

Executive Decision Report

Connecting Leicester Phase 2

Decision to be taken by: City Mayor

Decision to be taken on: 7th August 2015

Lead director: Andrew L Smith



City Mayor

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: Castle, Stoneygate and Abbey
- Report author: Andrew Smith

1. Summary

The purpose of this report is to approve, in principle, the Connecting Leicester Phase 2 programme for commencement in years 2015 and 2016 and associated funding provisions.

2. Recommendations

The City Mayor is requested to:

1. Approve, in principle, the Connecting Leicester Phase 2 programme for 2015/16 commencement, as outlined in the report, and add to the capital programme.
2. Note the existing approved capital programme funding provisions contributing to this programme of £1.2m from the Highways programme and £1.96m from the 2015/16 Local Growth Fund.
3. Approve the application of £0.676m of Local Growth Fund Monies expected to be confirmed for 2016/17, to be underwritten from the Economic Action Plan.
4. Note that the cost of the Mill Lane improvements (estimated at £2m), once confirmed, will be funded by De Montfort University.
5. Approve the balance of £4.50m from resources set aside for the Economic Action Plan.
6. Delegate approval for the finalisation of scheme details, including appropriate consultation, and letting of any relevant contracts to the Strategic Director City Development and Neighbourhoods in consultation with the City Mayor.

3. Supporting information including options considered:

The Connecting Leicester Phase 1 programme of works has delivered a series of linked projects which have substantially enhanced the public realm and pedestrian and cycle connectivity in the city centre.

Following consideration of further opportunities to remove barriers to cycle and pedestrian movement and enhance the public realm, the following areas of focus have been identified:

- i. Linking routes in the heart of the city centre between the Market, Belvoir Street, Pocklington's Walk and Granby Street. This will assist in connecting the Market/Lanes area, the New Walk Centre development site/Market Street and the Cultural Quarter.
- ii. The Old Town 'Greyfriars' Conservation area, to enhance the work to be carried out to improve properties as part of the Heritage Lottery funded Townscape Heritage Initiative.
- iii. Linking routes to the North of the city centre within the area extending from the new Haymarket Bus Station to Abbey Park and Belgrave Road. This will help to connect the city centre with existing and proposed communities at Belgrave and Abbey Meadows, together with new development sites at Belgrave Circle and

the Community Arena on Charter Street.

- iv. Main road and river/canal corridor access improvements to assist walkers and cyclists to access the city centre from adjoining neighbourhoods.

This report seeks approval, in principle, for the following specific projects identified from these areas of focus for delivery in the 2015 and 2016 years.

- i. Charter Street – Abbey Park new bridge and related access improvements to Charter Street/Memory Lane. Access improvements and a new car park will also be provided on land at Archdeacon Lane.
- ii. Rutland Street improvements linking previous works in the Cultural Quarter and at Granby Street.
- iii. Belvoir Street improvements connecting to Market Street and Granby Street.
- iv. Charles Street/Belgrave Gate public realm and access improvements supporting the new Haymarket Bus Station project.
- v. Public realm improvements within the Townscape Heritage Initiative area including specific improvements at Marble Street to prevent vehicular egress at Newarke Street.
- vi. Welford Road improvements for cyclists and pedestrians. A trial was carried out to assess the impact of removing a traffic lane earlier in 2015. The results of this trial and scheme details will be subject to further consultation.
- vii. Mill Lane public realm improvements - works commissioned, and to be funded, by De Montfort University as part of wider campus improvements.

Consultation on these projects will be carried out through a combination of engagement with cycle, access and other affected groups, statutory consultation and specific consultation where appropriate e.g. Welford Road.

4. Details of Scrutiny

The Connecting Leicester 2 programme was considered at the 23rd July, 2015 Economic Development Transport and Tourism Scrutiny Commission.

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

The total estimated cost of the Connecting Leicester Phase 2 programme outlined in this report is £10.34m.

External funding to be provided from the Government/LLEP Local Growth Fund for the Charter Street/Charles Street projects includes £1.96m as secured for the 2015/16 financial year and already included in the 2015/16 capital programme. A further £676k from the Local Growth Fund is expected to be allocated in 2016/17, although there is a small risk that this funding may not be forthcoming and therefore needs to be underwritten through the Economic Action Plan.

The Mill Lane scheme is estimated at this stage to be £2m. Whilst the full cost of the scheme is to be funded by De Montfort University, it will be delivered by the Council

and as such will need to be added to the capital programme. The capital programme will need to be adjusted when final costs are determined. The scheme will proceed only when DMU funding is in place.

The Council's 2015/16 Capital Programme also already includes contributions to support the North City Centre Works at Charter Street (£900k) and works at Welford Road (£300k available), a total of £1.2m.

A sum of £4.50m is therefore required to be allocated from resources set aside for the Economic Action Plan to fund the balance of the estimated programme cost.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance, ext. 37 4081

5.2 Legal implications

No legal implications arise in principle from the programme. Officers working on schemes may seek specific legal advice on the statutory procedures that are required to be followed before the pedestrian and cycle improvements are implemented.

Hannah Price Solicitor, Legal Services

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

Leicester City Council has a target to reduce the carbon footprint of the city by 50% by 2025, based on 1990 levels. Both phases of the Connecting Leicester scheme seek to encourage walking and cycling in the city by improving pedestrian environments and access for cyclists. Converting transport habits from driving to walking and cycling will contribute to a reduction in city wide emissions.

Louise Buckley, Senior Environmental Consultant (Climate Change), 372 293

5.4 Equality Impact Assessment

The equality impacts of the schemes within the programme and mitigating actions will be considered during the development of schemes and individual EIAs will be produced as appropriate.

5.5 Other Implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

None

6. Background information and other papers:

Presentation to 23rd July 2015 Economic Development Transport and Tourism Scrutiny Commission

7. Summary of appendices:

None

8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

9. Is this a “key decision”?

Yes

10. If a key decision please explain reason

Capital spending in excess of £1m is to be committed on schemes not specifically authorised by Council (specifically the £4.5m Economic Action Plan funds, £2m from DMU and £676k expected from the Local Growth Fund in 2016/17); and the programme significantly affects more than one ward.