



Black Country Executive Joint Committee
Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton

REPORT OF THE CITY DEAL AND GROWTH DEAL ADVISORY BOARD

TO

BLACK COUNTRY EXECUTIVE JOINT COMMITTEE

ON

23 NOVEMBER 2016

Black Country Local Growth Deal - MANAGING SHORT TRIPS – ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Approval to Amend the existing Grant Agreement

Key Decision:	Yes
Forward Plan:	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To request that the Joint Committee approve proceeding to amend the existing Grant Agreement for the Managing Short Trips project from within the Local Growth Fund (LGF) Programme - with delivery to commence in the 2016/17 financial year.
- 1.2 This project was approved by the LEP Board at the 19th September 2016 Board meeting (ref 116/16/3 LEP Board minutes), the Working Group on 7th October 2016 and the Advisory Board via email on the 11th November 2016.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Joint Committee approves for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed with amending the existing Grant Agreement with **Transport for West Midlands – TfWM (Previously known as Centro) for an additional £1,433,700** to deliver additional Managing Short Trips schemes – with delivery to commence in the 2016/17 financial year.

3. REPORT DETAIL

- 3.1 A summary of the request for amending the existing Grant Agreement with Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) by the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) is below.

Managing Short Trips – additional Walking & Cycle paths scheme bid of £1,433,000 in 2016/17 from TfWM /Canals & Rivers Trust

3.2 This project is an extension of the existing Managing Short Trips programme. Managing Short Trips combines infrastructure and innovation to deliver sustainable urban mobility in the context of ongoing economic growth, directly addressing several key barriers to growth in the Black Country:

- Accessibility: The area's multi-centric pattern of employment means that a mobile pool of workers is needed to serve these growing industries
- Severance of communities from access to employment, education and training opportunities
- Traffic Congestion
- High levels of deprivation – low levels of car ownership mean that people are heavily reliant on public transport. Walking and cycling can offer a cheaper alternative to people on low incomes.

These issues are made even more prevalent given the multiple strategic centres that exist and the need for access to, from and between each. The provision of the necessary infrastructure is therefore the first step in instilling a culture of sustainable travel.

3.3 The Managing Short Trips programme has been developed in response to these challenges in order to:

- Make the most efficient use of local transport networks by targeting short trips which can be undertaken by active modes. Reducing localised congestion supports more efficient access to the strategic transport network which in turn supports regional export growth and international competitiveness.
- Support access to education, employment and training, through the development and promotion of cost effective and reliable travel options.
- Support social inclusion by reducing severance and more effectively connecting local communities with employment and other services.
- Integrate walking and cycling into the core 'transport offer' in the Black Country.
- Facilitate behaviour change, by working directly with businesses, schools, colleges and communities to promote the benefits of active travel.

Delivery of new canal cycle paths is supported by West Midlands Combined Authority and Local Authority sustainable travel teams who will promote and launch this new infrastructure to businesses and the community.

3.4 The project will generate benefits to the Black Country economy and residents and be an important catalyst for future growth and prosperity in the region by delivering 6.31 Km of canal tow path improved for use as off-road cycle paths by March 2017.

3.5 The LEP Board agreed that approval is subject to the Canal and River Trust entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the relevant authorities to prevent objections and charges being levied by the Trust in relation to Grant supported schemes on Trust owned land.

The Black Country Transport Director has confirmed that the Canal and River Trust, "have agreed to produce a MoU to cover all Black Country schemes moving forward.

They will seek to reduce or remove all of their costs associated with each scheme. In addition they will have agreed to not object to any planning for Compulsory Purchase Order published for any scheme across the Black Country. This should be in place by mid November 2016.”

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 All the costs associated with this proposal form part of the LGF programme and will be covered by allocations from government associated with this programme. This includes the use of any interest accrued by the Accountable Body to cover costs associated with the delivery of Accountable Body functions, as approved by its (Walsall Council) Cabinet on the 29th October 2014.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The appropriate Grant Agreements are in place and will be utilised by the Accountable Body (Walsall Council), and include all conditions passed onto the LEP by Government, together with all terms, conditions, performance measures and sanctions as required by the approvals/conditions received from Government or approved by the LEP Board or the Joint Committee.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 Risk is being managed through the on-going monitoring of individual projects and their ability to deliver the required spending profiles and outcomes for the programme as required or agreed with Government and set into place by the LEP Board and the Joint Committee.

7. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None at the time of drafting.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 This is an extension of an existing project that was initially driven by feedback from businesses and the Black Country Chamber of Commerce that accessibility issues prevent local people from accessing opportunity and reduce the attractiveness of the Black Country as a place in which to invest, which in turn limits the potential for economic growth. In particular, there were significant concerns over the proportion of short vehicle trips currently being accommodated on the strategic highway network, which constrain freight movements and contribute to wider issues of congestion and journey time reliability.

- 8.2 Stakeholder engagement and consultation was undertaken with key stakeholders including Local Authorities, to ensure that the scheme has a positive impact and is fit for purpose.
- 8.3 As referenced in the Report Detail, the Black Country Transport Director has worked with Canal and Rivers Trust put in place a Memorandum of Understanding with the relevant authorities to prevent objections and charges being levied by the Trust in relation to Grant supported schemes on Trust owned land. This agreement should be in place by mid November 2016.
- 8.4 Legal and financial services at Wolverhampton City Council have been consulted as part of the development of this report.

Back Ground papers

Local Growth Deal Project Recommendation – Managing Short Trips Programme – *Joint Committee Report 22nd April 2015*

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