



Report of the Director of City Development

Inner North West Area Committee

Date: 13TH November 2008

Subject: A65 Quality Bus Initiative

Electoral Wards Affected:

Kirkstall

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Council
Function

Delegated Executive
Function available
for Call In

Delegated Executive
Function not available for
Call In Details set out in the
report

Executive Summary

1 Purpose Of This Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a brief update, to members of the area committee, on progress with the design and procurement of the A65 Quality Bus Initiative. The purpose of this report is also to seek any comments the members of the area committee may have regarding these proposals.

2 Background Information

2.1 The A65 corridor is one of the busiest in the City. Problems of traffic congestion have been identified as being particularly detrimental to the delivery of a high quality and reliable bus service. In order to address these concerns a detailed study was undertaken during 1999/2000 which resulted in the preparation of a comprehensive package of proposals for the provision of a Quality Bus Corridor (QBC) for the A65.

2.2 Implementation of QBC proposals has been divided into three stages:

- i) the main A65 Quality Bus Initiative (A65 QBI) scheme that covers the section of the A65 from Leeds Inner Ring Road to Kirkstall Lane which is the subject of this report.;

- ii) the Abbey Road proposals which provide bus lanes past Kirkstall Abbey and were completed early in 2006; and
- iii) longer term proposals to provide bus priorities on the approach to the A6120 Horsforth roundabout which are tied up with the development of a strategy for the A6120 route and the associated proposals to address this junction.

2.3 The remainder of this report gives an update on current progress with the main A65 QBI scheme.

3 Main Issues

3.1 Proposals for building the new A65 QBI are being advanced to the next stage. The preliminary design work has now been completed and the City Council is pleased to announce that the contractor, Carillion (McAlpine), has been appointed to work with the Council to progress the next stage of the detailed design work. Carillion were number one from the tenders submitted in both quality and price.

3.2 The £21 million scheme is being developed to provide a high standard of bus service along this heavily congested route into the city centre.

3.3 The proposals include 4km of new bus lane in to and out of Leeds, which will provide improved bus journey times as well as reliability; better quality buses; new shelters with real time information at the busiest stops; and improvements for pedestrians and cyclists.

3.4 The City Council is keen to keep disruption during construction to a minimum and will draw upon Carillion's construction expertise early in the detailed design stage to achieve this. Carillion will also work with the Council in providing more information in advance of the construction work as well as working closely with local residents and businesses. Construction is expected to take around two years. Work should start on site in Autumn 2009 with completion planned for Autumn 2011.

3.5 A meeting is to take place on the 22nd of October 2008 with the DfT to provide an update on the A65 QBI. Faber Maunsel has been appointed to review the business case for submission of conditional approval in January 2009. A decision on conditional approval is expected in March 2009, with a decision on full approval expected to follow in June 2009.

3.6 Major public consultation was held in October 2007, this included newsletters delivered throughout the affected area and three public exhibitions. The next consultation process is to start shortly; this will include 15,000 leaflets distributed. Consultation has continued with the developers on the south side of Kirkstall Road, looking at access arrangements and the affects of a TRO on assesses.

3.7 A public inquiry was held on the 14th to the 17th October 2008 regarding the compulsory purchase order on Commercial Road. A decision on the compulsory purchase order is expected to be received in early 2009.

4 Implications For Council Policy and Governance

4.1 The A65 QBI is an integral part of the Local Transport Plan which contributes to the delivery of the Council's corporate objectives for transport and those of the Vision for

Leeds. The scheme will make a major contribution to improving the attractiveness and quality of bus travel and will significantly increase bus patronage and public transport mode share. The scheme will also improve cycling and pedestrian facilities and therefore ultimately improve the air quality.

- 4.2 All the bus stops throughout the scheme are to be provided with raised kerbs to make access to and from buses easier for disabled groups in line with Disability Discrimination Act.
- 4.3 The proposals are consistent with the Council's Environmental Policy and provide encouragement for the use of public transport and cycling.

5 Legal and Resource Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal and resource implications to report.

6 Conclusions

- 6.1 The procurement of this work is being undertaken with an Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) form of contract. This gets the Contractor involved in the delivery of the scheme much earlier in the process and LCC can draw on the Contractor's expertise throughout the finalising of the detailed design. The construction phase of the works is optional to LCC and is subject to final approval of funding by the Department of Transport (DfT).
- 6.2 Public consultation is an important part of the process and is ongoing.
- 6.3 Regular meetings are being held with the DfT and the approval process is ongoing. Indications are that DfT are fully supportive of the scheme which will provide significant improvements along the A65 Corridor.

7 Recommendations

- 7.1 The Area Committee is asked to note the content of this report and make comment as necessary.

Background Papers
None