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## A64 Bus, Walking & Cycling Corridor Project (Phase 1+) Injection of funding and amendment to existing Funding Agreement with WYCA

Date: 06/03/24

Report of: Principal Transport Planner

Report to: Chief Officer Highways and Transportation

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

The A64 Bus, Walking and Cycling corridor project forms part of the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) programme and looks to improve bus reliability and travel times, and enhance the walking & wheeling environment.

Following approval of the Outline Business Case (OBC) by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA), funding has been approved for development and design of a package of measures (Phase 1+) along the corridor (£561,000). The funding allocation has also been increased from £2.68m to £4.98m. This will enable a Full Business Case (FBC) to be developed, including detailed design.

### Recommendations

The Chief Officer, Highways and Transportation is recommended to:

- a) approve the injection of an additional £2.3m from the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) into Leeds City Council's (LCC) Capital Programme, following approval of the OBC by WYCA on 16/11/2023; increasing the total budget allocation to £4.98m;
- b) give approval to spend the additional development funding of £561,000 to enable further work to progress on the detailed design and FBC tasks;
- c) enter into a Deed of Variation (DoV) to amend the existing funding agreement with WYCA to cover the additional development funding (£561,000).

### What is this report about?

- 1 The A64 Corridor Improvement scheme forms part of the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) Programme, which aims to create positive change in the way we travel across the region by

connecting people to employment, education and leisure through affordable and sustainable transport.

- 2 The A64 is a key radial route through East Leeds carrying longer distance traffic from the wider Leeds City Region alongside local traffic. Sections of the A64 corridor benefit from existing bus lanes and guided bus ways. It is a key bus corridor with high frequency services carrying large numbers of passengers.
- 3 The scheme consists of a package of measures between Marsh Lane and Baildon Drive. The package aims to improve current bus journey times, encourage modal shift primarily from private car to more sustainable modes, reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality in line with Leeds' commitment to the Climate Emergency.
- 4 The Outline Business Case (OBC) for the project was approved by the Combined Authority on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and a further £561,000 development funding was approved, to be drawn down from the TCF allocation. This is specifically to develop the first phase of the project (Phase 1+) to detailed design stage and Full Business Case (FBC) submission. The key decision and this report is seeking the approval to inject the additional monies into the LCC capital programme.
- 5 The proposals included in Phase 1+ are shown in Appendix 2 and constitute:
  - Extension of the inbound bus lane between Upper Accommodation Road and Raincliffe Road;
  - Traffic signal junction upgrades at Selby Road;
  - Traffic signal junction upgrades at Killingbeck Drive;
  - Traffic signal junction upgrades at Cross Gates Road;
  - New inbound bus lane from Inglewood Drive to Cross Gates Road;
  - Signalisation upgrades (including new pedestrian and cycle crossings) at Old York Road and Inglewood Drive;
  - Reconfiguration of Seacroft Avenue to create a right turn for buses only onto York Road;
  - Traffic signal junction upgrades at Seacroft Avenue;
  - New inbound bus lane on approach to Outer Ring Road.
- 6 Future phases of the project will be brought forward for further development and delivery when further funding sources become available.
- 7 Leeds City Council commissioned development partner support from Aecom, through the LCC Major Projects consultancy framework in 2020 to support on the Outline Business Case. It is anticipated that, subject to this request for injection of funding, Leeds City Council will extend the existing commission with Aecom through to FBC submission. This will provide continuity and ensure the scheme can progress in a timely manner.

### **What impact will this proposal have?**

- 8 Approval to inject the additional £561,000 will enable completion of the FBC and detailed design for Phase 1+ of the corridor project. Subject to further approvals via WYCA's Appraisal Framework and funding availability, elements of the project will then be taken forward to delivery, providing improvements for buses, walking and cycling.
- 9 The predicted benefits to local residents will be improved bus journey times and reliability, safer cycling routes and improved safety at signalised crossings. Promoting active modes through cycling improvements.

## How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 10 Inclusive Growth and Health and Wellbeing are at the forefront of the A64 Corridor Improvements proposals, providing improved connectivity and access for local residents and communities in East Leeds with growing employment and training opportunities in the City Centre and the wider city region.
- 11 Approval to spend the additional development funding will enable conclusion of the FBC and detailed design in a timely manner. The proposals support Inclusive Growth ambitions by improving access to education, employment and training opportunities; delivering journey time savings which improve productivity and supporting access to affordable and accessible transport options.
- 12 The proposals will deliver benefits to public transport and active travel modes, improving reliability and accessibility. This will facilitate a modal shift away from private motor vehicles, helping to reduce emissions, improve local air quality and encourage active travel (with associated potential health benefits).
- 13 During the construction phases of this project there will be some unavoidable negative effects, such as embedded carbon involved with materials, construction traffic etc. LCC will work with the Contractor to explore opportunities to reduce carbon emissions in line with the Council's climate emergency targets and will advise on this and the details of any measures they take to minimise carbon emissions, including effectively managing waste and transporting plant and goods through recycling of materials.

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: Burmantofts and Richmond Hill, Gipton and Harehills, Killingbeck and Seacroft, Crossgates and Whinmoor

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 14 Public consultation on the proposed improvements to bus, walking and cycling along the A64 corridor was carried out between June 21st and July 25th 2021. Further stakeholder engagement has been programmed for spring 2024, specifically around the Phase 1+ proposals.
- 15 Constructive and targeted engagement with key stakeholders has been undertaken to inform the development of scheme proposals. This has included a series of briefings, workshops and meetings including with local ward councillors, local cycle forum, bus operators, accessibility groups and local transport groups.
- 16 A briefing on the scheme was given to the members of the Access and Useability Group (AUAG) in advance of the public consultation, to help ensure they were able to review the proposals and feedback.
- 17 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed. This shows the scheme proposals have neutral or positive impacts for people with protected characteristics. A copy of this is appended to the Report at Appendix 1.

### **What are the resource implications?**

18 The development funding is drawn down from an existing allocation from the TCF and has been approved by WYCA. There will be no direct impact on LCC resources or value for money for completion of FBC and detailed design.

### **What are the key risks and how are they being managed?**

19 The risk register for the A64 Corridor project has been completed as part of Outline Business Case re-submission and will be reviewed for FBC submission. This register will continue to be monitored and updated throughout the lifecycle of the project to include risk mitigation with owners clearly identified.

20 The additional development funding requested to be injected will ensure resource is in place to enable completion of the FBC and design work in a timely manner.

21 If injection of the additional drawdown of development funding is not approved, there is a risk that the FBC and design work cannot be completed or not completed to an acceptable standard.

### **What are the legal implications?**

22 An existing Funding Agreement is in place that regulates the provision of the grant funding. A Deed of Variation will therefore be required to the Funding Agreement to increase the value of the existing Agreement to enable subsequent grant funding claims to be paid. The Deed will be progressed accordingly to completion.

23 Given the value of the funding, this is a key decision and is eligible for call-in.

## **Options, timescales and measuring success**

### **What other options were considered?**

24 If this decision is not approved, there is a risk that the FBC cannot be completed or not completed to an acceptable standard. The project would be unlikely to progress as no alternative funding source is currently available.

### **How will success be measured?**

25 Directly in terms of this decision, the anticipated outcome will be the successful completion and submission of the FBC. The success of the project will be measured against Key Performance Indicators.

### **What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

26 The FBC is due to be submitted to WYCA in August 2024. Subject to approvals and funding availability, it is anticipated that the Phase 1+ can be delivered 2025/26.

## **Appendices**

27 Appendix 1 – EDCI Screening Report

28 Appendix 2 – A64 phase 1+ proposals and scheme extent