

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	12 th November 2013
Report of:	Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity
Subject/Title:	Strategic Infrastructure - Poynton Relief Road (Forward Plan Ref. CE 13/14-51)
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor David Brown, Strategic Communities

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 This report updates on the major steps forward in the funding and delivery of this key piece of strategic infrastructure which will help promote jobs-led growth in the north of the Borough.
- 1.2 Cabinet approved at their meeting in September 2012 to update and develop a revised route for Poynton Relief Road (PRR). This road will form part of a wider multi modal strategy for the A523 corridor which will include other complementary measures.
- 1.3 The A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road (A6-MARR) scheme is fully funded and this makes it vital that the PRR scheme is delivered as soon as possible to realise the traffic and wider economic benefits to the Borough.
- 1.4 The scheme has been prioritised by the Cheshire and Warrington Local Transport Body (CWLTB) in its 4 year funding programme from 2015/16 to 2018/19. Additional funding will be bid through the Growth Deals process between the Government and the LEP. A business case is required to be developed to access the CWLTB funding and design work will need to be undertaken to enable swift implementation of the scheme when full funding is in place or to take full advantage of other funding opportunities.
- 1.5 This report requests approval for a range of key tasks to be progressed that enable a revised programme to be achieved to deliver the PRR and any A523 corridor improvements subject to the residual funding being identified.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 To endorse the successful £5.62m funding allocation through the Cheshire and Warrington Local Transport Body process and the inclusion of the scheme and A523 corridor strategy in the Growth deal bid to Government.
- 2.2 That a DfT compliant business case be developed to allow access to this funding.
- 2.3 That the objectives of the scheme be defined as:

- To support the economic, physical and social regeneration of Poynton and the North of the Borough, in particular Macclesfield.
- To relieve existing Village centre traffic congestion and HGVs and reduce traffic on less desirable roads on the wider network.
- To deliver a range of complementary measures on the A523 corridor to Macclesfield that addresses Road Safety, Congestion and mitigates the wider environmental impact of traffic.
- To improve strategic transport linkages across the Borough, including improving a key strategic link between the A6-MARR, Macclesfield and the M6 thereby facilitating wider economic and transport benefits including higher GVA and job creation.
- To allow improvements to the highway network for walking, cycling and public transport

- 2.4 That the corridor of interest for new possible routes for PRR be agreed as shown in **Appendix A**
- 2.5 That approval to proceed to public consultation on possible new routes for PRR be delegated to the Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Communities.
- 2.6 That the extended scheme programme be delivered (attached at **Appendix C**) with the following key milestones:

Task	Start	Finish
1. Revised Preferred Route announcement	Ongoing	May 2014
2. Preliminary Design including improvements to the A523 corridor to Macclesfield and scoping a wider multi modal strategy.	May 2014	February 2015
3. Scheme Business Case	May 2014	May 2015
4. Environmental Surveys	May 2014 (Indicative dates)	May 2015 (Indicative dates)
5. Environmental Statement	February 2015 (Indicative dates)	August 2015 (Indicative dates)
6. Planning Application	August 2015 (Indicative dates)	January 2016 (Indicative dates)

2.7 That Cabinet note the revised budget profile as set out below:

- £0.350m 2013/14
- £0.650m 2014/15
- £0.150m 2015/16

Total £1.150m

2.8 That the scope of the brief be extended to consider measures to address safety, environmental and congestion issues on the A523 corridor between the end of the proposed PRR and the end of the Silk Road in Macclesfield, including undertaking a wider multi modal study to manage traffic growth on the A523 corridor.

2.9 That the necessary professional services for these tasks continue to be procured through the current Highway Services Contract (Ringway Jacobs) subject to the Strategic Infrastructure Manager being assured of value for money.

2.10 That the project governance structure as set out in **Appendix B** be approved.

2.11 To note that the Highway Agency intends to remove its route protection for PRR in the near future and that Cheshire East Council will become liable for blight costs associated with the route protection of PRR as contained in the extant Macclesfield Borough Council Local Plan.

2.12 To request that Stockport MBC maintain and broaden its Local Plan protection for PRR along a corridor of interest that lies within its boundaries until such time as Cheshire East Council provides a revised route and, if necessary, to indemnify Stockport MBC against any blight claims it may receive as a result of its route protection for PRR. This plan is shown at **Appendix A**.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 These recommendations are necessary:

- To ensure that Poynton Relief Road can be constructed at the earliest opportunity to take advantage of any new funding streams that become available and coincide with the opening of the A6-MARR.
- That measures are identified and developed to ensure that complimentary measures are provided on the A523 corridor to Macclesfield.

- To enable a new protected route to be included within the CEC local plan.
- To continue to protect the existing route of the relief road in the meantime until any revised route is agreed and incorporated into the Local Plan.

4.0 Wards Affected

4.1 Poynton East and Pott Shrigley, Poynton West and Adlington, Prestbury

5.0 Local Ward Members

5.1 Local Ward Members include:

- Poynton East and Pott Shrigley – Cllr Howard Murray and Cllr Jos Saunders.
- Poynton West and Adlington – Cllr Philip Hoyland and Cllr Roger West.
- Prestbury – Cllr Paul Findlow.

5.2 As part of the project Governance, the design team will be seeking support for establishing a Local Member Working Group now that the project will move forward to planning and business case milestones.

6.0 Policy Implications

6.1 The current programme for the production of the draft Core Strategy of the Local Plan indicates publication will take place by Autumn 2013 enabling a submission to the Secretary of State by early 2014.

6.2 The final protected line for PRR needs to be established and approved by Summer 2015 for inclusion within the Local Plan Site Allocations document. A corridor of interest will be provided in the Core Strategy.

6.3 Until this time, the existing route protection for the scheme will be maintained as shown on the extant Macclesfield Local Plan. Stockport MBC will protect that part of the scheme that falls within their authority area.

6.4 No strategic development sites have been identified in and around Poynton but there are proposed allocations for new settlements, one on the former BAe Woodford site (in Stockport MBC plan) and the other at Handforth East. Any non-strategic sites will be identified within the Site Allocations Document.

6.5 The scheme will improve connectivity from the North of the Borough to the Motorway network.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 In July 2013 the DfT confirmed the CWLTB allocations for devolved funding covering the period 2015 to 2019. £14.5m was awarded to the CWLTB. Subject to confirmation of the business case the PRR has been

confirmed as a priority scheme by the CWLTB. The funding awarded amounts to £5.62m in the 2015 to 2019 period with an additional £4.16m to be made available as part of the next Spending Review period.

- 7.2 The junction that accommodates the PRR will be funded by the SEMMMS project. The SEMMMS project has also agreed in principle to making a contribution of £2m towards the PRR. A separate legal undertaking should be progressed to secure this with the Greater Manchester combined Authority (GMCA).
- 7.3 Indicative scheme costs, including project development and land, are in the region of £20m (including 44% optimism bias). The funding gap outside of the CWLTB allocation and the settlement with GMCA will need to be identified from the Council's capital programme or from other funding sources.
- 7.4 The Council owns land on the current protected alignment of the PRR – a revised alignment which avoids this would increase the value of this asset.
- 7.5 The current budget provision for the scheme is £1.150m this assumes a contribution from the GMCA of £0.550m, which the Council may be required to fund in advance of the actual receipt.
- 7.6 The current approved commission to provide a revised protected route (Task 1) has a budget estimate of £350,000.
- 7.7 The indicative budget estimate to complete the whole of tasks 2 – 6 is £0.800m; all within the current budget provision of £1.150m.
- 7.8 The current route of PRR is contained in the extant Macclesfield Borough Council Local Plan. The Highways Agency has also maintained the same route protection and has met any blight claim costs over the years. However, the Highways Agency has informed us that they intend to remove the route protection in conjunction with the wider development of the A6-MARR scheme.
- 7.9 Assessing the financial implications of any potential blight claims on the route of the existing PRR is very difficult and although likely to be on an exceptional basis, this does present a risk that additional funding may be required to be met from Council resources.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 The Highways Agency (HA) has maintained a protected route corridor, as shown in the Macclesfield Local Plan, and associated orders for part of the SEMMMS which at the time included Poynton Relief Road. Now that both the SEMMMS scheme and the Poynton Relief Road are being progressed as local authority promoted schemes, the HA want to remove their protection from the corridor. In order for the Council to progress the Poynton Relief Road, the protected route corridor must remain in the Local Plan and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Council will be liable for any blight claims following the removal of the HA's

protection. It is not clear at present when the HA protection will cease and when the liability will transfer to the Council.

- 8.2 The majority of Poynton relief road is in Cheshire East, however, a small section of the route for which the HA maintains protection is in Stockport. Cheshire East has written to Stockport Council requesting that a corridor of interest for the alignment of the Poynton Relief Road is protected within the Stockport boundary. It may be necessary for the council to indemnify Stockport Council against any blight claims that it receives in respect of the PRR.
- 8.3 Other legal issues and considerations which will apply to this project will be the subject of future Cabinet reports. However the following matters will/ may be relevant as the scheme develops:
1. Protected route process
 2. Planning permission
 3. Compulsory Purchase Procedures including in all likelihood a public enquiry
 4. Side Roads and Traffic Regulation Orders
 5. Highway agreement with Stockport Council for the procurement and carrying out of the works within Stockport

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 It is considered that continuing with project development work on the PRR will enable the council to be best placed to take advantage of funding opportunities that may flow from the Governments 'Growth Deals'. However, there can be no certainties that this funding will be available.
- 9.2 Preliminary traffic modelling undertaken for the PRR indicates that a wider strategy for the remaining A523 corridor needs to be considered. This work would consider issues affecting the existing road corridor including looking at other modes of transport.
- 9.3 Gateway reviews, built into the Project Plan and governance structure will ensure that progress to the next stage of scheme development is warranted.
- 9.4 It is considered that the risk of new blight claims arising on the existing protected route is very low as a revised alignment is expected relatively quickly and the Highways Agency have settled most valid claims over the years.
- 9.5 An assessment of potential Part 1 claims arising as a result of the scheme has been undertaken. However, the true / eventual cost of part 1 claims is notoriously difficult to assess and these figures will be kept under review by the Project Team.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 A protected route currently exists for PRR. Following the closure of BAe Systems, Woodford, work is being undertaken by the Council to identify preliminary options for a more direct alignment for PRR that will have a stronger business case and lower capital cost.
- 10.2 Following the Cabinet meeting of September 2012, the Council has commissioned consultants to undertake the necessary work to support the investigation, development and assessment of a new preferred route for PRR. This includes:
 - Preliminary Investigation and Scoping;
 - Data Gathering;
 - Option Development (DMRB Stages 1 and 2);
 - Traffic Modelling and Option Appraisal; and
 - Technical Appraisal Report and Preferred Route proposal.
- 10.3 The Project programme and plan will be taken for approval at the Executive Management Board prior to commencement of the next stages of work.
- 10.4 Once a new preferred route has been defined the route protection on the former HA alignment can be removed – allowing for any land owned held by the council to be used for other purposes or sold.
- 10.5 Stockport MBC is a major stakeholder in the scheme because the part of the Scheme is within their boundaries and the scheme connects to the A6MARR. As such it is essential that as the scheme develops it reflects the views of Stockport Council. A senior representative of Stockport MBC has therefore been invited on to the project board. For information the local junctions proposed on the A6MARR scheme are shown in **Appendix D**.
- 10.6 The proposed Governance Structure is included in **Appendix B**.
- 10.7 The scheme is being progressed in line with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) and to support future funding opportunities it is also compliant with the Department for Transport's (DfT) Web based Transport Appraisal Guidance (WebTAG).
- 10.8 Current activities are focused on the Stage 1 DMRB Assessment of the Route Options and early engagement with the SEMMMS team has enabled the Data Gathering and the Traffic & Economic Appraisal to progress. Following confirmation of the timescales associated with the Local Plan, public consultation on route options will be undertaken in early 2014.
- 10.9 As part of the scheme development process, the outputs from the historic SEMMMS strategy are being reviewed to ensure that they are still relevant including scheme objectives, problems and opportunities. This work is being undertaken to ensure that a road based scheme is still the correct measure to address the identified problems.

- 10.10 In addition, an initial review of the appropriateness of the SEMMMS outputs is being undertaken using the DfT's Early Assessment Sifting Tool (EAST). This will ensure best practice and help mitigate future risks as the scheme develops.
- 10.11 Following the identification of a revised preferred route the next steps to deliver the scheme are to undertake preliminary design and progress the scheme through the necessary statutory processes including Planning, Side Roads Orders and Compulsory Purchase Orders.
- 10.12 Because of their knowledge of the scheme and in order to maintain continuity, it is considered that the current consultants are best placed to deliver this service most efficiently. It is recommended that the Head of Environmental Protection and Enhancement identify the necessary fee and commission the current consultants to develop the scheme. The scope of these works is adequately covered in the Highways Services Contract with Ringway Jacobs.
- 10.13 At the northern end of the scheme, the Council is working closely with the SEMMMS project team to develop an acceptable solution to the interface of the proposed PRR with the SEMMMS scheme at Chester Road. Details of the indicative arrangement are included in a report taken to cabinet on 7 May 2013.

11.0 Access of Information

- 11.1 The background papers relating to this report can inspected by contacting the author:
- | | |
|--------------|--|
| Name: | Paul Griffiths |
| Designation: | Principal Transportation Officer |
| Tel No: | 01270 686353 |
| Email: | paul.griffiths@cheshireeast.gov.uk |