



Cabinet report

Date	15 JULY 2021
Title	RYDE TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE – TRANSFORMING CITIES FUND UPDATE
Report of	CABINET MEMBER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report explains the outcome of the joint partnership bid with Hampshire County Council and Portsmouth City Council for a share of the Department for Transport (DfT) Tranche 2 Transforming Cities Fund (TCF); the scope of the planned improvements to the transport interchange in Ryde; the approach to public consultation and the project delivery programme.
2. Delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhoods is sought to finalise the design of those elements to be implemented by the council which will be informed by the findings of the public consultation, terminate leases as necessary to complete land assembly and to instruct the implementation of those works subject to construction costs being within the available funding and TCF funding timescales.

BACKGROUND

3. The project involves a number of enhancements to make the Ryde Transport Interchange area more attractive by reducing the dominance of motor vehicles and improving priority to pedestrians, and doing so in a way that respects the historic pier and rail station and celebrates the local heritage. The main elements include:
 - (a) Remodelling and refurbishment of the Esplanade bus interchange to create a better environment for bus users and pedestrians making it easier and safer for buses to manoeuvre in and around the bus station and allowing services to exit via George Street, operating more efficiently and reliably.
 - (b) Reinstatement of the pier tramway to provide a new separate 'boardwalk' facility for pedestrians and cyclists.
 - (c) Refurbishment of the station buildings including new, fully accessible disabled toilets, a new façade, remodelled / expanded concessions and access to the boardwalk.
 - (d) Improvement of cycling links to and through the interchange to link with the existing cycleway to Puckpool in the east and Ladies Walk in the west.

4. The council TCF funded element will be delivering the bus station, highway and cycling improvements; Wightlink will complete the pier tramway reinstatement and South Western Railways / Island Line (SWR) the station refurbishment. The council's works are planned to commence on site early in 2022 to be completed in around 12 months depending on detailed design following the consultation. The other elements are also due to complete by the beginning of 2023.
5. The project is Department for Transport (DfT) funded awarded to the Isle of Wight Council, Hampshire County Council and Portsmouth City Council (together as South East Hampshire Rapid Transport) after a successful joint bid to the Transforming Cities Fund. The project therefore is part of a wider, co-ordinated initiative to enhance sustainable transport infrastructure and connectivity in and around Portsmouth (Portsmouth City Region).
6. The overall funding bid was successful in attracting a total of £55.6 million, £10million of which is earmarked for the Ryde Transport Interchange improvements with implementation required by 30 March 2023. Approximately £30 million worth of complementary contributions are also being provided by Wightlink, Southern Vectis, Network Rail and South Western Railway as match funding toward the project.
7. The project is on a tight timetable for delivery. This allows consultation results to be reviewed and assessed and material selections to be made in order to finalise detailed design in August. In September final quotes will be required from sub-contractors and suppliers to agree a final scheme cost with the main contractor, to enable an order to be placed at the end of that month. This then gives the required three months' notice for the contractor to organise and mobilise for an on-site start in January 2022. The works are expected to take 12-13 months dependant on the final detailed design. This leaves two- or three-months contingency for construction issues such as unknown obstacles under the ground and poor weather conditions.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

8. The proposals for the Ryde Transport Interchange support the vision and aims of the Corporate Plan, through promoting the opportunity for Growth, further Regeneration beyond the scope of this project, and enabling Opportunity through better links with the Portsmouth city region. The revitalisation of the Ryde Transport Interchange will help promote wellbeing through promoting active travel and significant improvements to the associated infrastructure.
9. [Ryde Gateway](#) has been earmarked as the council's flagship regeneration project within its overall [2019-2030 Regeneration Strategy](#) for the Isle of Wight. Together with the [Ryde Place Plan](#) it has identified a set of strategic challenges and opportunities to the town and its future.
10. Among these is the need to "address critical road and transport junctions, including the seafront interchange itself" which "must be improved for the movement of traffic and the safety and convenience of residents and visitors." It is these aspirations and those of improving the wider public realm that are the focus of this project.
11. The intent is to reorganise the space to provide a more pedestrian prioritised area with additional public space opening up new views of the historic pier whilst facilitating

an improved transport interchange which respects the local heritage, wider natural environment and conservation area status.

12. Linking with existing infrastructure, the project will bring improvements for bus and rail users, cyclists, and pedestrians as well as for people using Wightlink's FastCat services. It also seeks to enhance the links with the town.

CONSULTATION

13. The scheme and public consultation has been developed to reflect the funding award conditions in liaison with the Ryde Regeneration Group comprising delegated representatives of Ryde Town Council, Ryde Society and Ryde Business Association and the principle partners in the project Wightlink, South West Railways and Southern Vectis.
14. Whilst there is no statutory duty to consult on this scheme, a public consultation was launched on 22nd June 2021 for a 6 week period which seeks observations on the materials, planting and features that will help define the space in and around Ryde Bus Station, Ryde Esplanade rail station and Ryde Pier. The intent is that the findings of the consultation will inform the choice of design materials, landscape and planting to help create a space that is more than a functional transport interchange rather a gateway to Ryde and destination in itself. The consultation document is linked in the background papers to this report.

FINANCIAL / BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

15. Whilst the TCF funding bid secured £10 million for the implementation of the scheme the construction cost estimates for each component remain to be confirmed following completion of the detailed designs.
16. The project will be delivered within the funding available, retaining sufficient funds for accrual to the PFI network for future maintenance and if necessary, the scope of the project will be reduced to do so.
17. As detailed below, the project does require the demolition of a kiosk and toilet block which are owned by the council and are currently the subject of leases. As such there could be an ongoing loss of c. £8,000 per annum of rental income. However, this project places no further constraints on a new concession (or similar) being agreed for Western Gardens in due course by Property Services.
18. The DfT require all Tranche 2 Transforming Cities Fund projects to be completed by March 2023 otherwise funding may be clawed-back. This risk is being mitigated by careful programme management including appropriate reviews at key stages to assess viability and affordability and adjust scope if needed.
19. As a consequence, this project does not present a significant financial risk or exposure for the council.

CARBON EMISSIONS

20. Though the core aim of the Transforming Cities Fund is increasing productivity and providing better access to good jobs. The proposals for the Ryde Transport

interchange significantly promote and will enable the use of sustainable travel, whether it would be use of public transport or active travel to connect with the cross Solent links with the Portsmouth City Region.

21. Whilst the proposed improvements will not directly impact the Council's carbon emissions, they will facilitate reduced bus journey distances improving the efficiency and reliability of bus services and so reduce the associated carbon emissions. In turn an increase in the use of sustainable travel is forecast and therefore a reduction in private vehicle use. This will also result in associated carbon emission reductions.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

22. Portsmouth City Council (PCC) are the accountable body for the DfT grant and so IWC council is subject to the terms of a funding agreement between PCC & IWC.
23. The project elements and benefits have been agreed with DfT as a part of the bidding process and any significant changes would require further negotiation.
24. To implement the scheme, it will be necessary to take possession of the toilet block and Ryde Pier Café. Whilst both of these are owned by the council they are currently the subject of leases. Whilst the lease for the toilet block to Ryde Town Council envisaged this requirement and makes specific provision for repossession, the lease on the Ryde Pier Café is longer standing and covered by the landlord and tenant act. This gives the tenant a right to renew the lease when it expires in March 2022 unless the site is required for redevelopment. In such circumstances, compensation equal to twice the rateable value is payable to the leasee and provision for that will be made within the construction cost.
25. In both cases the council is required to serve notice on the respective occupiers a minimum of 6 months before expiration of the leases and authority is sought so to do. However, where possible the council will seek to negotiate a mutually agreeable conclusion to ending the leases.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

26. The council as a public body is required to meet its statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equal opportunities between people from different groups and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
27. An equality impact screening assessment has been undertaken in respect of the project which is linked in the background papers to this report. This found either positive or no impact on the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 and consequently no further assessment is required.

PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

28. As mentioned previously, to implement the scheme it will be necessary to take possession of the toilet block and Ryde Pier Café which are owned by the council and subject to leases.
29. The scheme requires the demolition of these structures to allow for a new approach to the pier.
30. As detailed in the consultation document (included as a background paper) the wider project will also fund an enhanced concession and public toilet facilities within the Esplanade railway station so as to mitigate against any loss of key facilities. These will be under the management of SWR as is currently the case.

SECTION 17 CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

31. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended by Police and Justice Act 2006) provides that: ‘...it shall be the duty of each authority ... to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all it reasonably can to prevent, crime, disorder, antisocial behaviour adversely affecting the environment, and substance misuse in its area’.
32. Section 17 applies to all duties, activities and decision making. Ignorance or failure to respond to the requirements of section 17 leaves the Council open to legal challenge.
33. The scheme design contributes to reducing crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour by improving visibility across Western Gardens and the interchange improving natural surveillance.

OPTIONS

34. OPTION 1: That authority is delegated to the Director of Neighbourhoods to: finalise the design and materials for those elements of the project to be implemented by the council informed by the findings of the public consultation, terminate leases as necessary to complete land assembly in a timely manner and to instruct implementation of works subject to construction costs being within the available funding and TCF programme window.
35. OPTION 2: That the findings of the public consultation are reported to a future meeting of the cabinet to inform a final decision on the detailed design of those elements of the project to be implemented by the council. All other matters to be delegated to the Director of Neighbourhoods as above so as to advance the project prior to this decision. If cabinet meetings occur as planned, this programme delay would make it extremely unlikely that the project could be completed by the March 2023 end date required by the Department for Transport. This would also put the railway station and the tramway pier elements at risk as DfT are funding the whole package for completion by March 2023.
36. OPTION 3: The cabinet vote to halt the project (including the railway station and the tramway pier elements as DfT are funding the whole package for completion by March 2023) by bringing all currently contracted work to an appropriate close to retain

some return on investment for the council where possible, and return the funding. This would have a significant impact on the image and reputation of the Isle of Wight and make it very difficult to attract further funding for the foreseeable future.

RISK MANAGEMENT

37. This project is overseen by the major highway improvements project board comprising the portfolio holder, director and senior officer in relevant services. That project board meets monthly, receives progress reports from the project manager and reviews progress against programme, spend against budget projection and the established risk log making interventions when necessary to manage and minimise risk.

EVALUATION

38. The preferred option is recommended to allow a timely instruction to be issued for the implementation of the council's works and hence reduce the risk of inflationary costs and the delivery programme extending beyond the TCF programme window which may compromise the funding availability.
39. The option to report the findings of the consultation on the design materials to a future meeting of cabinet would delay instruction for completion of the detailed design and subsequently construction which may prevent delivery of the scheme within the TCF programme window risking withdrawal of the DfT funding award.
40. A decision not to authorise termination of the leases necessary to complete land assembly in accordance with the terms of the leases would prevent the delivery of the improvement.

RECOMMENDATION

41. **OPTION 1:** That authority is delegated to the Director of Neighbourhoods to: finalise the design and materials for those elements of the project to be implemented by the council informed by the findings of the public consultation, terminate leases as necessary to complete land assembly in a timely manner and to instruct implementation of works subject to construction costs being within the available funding and TCF programme window.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- (a) Equality Impact Screening Assessment
- (b) Public consultation document

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