

## MEETING OF THE BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY (BLTB) – THURSDAY 15 JULY 2020

**CONTACT OFFICER: Josie Wragg, Chief Executive, Slough Borough Council, Lead Officer to the BLTB**

### **Item 14: Requested scheme updates following June BLTB meeting**

#### ***Purpose of Report***

1. At your meeting in June 2020, you requested specific scheme updates on three projects that were approved:
  - 1.1. scheme 2.24 Newbury railway station upgrade;
  - 1.2. scheme 2.38 Theale railway station upgrade and
  - 1.3. scheme 2.13 Thames Valley Park and Ride/ Wokingham Borough Council Bus Service Tender.

#### ***Recommendation***

2. You are recommended to note the following update reports from the scheme promoters.

#### ***Supporting Information***

### **3. West Berkshire: Scheme 2.24 Newbury Station upgrade**

Work is taking place to meet the conditions set against the two addendums for Newbury Station.

One of the conditions that the scheme promoters can report progress against is: Completion of the demand analysis study, with a clear demonstration of strong potential demand for the business start-up units that correlates with a strong probability of high occupancy levels of the units.

With regards to progress, a draft of the demand analysis study has been received and considered by the scheme promoters. Further details will be reported against this condition once the information from the study has been used to shape the fine details and plans for the business start-up units.

### **4. West Berkshire: scheme 2.38 Theale Station upgrade**

Four conditions were set for the Theale Station Upgrade Scheme. Work to meet the first condition has been progressed. The condition was as follows:

Further analysis of the impact the scheme will have upon decongestion of the highway network, including the number of trips removed from corridors leading into urban areas with known congested networks, which is sufficient to determine that the decongestion benefits will be higher than those currently presented within the Economic Case.

The scope for some additional highway modelling work to help satisfy this condition has been agreed and the work has been commissioned. It was acknowledged that the Wokingham Strategic Model was the best tool to use to undertake this work and Officers at West Berkshire are very grateful to colleagues at Wokingham for permitting use of their model for this work. Initial outcomes from this work are expected by the end of the month.

## 5. Common conditions to both Newbury and Theale schemes

There are some conditions that are common to both schemes. These are:

- Formal funding commitment from First Group and DfT for the match funding identified by GWR.
- An understanding of what processes would be undertaken in the event of any cost overruns, should they arise.

With regards to (9.1) above funding submissions have been made by GWR to DfT and is currently with the Department for consideration.

The proposed response to the second condition listed in 9.2 is as follows:

It is acknowledged that there are no further opportunities to bid for funding from the LEP

Contingency has been built into the cost of the scheme. However, if cost overruns arise for any reason the scheme promoters will work together to address these. Options will be explored as follows:

- opportunities for value engineering in order to reduce costs
- availability of funding from either of the scheme promoter organisations
- opportunities to bid for funding from other sources

The scheme promoters' objective will remain to deliver the scheme according to the details set out in the relevant business case in order that the full value of the benefits are realised.

## 6. Next Steps Newbury/ Theale

There is more work to be done across both schemes on meeting the conditions set at the BLTB meeting on 4th June. Work will progress in order to meet these conditions within the timescales set and to achieve full financial approval for these schemes.

## 7. Wokingham Borough Council/ scheme 2.13 Thames Valley Park and Ride/ Bus service tender

The car park construction for this project is very nearly complete. There remains a small amount of surfacing and minor works required (less than 1 week's work), however, worked stopped and the sub-contractor furloughed its staff.

The bus service tender has been written and is ready to be released, however, due to the current circumstances there is little likelihood of the bus service being well-used in the short term. At present WBC are monitoring the changing government advice and usage of bus services and expect to reconsider whether to tender in September.

### **Conclusion**

8. There is no further action required at this point, but all schemes will continue to be monitored against required conditions.

**Background Papers:** None.