

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	15 JANUARY 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	7
TITLE:	SOUTH READING MRT PHASE 3 & 4 - SCHEME & SPEND APPROVAL		
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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the ongoing procurement process for the implementation of Phases 3 & 4 of the South Reading Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) scheme; and to seek scheme and spend approval, and 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 the proposals.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 That the Committee gives scheme and spend approval for Phases 3 & 4 of the South Reading MRT scheme.

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 Phase 3 of the scheme and a separate contract for Phase 4.

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 MereOak 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 3 & 4 of the scheme were granted funding approval from the Berkshire Local Transport Body in November 2017 following completion of the full business case, which confirmed that the scheme represents 'high value for money' in accordance with Department for Transport guidance.
- 4.3 The latest designs for Phases 3 & 4 of the scheme are set out below and shown at Appendix A.

Phase 3 includes construction of the following elements:

- Outbound bus lane on London Street;
- Extension of the inbound bus lane on Bridge Street;
- Upgrade of the traffic signals on the Oracle roundabout to a MOVA method of control.

Phase 4 includes construction of the following elements:

- Outbound bus lane on the A33 approach to Rose Kiln Lane;
- Outbound bus lane on the A33 between Rose Kiln Lane and Lindisfarne Way (Kennet Island);
- Inbound bus lane on the A33 between Longwater Avenue and Island Road; and
- Upgrade of the traffic signals on the Bennet Road gyratory to a MOVA method of control.

- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 It is anticipated the town centre elements of Phase 3 (London Street and Bridge Street) will be delivered by the Council's Highway department, and the elements on the A33 will be tendered for an external contractor.

- 4.6 The programme for delivery of the scheme is for construction of Phase 3 between June and November 2018, and Phase 4 from February to November 2019. 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.
- 4.7 A landscaping mitigation plan for the A33 corridor for the full South MRT scheme has been agreed, with elements delivered as part of the Phases 1 & 2 works and further mitigation to be provided alongside Phases 3 & 4 of the scheme.
- 4.8 Funding for future phases of the South MRT scheme will be sought when suitable opportunities arise in the future.

Procurement

- 4.10 In order to achieve the programme deadlines, it is proposed to run a separate procurement exercise for Phase 3 and Phase 4. In both cases a single stage open procurement will be conducted in accordance with the Public Contract regulations (2015), and published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU).
- 4.11 It is intended to enter into a separate contract for each Phase based upon the most economically advantageous tender in accordance with the criteria stated in the specification.

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 for each phase exceeds the “Works Threshold”, the 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.

8.4 Implementation of the inbound bus lane on the A33 between Longwater Avenue and Island Road is subject to agreement with the Option holder for the land.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The funding package for the scheme comprises of £10.15m from the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Growth Deal and £2.45 local contribution as set out in the Council’s Capital Programme. The local contributions comprise of existing Section 106 receipts which to date amount to £380k, £450k from the Councils Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Block funding and £1.62m borrowing. There is the potential for further S106 contributions to be allocated to the scheme which would reduce the amount of borrowing required. The total cost of the scheme includes consultants’ fees associated with design, project management and site supervision.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Major Transport & Highway Projects Update Reports, Strategic Environment, Planning & Transport Committee from July 2016 onwards.

10.2 South Reading MRT Scheme Progress Reports, Berkshire Local Transport Body, from March 2017 onwards.

APPENDIX A - SOUTH READING MRT PHASES 3 & 4

