

**Berkshire Local Transport Body – Meeting held on Thursday, 31st January, 2019.**

**Present:-**

Councillor Page (in the Chair)	Reading Borough Council
Charles Eales (Vice-Chair)	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Stuart Atkinson	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Councillor Bicknell	RBWM
Councillor Carter	Slough Borough Council
Councillor Clifford	West Berkshire Council
Malcolm Kempton	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Bob Mountain	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Simon Ratcliffe	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Councillor Sleight (deputy)	Wokingham Borough Council
Matthew Taylor	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP

**Also present under Rule 30:-** Councillor Chopping (Wokingham Borough Council)

**In attendance:-** Rob Stubbs (RBWM, TVB LEP accountable body)

**Apologies for Absence:-** None.

**PART 1**

**31. BLTB Membership**

It was noted that following a recruitment process, Bob Mountain had been appointed to BLTB as a representative of Thames Valley Berkshire LEP.

**Resolved –** That Bob Mountain be welcomed to BTLB.

**32. Declarations of Interest**

Matthew Taylor declared that he worked for Stewarts Coaches Ltd, which had a potential commercial interest in Item 8: 2.34 Slough MRT Phase 2. He withdrew from the meeting during consideration of the item.

**33. Briefing Note - TVB LEP/BLTB 'How We Work' - To Note**

Members noted a briefing note that summarised the process by which Thames Valley Berkshire LEP and the Berkshire Local Transport Body operated in investing in local transport schemes. The Chief Executive of Thames Valley Berkshire LEP commented that the organisation was going through a new assurance process which was likely to include a review of BLTB Assurance Framework and ways of working.

**Resolved –** That the BLTB 'How we work' briefing note be noted.

**34. Revised Local Growth Fund Programme 2015/16 to 2020/21**

A report was considered on proposals to revise the Local Growth Fund (LGF) programme 2015/16 to 2020/21.

East Reading MRT Phases 1 and 2 had been delayed following the refusal of planning permission for the second time by Wokingham Borough Council. The scheme promoter had confirmed that it could not therefore be delivered within the current LGF programme by the end of 2020/21. It was proposed that the £19,067,000 of LGF be re-allocated to following schemes from the previously agreed prioritised list:

- 2.35 Reading: Reading West Station Upgrade
- 2.36 Wokingham: Coppid Beech Park and Ride
- 2.37 Bracknell: A322 A329 Corridor Improvements
- 2.38 Theale: Theale Station Park and Rail Upgrade
- 2.39 Wokingham: Coppid Beech northbound on-slip widening
- 2.40 Windsor: Town Centre Package

It was also proposed that consideration of programme entry status for a further scheme, 2.41 Slough: MRT Phase 3 A4 West Park & Ride, be deferred until the BLTB meeting in March 2019.

BLTB was disappointed that the delays to the East Reading MRT scheme had meant that it could not be delivered in the timescales required for LGF investment and some of the lessons learned were discussed. Councillor Page commented that Reading Borough Council would continue to look at the options to address the transport issues that the scheme sought to address. It was recognised that there were delivery risks to major schemes but that effective programme management meant that there were other strong schemes able to be funded and realistically delivered on time. The timetable was tight for the proposed schemes and assurance was sought from scheme promoters that they would be able to bring forward their schemes by 2021.

There were particular timetable risks for the Slough MRT Phase 3 A4 West Park and Ride scheme given the involvement of other interested parties and discussions were ongoing with Highways England. BLTB agreed that it would want to be assured that the delivery risks could be managed by the time it was considered for financial approval in March 2019. It was also agreed that the links with bodies such as Highways England and Network Rail were important and TVB LEP was asked to discuss with them their engagement at the LTB and/or Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the LTB agreed that the East Reading MRT schemes be deleted from the programme and the funding released be reallocated to other schemes as per the prioritised list.

**Resolved –**

- (a) That scheme 2.14 and 2.25 East Reading MRT Phases 1 and 2 be deleted from the LGF programme following notification from Reading Borough Council that it cannot now be progressed before March 2021.
- (b) That programme entry status be granted to the following schemes (agreed at the meeting of the BLTB in July 2018):
- 2.35 Reading: Reading West Station Upgrade
  - 2.36 Wokingham: Coppid Beech Park and Ride
  - 2.37 Bracknell: A322 A329 Corridor Improvements
  - 2.38 Theale: Theale Station Park and Rail Upgrade
  - 2.39 Wokingham: Coppid Beech northbound on-slip widening
  - 2.40 Windsor: Town Centre Package
- (c) That consideration of programme entry status for scheme 2.41 Slough: SMaRT Phase 3 A4 West Park and Ride be deferred until the meeting of the BLTB in March.

**35. Business Rates Retention Pilot Year 2 - Approvals**

Following the successful application for a second Berkshire-wide Business Rates Retention Pilot (BRRP), a report was considered that recommended the allocation of BRRP 2 monies.

The Berkshire Treasurers' Group had calculated a planning figure of £11m for allocation for 2019/20 on the same basis as for schemes in the first year which was for major infrastructure schemes which supported housing development or major regeneration projects.

The schemes proposed to be funded through BRRP 2 were as follows:

- Slough MRT Phase 2 £3.058m.
- Maidenhead Housing Sites Enabling Works Phase 1 £1.068m.
- South Wokingham Distributor Road – Eastern Gateway £5.000m.
- Further revenue support for the development of infrastructure business cases (£1.874m).

Approval was also sought to award programme entry status to 2.42 Wokingham: South Wokingham Distributor Road – Eastern Gateway. The recommendations were in line with the priorities agreed by BLTB at the meeting in November 2018. It was also noted that there was an anomaly in the minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2018 relating to Slough MRT Phase 2 and it was proposed that this be clarified as per resolution (c) below.

After due consideration, the LTB agreed the recommendations as proposed.

**Resolved –**

- (a) That the following allocation of BRRP funds in 2019-20 be confirmed:
- i. Slough MRT Phase 2 £3.058m (top up from BRRP1)
  - ii. Maidenhead Housing Sites Enabling Works Phase 1 £1.068m (20% own contribution from LGF)
  - iii. South Wokingham Distributor Road – Eastern Gateway £5.000m
  - iv. Further revenue support for the development of infrastructure business cases, the balancing amount (£1.874m based on a £11m overall approval), subject to a detailed report to a future meeting of BLTB
- (b) That programme entry status be granted to 2.42 Wokingham: South Wokingham Distributor Road – Eastern Gateway.
- (c) That Minute 7 of the BLTB meeting of 19th July 2018 in relation to Slough MRT Phase 2 be corrected, by reiterating that in order to cap the level of BRRP commitment at £25m, the funding for the Slough MRT scheme was agreed to be reduced from £13.3m to £10.242m

**36. TfSE - Proposal to Seek Statutory Status - Informal Engagement Process**

A report was considered that set out the process for Transport for the South East (TfSE) to seek statutory status. The purpose of the Sub-National Transport Body would be to facilitate the development of a transport strategy and so promote economic growth for the area.

The TfSE Shadow Board had approved a draft Proposal to Government for informal engagement in the period to 1 March 2019 followed by a formal period of consultation between 2 May and 31 July 2019 after the local elections. Briefings were proposed for each of six Berkshire authorities and those in West Berkshire, Slough and Reading were already confirmed. Each authority would need to take a report to their relevant decision making body to make a formal resolution to become a constituent authority of TfSE.

Councillor Page, who was the Vice-Chair of TfSE, encouraged authorities to participate during the engagement periods and informed members of the approach that was being taken to ensure the new body added value to work at local and sub-regional level.

The membership arrangements and distribution of votes were clarified. There would be one representative for BLTB with six votes of a total of 54 from TfSEs constituent authorities. Each Berkshire authority were contributing circa £10,000 for their membership. It was an option for each unitary authority to participate individually rather than through BLTB jointly, the cost of which would be circa £30,000 each.

Members agreed the importance of working collaboratively to develop the strategy and schemes. It was noted that workshops would be held and proposals would come back to the LTB for consideration as the work of TfSE moved forward.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the recommendations were agreed.

**Resolved –**

- (a) That it be noted that the officers would prepare a response on behalf of BLTB which would be subject to your further consideration and response on 15 March 2019;
- (b) That it be noted that TfSE proposed to conduct formal consultation on its final proposal to government and that this would be the subject of a further report to the BLTB meeting on 18 July 2019.

**37. Financial Approval for 2.32 Maidenhead: Housing Sites Enabling Works Phase 1**

A report was considered that sought giving financial approval to scheme 2.32 Maidenhead: Housing Sites Enabling Works Phase 1. The scheme consisted of a package of traffic management measures to deliver additional capacity at key junctions around Maidenhead.

It was proposed that conditional approval for a total of £4.2m be given subject to the supply of further evidence to support the business case. The scheme had been reduced from the original 8 junctions to 6 and the costs had reduced by £600k accordingly. The scheme had a high Benefit-Cost Ratio of 3.2.

BLTB welcomed the progress of the scheme and agreed financial approval, subject to the conditions set out in the report.

**Resolved –**

- (a) That scheme 2.32 Maidenhead: Housing Sites Enabling Works Phase 1 be given conditional financial approval in the sum of £2,123,200 in 2019/20 and £2,090,000 in 2020/21 on the terms of the funding agreement set out at paragraph 12 step 5 below, subject to meeting the following conditions:
- (b) The supply of further evidence which supported the conclusions reached in the Full Business Case in respect of:
  - Additional detail outlining the approach adopted to determine the dependent development sites and preferred junction enhancements.
  - Further detail on how the package of junction improvements will address the secondary objectives relating to accidents, air quality and accessibility for walking & cycling.

- Additional detail on the RBWM-HM2 model, its baseline calibration and validation, and how it reflects current junction performance.
- Detailed workings to support the outputs of the quantified economic assessment.
- Inclusion of sensitivity tests to understand the impact of any variability in the benefits and costs of the scheme.
- Full assessment of environmental and social impacts of the scheme and inclusion of an Appraisal Summary Table.
- Further detail around scheme costs, contingency (linked to a quantified risk assessment), and levels of cost inflation.
- Clarifications to the Commercial Case in relation to the procurement processes.
- Provision of a full project programme, risk register and Quantified Risk Assessment
- That the scheme retains high or better value for money once these conditions have been met.

*(Matthew Taylor withdrew from the meeting at this point)*

### **38. Financial Approval for 2.34 Slough MRT Phase 2**

A report was considered that sought full financial approval for a total of £13.3m for Slough Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) Phase 2 from the Business Rates Retention Pilot. It was noted that a revised version of the report had been published in a Supplementary Agenda and it was this version that was considered.

Phase 2 would extend the MRT project from its current end point at Langley and take it onto the Heathrow service road. Bus lanes and other priority measures would be put in place and there was also funding for a 600-car park and ride site at Brands Hill. Members asked a number of questions including about the impact on the commercial viability of the scheme if Heathrow Airport expansion did not take place. The scheme promoter responded that three bus services were already in operation and would link into the park and ride. Heathrow expansion would add further and more frequent services but assurance was provided that the scheme was not dependent on airport expansion.

After due consideration, financial approval was given to the scheme.

**Resolved** – That scheme 2.34 Slough MRT Phase 2 be given full financial approval in the sum of £13,300,000, with £10,242,000 in 2018/19 from BRRP1 and £3,058,000 in 2019/20 from BRRP2 on the terms of the funding agreement set out at paragraph 12 step 5 of the report.

*(Matthew Taylor rejoined the meeting)*

**39. Business Rates Retention Pilot - Revenue Support**

A report was considered that recommended approval of the revenue support proposal of Bracknell Forest Council under the provision put in place in July 2018 to “top slice” £600k from the BRRP to provide revenue funding to assist authorities develop a strong pipeline of future infrastructure schemes.

The revenue funding of £100k each for Reading, West Berkshire, Windsor & Maidenhead and Wokingham had been agreed by the LTB in November 2018 and the proposal of Bracknell Forest was set out in Appendix 1. Slough’s proposal was due to be approved in March 2019.

The LTB agreed the revenue support proposal of Bracknell Forest Council as at Appendix 1 to the report.

**Resolved –** That the revenue support proposal and the drawdown of BRRP funds by Bracknell Forest Council set out in appendix 1 to the report be approved.

**40. Date of Next Meeting - 14th March 2019**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 14<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.00 pm and closed at 4.40 pm)