements required. The Council have successfully bid to The West of England Combined Authority (WECA) for funds to develop four key transport schemes and approval is requested to include the schemes in the Councils programme from 2017/18 to 2019/20.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 The Cabinet is asked to approve:

- (1) the inclusion of the two new schemes listed below into the Capital Programme:
  - a) A37 to A362 Improvements to access Somer Valley Enterprise Zone, Business Case Development, £280k

- b) Hicks Gate Roundabout Improvement, Business Case Development, £460k
- (2) the inclusion into the Revenue Budget of the two studies listed below:
  - a) East of Bath Link, Development Support, £250k
  - b) Freezing Hill Lane Junction Improvement, Feasibility and Business Case Development, £100k

### **3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

- 3.1 The total funding for the development of the schemes is £1090k over a 3 year programme period. The funding will be a combination of capital and revenue grants. The highway schemes will be developed using a combination of internal and external resource.
- 3.2 The Capital Programme will need adjusting by £740k in line with the forecast spend set out in the report.
- 3.3 The Revenue Budget will incorporate the £350k in line with the forecast spend set out in the report.
- 3.4 The schemes are wholly grant funded from WECA.
- 3.5 The Somer Valley and Hicks Gates works will improve existing assets. Whilst the final layout is likely to result in an overall asset increase, this will be offset by improving the existing facilities and it is considered that the increased asset can be accommodated within the existing revenue budget. Any works undertaken as part of the East of Bath Link will be a Highways England asset and Freezing Hill Lane will be within South Gloucestershire Council.
- 3.6 On completion of the business case funding bids will be made to WECA to fund the schemes with the exception of the East of Bath Link which will be funded by Highways England.
- 3.7 If the capital schemes are not delivered, there is a revenue reversion risk.

### **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 The schemes supports the Council's duty under the Traffic Management Act 2004 to keep traffic flowing.
- 4.2 The schemes are supported by the West of England Joint Transport Study and the Transport Strategies for Bath, Keynsham and emerging strategy for Somer Valley.

### **5 THE REPORT**

- 5.1 The Council has successfully bid to The West of England Combined Authority (WECA) for funds to develop key highway projects. On 30<sup>th</sup> October 2017 WECA approved funding to develop schemes for:
  - (1) East of Bath Link, £250k

- (2) A37 to A362 Improvements to access Somer Valley Enterprise Zone, £280k
- (3) Hicks Gate Roundabout Improvement, £460k
- (4) Freezing Hill Lane Junction Improvement, £100k

## **5.2 East of Bath Link**

- (1) Dorset, Wiltshire, and Bath and North East Somerset councils are working together to study the current transport connections between the M4 and the south coast and their impact on our economy.
- (2) Evidence has been gathered to support a case to improve north-south transport connections in the south west, which could help grow the economy, support local businesses and improve people's quality of life.
- (3) The £250k is revenue and will fund the development and promotion of the prospectus for North South Connectivity. This will form part of the a compelling case to encourage the Secretary of State for Transport to mandate Highways England to carry out a Strategic Study, for eventual inclusion of the East of Bath link in the second Road Investment Strategy beyond 2020. If Highways England undertakes the study, the funding will be available to undertake additional supporting works.
- (4) The spend forecast is £50k, 17/18 and £100k, 18/19 and £100k, 19/20.

## **5.3 A37 to A362 Improvements to access Somer Valley Enterprise Zone**

- (1) Bath and North East Somerset Council is supporting the development of the Bath & Somer Valley Enterprise Zone which includes the 13.5ha allocated employment site at Old Mills located on the A362. B&NES see this as a key employment site for the Somer Valley and would want to progress this as a priority due to the potential to create 1,700 to 2,000 new jobs.
- (2) The upgrading of the route will ensure good connectivity to the A37 and surrounding areas and will enable the Zone to be delivered without further offsite improvements. This will remove a major hurdle to the delivery of the Old Mills site, is a pre-requisite for a successful Enterprise Zone and will allow its development to be accelerated.
- (3) The scheme will include:
  - a) Improvement to the existing A37/ A362 signalised junction to create additional capacity.
  - b) Localised road widening to remove pinch points which create delays and queues.
  - c) Pedestrian and cycling improvements to provide the sustainable routes to the communities to the east and west along the A362
- (4) The £280k is capital and will fund both an outline business case and full business case following any statutory approvals.
- (5) The spend forecast is £160k, 17/18 and £120k, 18/19.

## **5.4 Hicks Gate Roundabout Improvement**

- (1) The Keynsham Transport Strategy identified that improvements are required at Hicks Gate. The A4 / A4174 Hicks Gate Roundabout is a key junction on the A4 between Bristol and Bath and is located at the western end of the Keynsham Bypass. This is also the terminal junction at the southern end of the A4174 Ring Road route through East Bristol and the North Fringe.
- (2) In the peak time period 'exit blocking' results in delay to all arms. Improvements to the roundabout would involve the provision of a link from the A4174 to the A4 removing traffic from the roundabout. Any scheme would take account and accommodate the proposed Joint Transport Study major schemes.
- (3) Initially an outline business case will be developed that will include an updated preliminary design, environmental assessments, economic benefits including GVA, and traffic modelling / forecasts. Following statutory approvals a full business case will be submitted
- (4) The £460k is capital and will fund both an outline business case and full business case following any statutory approvals.
- (5) The spend forecast is £10k, 17/18 and £220k, 18/19 and £230k 19/20.

## **5.5 Freezing Hill Lane Junction Improvement**

- (1) The Freezing Hill Lane / A420 junction is located on the boundary of Bath & North East Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council. The junction forms the core access to the Lansdown Park & Ride site serving Bath city centre from the A46 corridor linking to J18 of the M4.
- (2) Vehicles travelling from the P&R give way to traffic on the A420 which is a T junction. This can cause long delays for vehicles exiting the Freezing Hill Lane junction.
- (3) The Council acting as lead Authority will work in partnership with South Gloucestershire Council will undertake a feasibility study to assess options for access improvements from the A420 to Lansdown Park and Ride. Once a preferred option is agreed a business case will be submitted to WECA.
- (4) The £100k is revenue and will fund the feasibility study and business case.
- (5) The spend forecast is £75k, 17/18 and £25k 18/19.

## **6 RATIONALE**

- 6.1 The four schemes are linked to the strategic improvements identified in the West of England Joint Transport Study and The Council Transport Strategies for Bath, Keynsham and Somer Valley. The schemes will provide significant benefits in reducing delays to vehicles using the Highway Network.

## **7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

7.1 The schemes were identified through the Council Transport Strategies and JTS, as the schemes are developed the options will be reviewed.

## **8 CONSULTATION**

8.1 Ward Members will be involved and given opportunities to comment during scheme development. The Cabinet member is supportive of the proposals.

8.2 Council teams, including legal (Monitoring Officer), highways, & finance (s151 Officer) have had opportunity to review and input into this report.

## **9 RISK MANAGEMENT**

A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

<b>Contact person</b>	Gary Peacock 01225 395307
<b>Background papers</b>	None
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	