

4 May 2022

Agenda Item:6

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, PLACE**TRANSFORMING CITIES FUND TRANCHE 2 – PUBLIC TRANSPORT
IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAMME UPDATE****Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide an update on progress with the public transport improvement schemes being funded by the Transforming Cities Fund and seek approval to make the necessary Traffic Regulation Orders, commence highway works, and install bus lane enforcement cameras subject to the necessary consultation processes.

Information

2. In March 2020, the Government announced that Nottingham and Derby had been successful in securing £161 million of grant funding from Tranche 2 of the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF). The TCF vision is to support sustainable growth, reduce carbon and improve air quality by improving access to jobs, reducing congestion, and improving public transport and other forms of sustainable transport such as cycling and walking.
3. Nottingham City Council led and developed the bid and is designated as the accountable body and lead contact with the Department for Transport (DfT). Nottinghamshire County Council was not eligible to bid into this funding stream, but a number of the proposed public transport improvement schemes are either within, or impact upon, areas of the County Council network. It was agreed that the County Council will lead the delivery of these schemes under Work Package 7 which had a total allocation of £7.91 million (amount allocated by Nottingham City Council).
4. Nottingham City Council established a Board to manage the overall TCF programme, including making any changes to the scope of individual programme elements or moving funds between existing approved budgets. Nottinghamshire County Council is represented upon this Board and provides monthly monitoring reports on individual scheme progress.
5. In March 2022, the TCF Board approved a revised project programme from the County Council which reflects the outcome of further feasibility work and updated cost estimates since the original bid submission. This revised programme removes elements which are no longer considered affordable within the approved budget, or which would have an unacceptable environmental impact, and reallocates funding to the remaining schemes in the project programme. The revised project programme was endorsed by Economic Development and Asset Management Committee on 19 April 2022. This revised programme provides a robust contingency fund and will enable the project programme to keep within the allotted funding amount whilst still delivering significant public transport improvements and benefits to all road users.

6. The A60 corridor (inbound) is a heavily congested route and journey times have steadily increased between 2010 and 2018. The section between the A614 Leapool island and Woodthorpe Drive is monitored annually and average journey times for motorists have increased by three minutes. The average journey time on this section of the A60 took 10 minutes in 2010/11 but this has now increased to 13 minutes in 2019 (pre-Covid). The A60 corridor commencing just north of the A60/Cross Street/Oxclose Lane junction has also been declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) by Gedling Borough Council (Gedling No.2). AQMAs are declared when there is an exceedance or likely exceedance of an air quality objective, and whilst this location has historically exceeded NOx objectives it has not actually exceeded air quality objectives since 2017. The package of measures outlined below aim to ease congestion and improve air quality by removing bus pinch points along key corridors travelling into Nottingham. Improved journey times and reduced congestion will benefit all road users and should encourage a longer-term shift towards more sustainable modes of travel.

Table 1: Revised project programme

	Proposed cost estimate /£m
Spend to date – fees and direct costs including surveys	0.324
A60 Corridor	4.842
Traffic Light Priority	0.359
Further investigation and possible delivery subject to further approvals	1.085
Contingency/Risk fund	1.3
Total	7.91

Schemes Requiring Approval

A60 Corridor bus priority improvements

7. It is proposed to create new sections of inbound bus lane towards Nottingham along the A60 corridor at the following locations (as shown on Plans 1-4 in Appendix A):
- A60 Esso Petrol Station to Arch Hill (north end)
 - Appledorne Way to Cross Street
 - Oxclose Lane, on the approach to Edwards Lane junction
8. It is proposed that the bus lanes will be operational 24/7 and bus lane enforcement cameras are proposed to ensure compliance. The proposed works will include widening of the existing carriageway and footway by reducing the width of the existing verge. This will require the removal of three mature trees along the route which will be replaced at a ratio of at least two trees planted for each tree removed. None of the trees affected are subject to a Tree Preservation Order. The Council is in ongoing discussions with Gedling Borough Council about the possibility of acquiring two small parcels of land totalling 52sqm as part of this scheme to accommodate carriageway and footway widening. If this is not possible the works could still be carried out within the existing highway boundary with a minor revision to the design of this section.
9. Design work carried out since the original bid has confirmed that the introduction of the new sections of bus lane will be capacity neutral and will not be detrimental to journey

times for car users. There are also anticipated to be long-term benefits as a result of drivers opting to switch to public transport due to the improved bus journey times which should further help to reduce congestion along this corridor.

10. Further sections of inbound bus lane are also under consideration at the A60 Mansfield Road/Thackeray's Lane junction in Arnold. EDAM Committee has approved further feasibility work to be carried out to understand the impacts of the proposed junction layout on road users and to investigate alternative options to minimise impacts on junction capacity and allow an informed decision to be made. Approval for this project to commence would need to be sought subsequently.

Switch on traffic light priority at 64 existing SCOOT/MOVA junctions

11. It is proposed to install or activate traffic light priority for buses at 64 existing signalised junctions within the County using either SCOOT (Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique) or MOVA (Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Actuation) software to improve the efficiency of the traffic signal network. The 64 junction locations to be upgraded are shown in Plan 1 and listed in Appendix B. SCOOT is a system which detects vehicles (in this case buses) well in advance of the junction and this information is then used to adapt the phasing of the traffic signals in the local area and ensure that delays are kept to a minimum for bus services. When junctions are further apart, MOVA is a more appropriate method of adaptive signal control which controls only one junction at a time. The majority of junctions will only require the activation of existing software although additional equipment will need to be installed at small number of junctions. The installation works will be carried out by Via East Midlands, subject to receiving approval at this Committee.

Schemes Under Consideration

Bus and Ultra Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) lane on the A612 Colwick Loop Road

12. As part of the work programme, it is proposed to create a new section of inbound bus and ULEV lane on the A612 Colwick Loop Road from the railway bridge near Victoria Retail Park to the signalised junction with Private Road No. 3 (as shown on Plan 5 in Appendix A). It is proposed that the bus lane will operate 24/7 and a bus lane enforcement camera is proposed to ensure compliance. This will require carriageway widening, the removal and replacement of vehicle restraint systems (VRS), and street lighting to be installed in the nearside verge. Given the substantial changes in level on the south side of the carriageway this will also require regrading of the embankment or the installation of retaining structures which is currently being investigated. The intention for any such measures in this location is to ensure proposals are network capacity neutral.
13. EDAM Committee has approved further feasibility work to explore additional options to enhance this scheme to ensure that value for money and with limited capacity implications can be achieved within the budget allocated for this work package. Approval to commence any additional works will be required.

Funding

14. In February 2021, the County Council agreed to accept grant funding of £7.91million from Nottingham City Council to cover the full cost of delivering the schemes included in Work Package 7. This has been transferred to the Capital Programme. DfT and Nottingham City Council have confirmed there is no additional funding available, and these projects will be managed to ensure there is no overspend and no risk to the County Council. The

removal of unaffordable/environmentally unacceptable schemes from the programme provides a sizeable contingency for the remaining schemes and provides the flexibility to investigate additional improvements. All the bus priority elements contained within the above can therefore be contained within the funding envelope with a contingency to provide additional bus priority on these corridors if the opportunity arises which is currently being reviewed. All schemes will maximise the benefit to users with the budget available through this fund, without providing significant disbenefits to other road users.

15. This round of TCF funding is intended to be spent by the end of the 2022/23 financial year but DfT has already acknowledged that a proportion of the expenditure may slip in to the 2023/24 financial year due to the delays experienced during the Covid 19 pandemic.

Regulatory Approvals

16. The works for which approval is currently being sought all fall within, or are immediately adjacent to, the highway boundary and do not therefore require planning permission.
17. Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) will be required for the creation of the bus lanes and installation of enforcement cameras and for carrying out temporary construction works. These orders will need to be advertised in accordance with the relevant statutory procedures, subject to securing approval at this committee.

Construction Delivery / Next Steps

18. All works will be delivered by Via East Midlands on behalf of the County Council to an agreed project programme. Initial works to switch on traffic light priority at existing junctions would be anticipated to start in Summer 2022 with all other works expected to be completed Spring 2024. Each of the schemes detailed in this report is still subject to the necessary consultation, statutory undertakings and other issues arising from feasibility studies, detailed scheme investigation, and design; as well as value for money considerations.

Consultation

19. The proposals requiring TROs will be subject to public consultation and appropriate public consultation will be required as part of the delivery of this project. Residents and businesses whose properties front on to affected carriageways/footways will be kept informed of scheme progress and the timing and locations of any proposed roadworks necessary to complete these schemes. Residents and businesses will also be contacted formally as part of the Traffic Regulation Order process.

Other Options Considered

20. The available funding can only be used for schemes identified in the original bid and cannot be transferred. If not utilised, the funds could be returned to Nottingham City Council to be spent elsewhere within the TCF Programme. Not progressing the remaining schemes contained in the revised programme has been considered but this would mean losing this opportunity to fund substantial public transport improvements which will reduce congestion and improve air quality along the A60 corridor and potentially the A612 corridor.

Reasons for Recommendations

21. Although it is no longer possible to deliver the original programme in full, the revised project programme will still address existing constraints along these key public transport corridors and provide significant journey time savings and contribute towards future modal shift/improve public transport patronage and ease congestion for all road users along key transport corridors.

Statutory and Policy Implications

22. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability, and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Finance Implications

23. The total budget is £7.91 million which includes a substantial contingency of approximately £1.3 million (17%). £5.2m is being committed for delivery of the projects outlined above and £1.085m has been allocated for further investigation and the completion of additional works if approval for these is subsequently obtained.

24. The schemes will be managed to ensure there is no overspend and, in the event of surplus funding, this will be used to deliver additional benefits within the existing programme if possible or returned to Nottingham City Council for use elsewhere within the TCF programme. This would need to be agreed by the TCF board.

Implications for Sustainability and the Environment

25. The proposed revised project programme will enable the Council to contribute towards national and local objectives to reduce carbon and improve air quality by reducing local congestion and improving public transport.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is **RECOMMENDED** that Committee:

- 1) Endorses the update on the TCF programme contained in this report
- 2) Approves the making of the relevant Traffic Regulation Orders and carrying out appropriate public consultation.
- 3) Approves the commencement of highways works and the installation and operation of bus lane enforcement cameras as detailed in the report, subject to the necessary public consultation.
- 4) Approves the installation and activation of traffic light priority software/measures at the 64 junction locations listed in Appendix A.

Adrian Smith
Corporate Director, Place

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Kevin Sharman, Tel: 0115 977 2970

Constitutional Comments (SJE – 21/04/2022)

26. This decision falls within the Terms of Reference of the Transport and Environment Committee to whom responsibility for the exercise of the Authority's functions relating to public transport, the planning, management and maintenance of highways and pavements and traffic management and TROs, has been delegated.

Financial Comments (GB 21/04/2022)

27. It is proposed that the works set out in this report will be funded from the £7.91m Transforming Cities Fund capital grant funding that is already approved within the Transport and Environment Committee capital programme.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Report to Policy Committee 10 February 2021 – Transforming Cities Fund – Scheme Update and Funding Agreements
- Report to Economic Development and Asset Management Committee 19 April 2022 – Transforming Cities Fund Tranche 2 – Public Transport Improvements Programme Update

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All wards and Members within Broxtowe, Gedling, and Rushcliffe.