

Title of Report:	West Berkshire/Reading/Wokingham Joint Local Strategic Transport Fund Large Scheme Bid
Report to be considered by:	Executive
Date of Meeting:	15 December 2011
Forward Plan Ref:	EX2386

Purpose of Report: To inform Members of a joint bid proposal to secure grant funding of up to £2.46 million from DfT for sustainable non-car transport measures within West Berkshire, and to seek approval for the bid insofar as it relates to West Berkshire.

Recommended Action: To approve support for the joint bid.

Reason for decision to be taken: Acceptance of the joint bid by Ministers will depend upon Member support and a demonstration of strong corporate governance.

Other options considered: Not supporting the Reading Large Scheme Bid . However the LSTF funding is an opportunity to deliver additional measures over and above those already planned that would otherwise require funding from the Council's own resources, or at the expense of other programmed capital/resource expenditure.

Key background documentation: Appendix B - Outline joint bid

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Plan Priority:

- CPP1 – Support our communities through the economic downturn** – to alleviate the impact on different communities and individuals who find themselves out of work and/or disadvantaged

The proposals will also help achieve the following Council Plan Themes:

- CPT1 - Better Roads and Transport**
- CPT5 - Cleaner and Greener**
- CPT8 - A Healthier Life**
- CPT10 - Promoting Independence**
- CPT13 - Value for Money**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Plan Priorities and Themes by:

promoting and implementing sustainable and/or healthy travel choices for West Berkshire residents within the Eastern Urban Area of West Berkshire, with improvements to air quality and congestion reduction.

Portfolio Member Details	
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Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	17 November 2011

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Implications

- Policy:** The proposals in the bid are in accordance with the West Berkshire Local Transport Plan and supporting strategies.
- Financial:** No direct financial commitment required. The West Berkshire contribution amounts to some officer time and member support as required. If successful some s.106 may be used on schemes in the Eastern Urban Area of West Berkshire.
- Personnel:** Some officer time devoted to administering project if bid successful. A cross-boundary Programme Board would involve members approving decisions as required through each authority's Executive.
- Legal/Procurement:** No issues identified.
- Property:** No issues identified other than where new facilities are installed on council land.
- Risk Management:** Reading BC are managing the development of the bid and administration of the bulk of delivery. Local delivery in West Berkshire if the bid is successful will be subject to routine Council risk management procedures. Overall risk to Council is very low.
- Equalities Impact Assessment:** Stage 1 completed - see Appendix A.

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In June 2011 Reading Borough Council submitted an initial proposal for a £24.2 million Local Sustainable Transport Fund large bid. This bid aims to address sustainable non-car transport issues throughout the Reading functional economic area, including the Eastern Urban Area of West Berkshire. The proposal was shortlisted by the Department for Transport (DfT) in August 2011, and a full business case is currently being developed for submission to DfT by no later than 20th December 2011.
- 1.2 As part of this West Berkshire, as a named delivery partner, would benefit from up to £2.46 million in grant funding (both revenue and capital) for sustainable transport measures in the authority. It has been agreed that West Berkshire's and Wokingham's contribution will be non-financial and will consist of officer time, member support for development and management of the bid, and implementation if successful, together with any s.106 monies that might be collected for transport-related projects.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 The joint bid is based on the former Urban Challenge Fund (UCF) partnership grouping of Reading BC, Wokingham BC, and West Berkshire Council, updated to reflect the lower levels of funding available and without any congestion charging proposals. It is consistent with, and will help deliver, West Berkshires Local Transport Plan 3 aims and objectives, and also contributes towards Park and Rail facilities at Theale station. Our own LSTF small project bid for Newbury and Thatcham, which is due to be submitted for approval by Individual Decision in February 2012, will not be compromised by or dependent upon the success of the Reading bid.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 Members are invited to approve West Berkshire's support for the joint bid and continuation of officer support as required. A cross boundary member group has already taken place on 26 October 2011, attended by Cllrs Betts and Bryant, and officers have met since where changes were made to reflect the lack of Park and Ride involvement by West Berkshire, and to refer to Park and Rail instead. Reading's Cabinet have cleared the bid, and subject to Executive approval by West Berkshire and Wokingham the full business case will be submitted to DfT on or before 20 December 2011.

Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Coalition Government announced details of its Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) in January 2011, as part of the Transport White Paper 'Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon'. The purpose of the fund is to enable local transport authorities to deliver local sustainable transport solutions that support the twin policy aims in the White Paper of growing the economy and reducing carbon.
- 1.2 In June 2011 Reading Borough Council submitted an initial proposal for a Large Project bid covering the wider Reading Urban Area, based on the former Urban Challenge Fund (UCF) partnership grouping of Reading BC, Wokingham BC, and West Berkshire Council. The proposal was shortlisted by the Department for Transport (DfT) in August 2011 (one of only 8 schemes nationally), and a full business case is currently being developed for submission to DfT by no later than 20th December 2011.
- 1.3 This report outlines the details of LSTF (Section 2), the bidding options that have been available to local authorities (Section 3), and the details of the Reading area large project business case (Section 4) including details of the individual package elements. It also outlines the timescales involved and the work that will be needed to ensure that the bid is formally approved by all three authorities prior to submission.
- 1.4 DfT have informed us that it is crucial to demonstrate successful collaborative working between the three partner authorities in order to gain funding. This includes the need for senior level support from all authorities. Therefore it is important that the project contains a strong governance element, including a Member represented Programme Board which will oversee the development and delivery of the package, taking into account its impact on the residents and businesses in the Reading urban area.

2. The Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF)

- 2.1 LSTF is a £560 million fund covering the 4 year period to 2014/15. All English local transport authorities outside of London have been able to apply for funding, both individually and through joint applications with other authorities where a wider functional economic area crosses local authority boundaries, as is the case with Reading and Wokingham.
- 2.2 The key emphasis by DfT is that bids must be committed to, and deliver, both of the Government's core objectives of supporting economic growth while reducing carbon. In addition they must offer value for money and be deliverable, affordable, and financially self-sustainable beyond the end of the funding period in 2014/15.
- 2.3 The fund comprises both revenue (62.5%) and capital (37.5%) funding. In addition, DfT expect that bids will contain a local contribution towards the overall cost of projects, which can come from local authority or other external partners. Details of the local contributions for the Reading bid can be found in paragraph 4.3. As mentioned before, there is a need for a clear statement of senior level support for any partner organisation.

3. LSTF Bidding Options

- 3.1 Three main bidding options have been available to local authorities as part of the application process. For Large Project bids up to £40m, such as the Reading joint bid, initial proposals were required to be submitted to DfT by 6th June 2011 and a list of those invited to develop full business cases was made on 3rd August 2011. The Reading area joint bid was accepted at this stage and the full business case is to be submitted to DfT by 20th December 2011, with a final decision due by summer 2012.
- 3.2 For Small Project bids (i.e. those seeking contributions up to £5m), local authorities have had two bidding tranches. Authorities with advanced proposals were able to submit an early Tranche 1 bid in April 2011, and successful recipients were announced on 5th July 2011). Authorities with less developed proposals were able to submit an Expression of Interest by 6th June 2011 under Tranche 2, with a view to submitting full bids by 24th February 2012 and announcement on funding in May 2012.
- 3.3 West Berkshire Council has submitted its own Expression of Interest for a Small Project bid for Tranche 2 of the Fund on 3rd June 2011. This bid is separate from the Reading large bid and covers the wider authority area, with a particular focus on Newbury and Thatcham. This bid, which will not be compromised by or dependent upon the success of the large bid, will continue to be developed prior to submission to DfT by 24th February 2012, and a decision will be needed on whether it can be approved by Individual Decision or will be presented to the Executive for approval on 9th February 2012.

4. Reading Area Large Project Bid

- 4.1 The LSTF Large Project initial proposal submitted by Reading Borough Council, under the title "*Targeting Travel Choice Transitions*", aims to address the transport issues throughout the Reading travel-to-work or functional economic area (covering the Eastern Urban are of West Berkshire and part of Wokingham district). A copy of the initial proposal submitted to DfT is attached as Appendix B. Reading also submitted their own Tranche 1 small project bid which was successful.
- 4.2 The large bid seeks a DfT contribution of £24.2m out of an overall package cost of £31.8m, of which around 60% is intended to be for revenue funding. Given the geographic split of the bid area, West Berkshire would stand to benefit from around 11% of this funding, approximately £2.46m.
- 4.3 The bid also identifies a £7.6m local contribution, which includes s.106 obligations, contributions in kind from business park partners and Reading Transport Limited. West Berkshire Council's own contribution is limited to officer time in terms of developing and delivering measures relating to West Berkshire, and attending project management meetings as appropriate. There may be some land required for Active Travel interventions (e.g. for improvements to pedestrian and cycle routes). There is no additional financial contribution required from the Council to deliver these measures. This position was affirmed by Reading BC at the cross-boundary Member meeting held on 26th October, attended by Councillors Betts and Bryant.

- 4.4 The package measures contained in the bid are based on elements agreed as part of the former Urban Challenge Funding work. It should be noted that there is no congestion charging proposal for the large bid. The measures are supported by the Local Transport Plan strategies for each of the three authorities, and for West Berkshire will contribute to each of the plan's local transport goals, as well as assisting delivery of the LTP's long-term Transport Vision for the Eastern Urban Area of the District.
- 4.5 West Berkshire is designated as a full delivery partner for the bid along with Wokingham District Council and NHS Berkshire West. Arlington Business Park at Theale and Reading Transport Limited are among other delivery partners. West Berkshire is specified as being involved in all the listed package elements of the bid, namely;
- Personalised Travel Planning
 - Fares, Ticketing, and Information
 - Active Travel
 - Cycle Hire
 - Park and Rail (note that the appendix supplied with this paper does not reflect this – a corrected paper will be made available at the meeting)
 - Package Management
- 4.6 The Personalised Travel Planning (PTP), Active Travel, and Cycle Hire elements are consistent with the West Berkshire Transport Vision for the Eastern Urban Area in that they will provide opportunities to deliver Active Travel and Smarter Choices measures to local communities and employment sites. In addition, the bid will seek improvements to the quality of local pedestrian and cycle routes (such as improved (low carbon) streetlighting, speed limit reviews, dropped kerbs, cycle training, maintenance, and route planning).
- 4.7 The bid will also seek to enable further Smart Ticketing to be introduced across the wider area and proposes a targeted fares incentive, which will be aimed at vulnerable groups across the wider area (e.g. children in full-time education, job-seekers, or those with health problems), to help reduce inequalities of accessibility and affordability of publicly available transport. These initiatives would be supported by improving the provision of data and information to public transport users, including extension of Real Time Passenger Information systems on cross-boundary and strategic corridors.
- 4.8 Although largely not relevant to West Berkshire, the bid proposes to further develop the Park and Ride strategy for Reading, including the expansion of Park and Ride sites and services to the East and to the South of Reading. However, if the southern park and ride site at MereOak in Wokingham is developed it is likely that National Express will relocate their interchange to the site from the current stop at Pincents Lane in Theale, thus freeing capacity for other public transport options at the site. This would be beneficial should the proposed Ikea development at Theale proceed.

- 4.9 The bid also proposes the development of “Micro” Park and Ride sites. It is intended that these would be located at under-utilised car parks with daytime capacity and frequent local nearby local bus routes would be developed where conventional facilities would be difficult to implement. No specific details regarding the locations of these Micro sites within the package area have been given at this stage, and we await further proposals, but this is likely to be of limited benefit to West Berkshire.
- 4.10 In terms of project governance, an LSTF Steering Group has been established, comprising of transport officers from Reading, Wokingham, and West Berkshire, along with representation from NHS Berkshire West Public Health. This group will project manage and oversee the general delivery, monitoring, and evaluation of the individual measures.
- 4.11 When required, decisions would be escalated to an LSTF Programme Board. This would comprise Councillor Membership, plus officer support from each partner authority, and then approved through each Council’s Cabinet or Executive. The Programme Board will be responsible for considering the wider implications of the package on transport and planning developments or changing circumstances in the Reading urban area.

5. Developing the Bid

- 5.1 Following the DfT announcement that the Reading bid was successful in being shortlisted, West Berkshire officers have met with Reading and Wokingham to discuss how the full business case should be prepared to allow for timely submission according to the 20th December 2011 deadline.
- 5.2 There has been a cross-boundary Member meeting between the three authorities, held on 26th October 2011. This meeting included discussions on the draft financial overview of the bid and on the draft terms of reference, of which the latter is considered crucial by DfT in terms of governance of the project. Some minor amendments to the draft terms of reference were identified as being required prior to Member sign up.
- 5.3 The DfT will also expect the senior level sign off to include that of the s.151 officer from each local authority. This will be sought in taking the bid through the internal Corporate Board, Management Board, and Executive process.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 Officers will continue to liaise with counterparts in Reading and Wokingham regarding finalisation of the bid and its business case.
- 6.2 The final bid, including revised terms of reference and s.151 officer sign off, will be presented to DfT on 20 December 2011. A final decision on the bid will be announced by DfT in summer 2012. Note successful bids may be funded wholly or in part.
- 6.3 Progress on developing both the Reading area and West Berkshire LSTF bids will remain a standing item on the agenda at future Transport Policy Task Group meetings.

6.4 Officers will continue to develop the West Berkshire small project Tranche 2 LSTF bid for submission by 24th February 2012. It is intended that this will be presented for an Individual Decision approval in February 2012.

Appendices

Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment – Stage 1

Appendix B – Joint Bid Document as submitted to DfT in August 2011

Consultees

Local Stakeholders:

Officers Consulted: Bryan Lyttle, Mark Edwards, Chris Sperring, Rachael Lancaster

Trade Union: n/a

APPENDIX A

Equality Impact Assessment – Stage One

Name of item being assessed:	West Berkshire/Reading/Wokingham Joint Local Strategic Transport Fund Bid
Version and release date of item (if applicable):	
Owner of item being assessed:	
Name of assessor:	
Date of assessment:	

1. What are the main aims of the item?
To promote healthy and sustainable travel choices in the wider Reading Urban Area

2. Note which groups may be affected by the item, consider how they may be affected and what sources of information have been used to determine this. (Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation)

Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this.
All	Greater transport choices for all groups	See Appendix B

Further comments relating to the item:
The bid is not targeted at a specific group, rather it aims to promote increased travel choice for all. As part of any measures specific legal requirements such as DDA compliance etc. will be automatically incorporated.

3. Result (please tick by double-clicking on relevant box and click on 'checked')
<input type="checkbox"/> High Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/> Medium Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/> Low Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Relevance - This does not need to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment

For items requiring a Stage 2 equality impact assessment, begin the planning of this now, referring to the equality impact assessment guidance and Stage 2 template.

4. Identify next steps as appropriate:	
Stage Two required	
Owner of Stage Two assessment:	
Timescale for Stage Two assessment:	
Stage Two not required:	

Name:

Date: