



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

7 September 2016

Black Country Local Growth Deal **ACCESSING GROWTH - A459 DUDLEY ROAD/COOMBS ROAD, HALESOWEN -** **JUNCTION IMPROVEMENT**

Approval to Amend the existing Accessing Growth Agreement

Key Decision:	Yes
Forward Plan:	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To request that the Joint Committee approves the amendment to the existing Grant Agreement for the Accessing Growth - A459 Dudley Road/Coombs Road, Halesowen - Junction Improvement project from within the Local Growth Fund (LGF) Programme - with delivery to commence in the 2016/17 financial year.
- 1.2 This funding request was approved by the LEP Board on 18th July 2016, endorsed by the Working Group on 22nd July 2016 and Advisory Board on 22nd August 2016.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Joint Committee grants approval for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to amending the existing Grant Agreement with **Dudley MBC to the value of £2,846,204** to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) funded elements of the Accessing Growth - A459 Dudley Road/Coombs Road, Halesowen - Junction Improvement .
Whilst delivery of the scheme is planned to commence in the 2016/17 financial year, the commitment contained within this report is for 2017/18 project spend.
- 2.2 The Joint Committee are asked to note that the above amendment is in addition to the LGF grant allocation for delivery in 2016/17 awarded to the project by the Advisory Board on the 25th February 2016 and the Joint Committee on the 20th April 2016.

3. REPORT DETAIL

- 3.1 A summary of the request for endorsement and subsequent amendment of exiting Grant Agreement by the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) is below.

A459 Dudley Road/Coombs Road, Halesowen - Junction Improvement - £360,000 in 2016/17 and £180,000 in 2017/18

- 3.2 Coombs Wood Business Park is home to 445 businesses (including 70 within the manufacturing sector and 65 within the professional, scientific and technical sector) currently employing 6800 staff, whilst the wider surrounding area includes 1415 businesses.
- 3.3 The main highway access to the Business Park is via the A459 Dudley Road/Coombs Road traffic signal junction, which suffers from significant queuing and delays, particularly at peak times, and therefore acts as a barrier to growth and constrains access to the local, regional and national highway networks (via M5 junction 3).
- 3.4 This proposal to improve the junction will improve efficiency and reduce delays thereby improving access and journey times to the Business Park from the surrounding local and strategic highway network. The proposal will also improve safety and access to the site by sustainable modes, including walking, cycling and public transport.
- 3.5 Furthermore, given the proposed junction improvement site sits within Regeneration Corridor 14 of the Black Country Joint Core Strategy (BCJCS) these access improvements will also benefit the main campus of Halesowen College, Halesowen Town Centre and also support the existing BCJCS and emerging Dudley Development Plan housing growth aspirations. This includes supporting the introduction of an additional 281 dwellings in the locality between now and 2021 by improving access to the adjacent A459 corridor in Halesowen.

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 Initial consultation has been carried out with the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and local ward members where the scheme has been supported. Further detailed consultation with frontagers and other key stakeholders will be carried out if funding is approved.
- 8.2 Legal and financial services at Dudley MBC have been consulted in the development of this report.

Back Ground papers

A459 Dudley Road/Coombs Road, Halesowen – Junction Improvement – Initial Proposal to the Black Country Programme Office

LGF Accessing Growth A459 Dudley Road/Coombs Road Halesowen Junction Improvement – Joint Committee Report 20th April 2016

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