
Individual Cabinet Member Delegated Decision

Cabinet Member for Economic Development, MCI and Communications – Cllr Philip Whitehead

Service Economic Development and planning

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Reference:

Title: Chippenham Station Hub – Approval to vary the existing Chippenham Station Hub funding agreement with SWLEP and replace it in its entirety with the terms of a new Agreement to reflect a revised funding amount.

Purpose of Report

1. This report seeks authority to vary the existing Chippenham Station Hub funding agreement with SWLEP and replace it in its entirety with the terms of a new Agreement to reflect a revised funding amount.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. To ensure that Wiltshire Council/Chippenham maximises the benefits and opportunities associated with the Growth Deal programme in terms of delivering key infrastructure projects and building Wiltshire's economy.
3. The Chippenham Station Hub projects and improvements will help delivery economic development in a sustainable manner by improving the use of public transport, better the experience for those arriving at the station, improving the station's role as a transport gateway to Chippenham town centre and create opportunities for jobs and growth. It will also support the grow in demand created by Great Western Main Line Modernisation Programme as well as the additional housing provision planned for the area.

Background

4. A Local Growth funding bid for the Chippenham Station Hub project was submitted as part of the Swindon and Wiltshire LEP Strategic and Economic Plan in 2014. It received a funding allocation of £16M.
5. The Cabinet Capital Assets Committee agreed in September 2016 to grant delegated authority to the Director of Economic Development and Planning to cashflow and deliver the schemes.
6. In October 2016 a grant agreement for £16M was entered into with the SWLEP with WC acting as Accountable Body, i.e. acting as the accountable organisation for SWLEP.

Main Considerations for the Council

7. During feasibility stage, an element of Chippenham Station Hub work (parking intensification in the northern platform) was deemed unfeasible/poor value for money.
8. This information was presented to the SWLEP and the Board decided to reduce the total funding envelop from £16M to £13M.

Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

9. In March 2020, the Joint Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) Task Group produced a report on the Chippenham Station Hub Project. The Chippenham Station Hub project was identified as a specific project for the task group to explore; the aim being for the task group to scrutinise the role of the SWLEP.
10. In undertaking this work, the task group was informed of a variety of reasons why this had been a constantly evolving project; including the detailed design of the various elements developing within the cost constraints of the allocated funding and within the needs and constraints of the variety of public sector and private sector partners involved in the project. The evolving nature of the project is also reflected in this request for a delegated decision. The task group is no longer in existence. There is now a SWLEP joint scrutiny panel, and the panel will be informed of this delegated decision.

Safeguarding Implications

11. No implications

Public Health Implications

12. The work of the SWLEP delivered through nationally competitive Growth Deals, aims to deliver significant levels of new jobs in Wiltshire and attract significant private sector investment to our economy. This will help ensure that Wiltshire's economy remains strong and resilient and that employment figures remain high.
13. The local economy is a known contributor to the wider determinants of health. A struggling local economy can lead to higher unemployment throughout the local population. This in turn can impact on the social, physical and mental health outcomes of the population. Getting people into work is therefore of critical importance for reducing health inequalities.

14. The proposed improvements offer an opportunity to enhance utilisation of both public transport and active travel options which over time could lead to improved health outcomes. There may also be associated benefits in relation to both road safety and air quality.

Procurement Implications

15. None identified

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

16. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills published its Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) for Growth Deals in July 2014. The report concludes that the Growth Deal programme has no adverse impact on any protected group and that the proposed funding decision is neutral in advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share the relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
17. As the project develops, Wiltshire Council officers will continue to consider the Final 5-9-16 equality implications locally and ensure that there are no negative impacts. This will be done throughout the life of their development and delivery.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

18. The planned improvements provide an opportunity to embed the development of a low carbon infrastructure and sustainable building practices.
19. The proposed improvements offer an opportunity to enhance utilisation of both public transport and active travel options which reduce the use of private car and therefore contribute to an overall carbon and pollution reduction in Wiltshire.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

20. There could be reputational issues for Wiltshire Council and SWLEP around transparency, accountability and compliance which could affect our ability to bid for future central government funding.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

21. No significant risks have been identified

Financial Implications

22. None identified - this is a LEP funded project and Wiltshire Council is only acting as the accountable body. Funding has already been allocated and approved by the SWLEP.

Legal Implications

23. Wiltshire Council's legal team have been involved in drafting the revised funding agreement with the SWLEP.

Workforce Implications

24. None identified

Options Considered

25. Not entering into a new agreement to reflect the revised funding amount could raise issues around transparency, accountability and compliance.

Proposal

26. The conclusions reached having taken all of the above into account.

Reason for Proposal

27. Approval to vary the existing Chippenham Station Hub funding agreement with SWLEP and replace it in its entirety with the terms of a new Agreement to reflect a revised funding amount.

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Background Papers

The following documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

- [Capital Assets Committee Meeting September 2016](#)