



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
20 JANUARY 2016

BLACK COUNTRY LOCAL GROWTH DEAL - ACCESSING GROWTH WEDNESBURY
TO BRIERLEY HILL METRO (Tranche 1)
Amending the existing Accessing Growth Fund Grant Agreement

Key Decision:	Yes
Forward Plan:	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To request that the Joint Committee grants the approval, contracting and subsequent amendment of an existing Grant Agreement by the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) for the 'Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro' project from within the Local Growth Fund (LGF) Programme.
- 1.2 The project has been endorsed by the Programme Management Office, the Advisory Board, the Working Group and received LEP Board approval on 23rd November 2015.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Joint Committee approves the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to amend the existing Accessing Growth Fund Grant Agreement with Wolverhampton City Council to the value of £100k of development funding to deliver the initial Local Growth Fund (LGF) elements of the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro project.
- 2.2 The work would commence in 2015/16 with work set to continue into the 2016/17 financial year. It is anticipated that the project will return in 2016/17 for additional LGF funding to support a second tranche of activity. The Advisory Board has not been asked to consider this as yet.

3. REPORT DETAIL

- 3.1 The Joint Committee received and endorsed a report on the 15th June 2015 setting out the new processes to be adopted for the evaluation and approval of new projects entering the Local Growth Fund process. The LEP secretariat is currently in the transition stage from the old processes to the new arrangements as LEP Theme boards are established and membership recruited.

- 3.2 To ensure the secretariat is still able to meet the commitments of the programme, notably achievement of the spend targets for this 2015/16 financial year, it is continuing with elements of the previous processes including drawing on the expert staff available to assess the proposed projects lifecycle the business case against the HM treasury 5 Case Model, resulting in proposals that can then move through the LEP board and onto the Joint Committee for approval.
- 3.3 The Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro project has been through this process, the details of which were reported to the City Deal and Growth Deal Advisory Board on 4th January 2016. The funding is available within the LGF programme and delivery will commence during the 2015/16 period. The application is for £100k of grant support.
- 3.4 Approval is sought to allocate initial development funding to begin the planning of the Metro link between Wednesbury and Brierley Hill. Following the West Midlands Combined Authority Devolution Deal announced by George Osborne on Tuesday 17th November, the DfT have provisionally allocated funding to the proposed East/West Metro link. The Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro forms part of this wider scheme. The scheme has been identified as a priority for a number of years within the Black Country. Extensive development work has already been undertaken for this scheme previously and it has already secured Transport and Works Acts Powers from the DfT.
- 3.5 In light of the recent decision, a refresh of the scheme, design and business case needs to be undertaken. The review work would be undertaken by Centro and the appointed framework consultants to review the business case, scheme programme and costs to accurately reflect 2016 prices.
- 3.6 The work needs to start in earnest now to allow the scheme to meet the DfT requirements and prevent the funding offer from the DfT being withdrawn. The work would commence in January 2016 with the work set to continue into the 16/17 financial year.
- 3.7 Confirmation that Dudley MBC will underwrite these costs has been received.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The costs associated with these proposals 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 assessment 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 or the Joint Committee.

7. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None at the time of drafting.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Consultation for the scheme was originally undertaken back in 2006 when the business case was developed by Centro and the Transport and Works Act powers were approved by the DfT
- 8.2 Up until 2010 a series of annual consultation events were held along with briefings with affected ward members in Dudley and at the ITA.
- 8.3 As part of the refresh of the Major Scheme Business Case another round of consultation will be undertaken over the next 6 months. Local Councillors, leaders of the ITA, businesses and local residents will all be consulted.
- 8.4 Feedback from the consultation events will be considered and minor revisions to the scheme maybe undertaken prior to the submission of the business case to the DfT.

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