



DECISION OF COUNCILLOR ELFAN AP REES

THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING, HIGHWAYS, ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING.

WITH ADVICE FROM
THE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT, SECTION 151 OFFICER, &
HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES

DECISION NO 16/17 DE 195

SUBJECT: Local Growth Fund mobilisation approval 2016/17

Background:

Along with the other West of England authorities, North Somerset Council applied to the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for LGF capital to be made available to them through the Department for Transport (DfT). This has since been successful.

Maximum available funds for North Somerset Council through LGF in 2016/17 were £442,000 in total for walking and cycling improvements. Funding is split over two schemes. These are for improvements to Weston-super-Mare town centre at the junction with Alfred Street and Locking Road, which will support and facilitate the Weston Town Centre Regeneration project. Weston town centre regeneration is arguably North Somerset Council's main corporate priority for the next decade.

The second project is for phased improvements to the Coastal Towns Cycle Route connecting Weston-super-Mare to other North Somerset towns and villages. The long term aspiration is to connect the coastal towns of North Somerset (Weston-super-Mare, Clevedon and Portishead) to Brean in the South and Bristol to the North. This will create a long distance mainly off-road and quiet road trail, connecting the towns. This will have benefits for commuting as well as tourism and business locally. We have chosen to deliver a route connecting to Wayacre Drove and improve it this financial year. This will connect Uphill to the Somerset boundary in Brean. This will build on momentum from last financial year when we upgraded the shared use route through Walborough Nature Reserve.

DECISION:

To approve mobilisation of the programme and spend external grant funding through the Local Growth Fund (LGF) for two sustainable transport schemes, which are within the proposed North Somerset Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2016/17.

To authorise the increase in gross capital budget by £442,000 and include in the LTP programme.

Reasons:

To enable better pedestrian access through the Weston Town Centre regeneration through the Alfred Street Scheme, and create a commuter route and sustainable tourist attraction through the Coastal Towns Cycle Route. The following policy reasons also justify these projects:

The Council's Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 - 2026 sets out our policy for contributing to better safety, security and health and improving quality of life. The Joint Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2026 (JLTP3) sets out our policy for improving health and wellbeing and ensuring safer communities.

Other Alternatives Considered:

Various sections of the Strawberry Line and Coastal Towns Cycle Route were considered for delivery in 2016/17, however various permissions were still required for many, so it is considered these would be better delivered in future years. We have investigated taking 3 main sections of the Coastal Route forward for delivery next financial year, one will be constructed whilst the other two will be delivered in subsequent years.

The Weston Town Centre Regeneration proposals are already at the masterplan stage and we have an excellent idea as to which infrastructure requirements are needed to unlock economic development within the town. Station Road approach was strongly considered for improvements to assist the Walliscote Place redevelopment, yet it was believed further funding would be required to enable the scheme and Alfred Street is more deliverable in the short term and had wider benefit to Alexandra Parade and to pedestrians.

Risk Assessment:

The main risk is of non-delivery and losing funding. For both schemes we are already at a detailed design stage and mobilising our term contractors in terms of timescales. We have also now consulted with the main stakeholders and the Executive Member.

Financial Implications:

In summary, financial implications for the programme will kick start the initial infrastructure requirements for the Weston Town Centre Regeneration project, whilst also realising high value for money sections of the Coastal Towns Cycle Route. This will see these aspirations realised far quicker than previously possible. **There are no revenue implications, except maintenance of the existing highway and public rights of way network.**

Figure 1.

Scheme	LGF allocation	LTP Match	Capital/Revenue
Alfred Street	£242,000	£20,000	Capital
Coastal Towns Cycle Route	£200,000	£50,000	Capital
Total	£442,000	£70,000	Capital

Implications for Future Years:

Maintenance of the existing highway, public rights of way network and/or permissive paths. This is something we are already responsible for the chosen phase of the Coastal Towns Cycle Route for delivery in 2016/17.

Signed..... The Executive Member for Strategic Planning,
Highways, Economic Development and Housing

Dated.....

Confirmation of Advice Given

Signed.....Director of Development & Environment

Dated.....