

# Birmingham City Council

## Report to Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment

4<sup>th</sup> February 2020



**Subject:** Local Pinch Point Fund 2019: Expressions of Interest – Unlocking Birmingham Cross City Buses – Line 2 & 3 Route Enhancements

**Report of:** Interim Director – Inclusive Growth

**Relevant Cabinet Member:** Councillor Waseem Zaffar – Transport and Environment

**Relevant O &S Chair(s):** Councillor Liz Clements – Sustainability and Transport

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Are specific wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No – All wards affected
If yes, name(s) of ward(s): all wards along routes		
Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, add Forward Plan Reference:		
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

### 1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to submit an Expression of Interest (EoI) to the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) for Department for Transport's Local Pinch Point Funding (LPPF). The EoI includes proposals for bus priority and traffic management measures, at a total estimated capital cost of £9m, in line with the City Council's plans and priorities to make Birmingham a great, clean and green place to live in, and a city that takes a leading role in tackling climate change. The EoI is included as Appendix A.

## **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 Approves the proposed interventions included in the EoI at a total estimated capital cost of £9m and the rationale for these being put forward as the most suitable options for submission for the LPPF.
- 2.2 Notes that the EoI submission is under £10m so is being made using the delegations in the Transport and Highways Capital Programme Cabinet Report 2019/20 to 2024/25.
- 2.3 Approves the submission of the EoI to WMCA for prioritisation for their final submission to the Department for Transport (DfT).
- 2.4 Notes that should the submission be successful and shortlisted by the DfT, a further detailed submission will be made to WMCA/DfT. Should this be successful, an Outline/Full Business Case will be submitted through the Council's Governance and Financial Approvals Framework and in line with delegations approved as part of the prevailing Transport and Highways Capital Programme report.

## **3 Background**

- 3.1 In July 2019, the DfT announced a competitive fund for local authorities to bid for high-impact schemes to help address congestion pinch points and to reduce congestion on local roads. The fund will offer a total of £150 million, £75 million per annum in 2021/2022 and 2022/2023. The pinch point fund will target small to medium scale improvements, including road widenings, junction improvements and public transport priority measures aiming to improve traffic flow.
- 3.2 According to the DfT guidance, where an authority falls within a combined authority, each component authority must submit its expression of interest via a co-ordinator in the combined authority. EoIs will be prioritised by WMCA prior to submission to DfT. WMCA have specifically asked for confirmation of S151 officer support to accompany the submission of the EoI. After the shortlisted proposals are announced by DfT, successful local authorities will be asked to submit more detailed business cases.
- 3.3 This report outlines the options considered and the proposals for unlocking Birmingham cross-city buses and route enhancements included in the EoI. The proposals include delivering a package of highway and traffic improvements including bus priority measures and additional measures to improve flow for all vehicles along five corridors in Birmingham. In addition, the proposals are complemented by an upgrade in the bus fleet in collaboration with National Express West Midlands aiming to provide the greenest buses on the market.
- 3.4 A second EoI focusing on bus priority and traffic management measures in the city centre is also proposed for submission and is the subject of a separate Cabinet Member report.

## **4 Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 4.1 Option 1 - Do nothing: Not recommended as the pinch point fund is a key opportunity to secure funding for the delivery of local public transport priority measures in the short term and deliver key outcomes such as improved journey times and air quality.
- 4.2 Option 2 – Submission of a wider range and bigger number of Eols: Not recommended as a targeted submission will better reflect the City Council's key priorities. Other schemes that were considered but were discounted include other bus corridors, cycling improvements, packages of network management improvements and highway improvements. The Eols submitted were the most appropriate when considering the Council's priorities, LPPF's criteria and deliverability.
- 4.3 Option 3 – Submission of this Eol focusing on unlocking Birmingham cross-city bus routes through measures set out in this report and Appendix A, to secure funding for the delivery of local public transport priority measures in the short term. This is the recommended option as it aligns most closely with the Council's priorities and meets LPPF's criteria about being 'shovel-ready'.

## **5 Consultation**

- 5.1 Consultation has been undertaken with Transport for West.
- 5.2 If these Eols are successful further consultation will take place as the projects progress through full business case and delivery including with local councillors and the public.

## **6 Risk Management**

- 6.1 The risk that the proposed measures do not meet the requirements of the funding has been considered. The City Council has chosen to put forward the Eols that align best with the fund's priorities and are likely to deliver the maximum benefits with the available funding, therefore this risk is considered minimal.
- 6.2 A full risk assessment will be provided in the more detailed submission should the Eol be successful.

## **7 Compliance Issues:**

- 7.1 How are the recommended decisions consistent with the City Council's priorities, plans and strategies?
  - 7.1.1 The Eols are consistent with the City Council's Plan and Budget 2018 to 2022, as updated in 2019. It will support delivery of the primary goals of an Entrepreneurial City, an Aspirational City, a Fulfilling City to age well in and a Great City to live in and support Birmingham residents in gaining the maximum benefit from hosting the Commonwealth Games. The proposals for the delivery of cross-city bus routes aim to fully integrate all corners of the city in transport terms and unlock the city's economic potential by

delivering fast and reliable bus journeys, while complementing policies that are already being progressed, such as the Clean Air Zone. In addition, by prioritising the movement of buses over private cars, it will assist the City Council in taking a leading role in tackling climate change.

- 7.1.2 In particular, the proposals put forward will support Outcome 1, Priority 4: We will develop our transport infrastructure, keep the city moving through walking, cycling and improved public transport; Outcome 4, Priority 4: We will improve the environment and tackle air pollution; and Outcome 6, Priority 2: We will continue to deliver, report and positively promote the Council's extensive climate change and carbon reduction activity.

## 7.2 Legal Implications

- 7.2.1 This report has no direct legal implications as these will be addressed in a more detailed submission should the EoI be successful.

## 7.3 Financial Implications

### Capital

- 7.3.1 The total value of the proposed scheme is £9m of which £7m Pinch Point funding (capital grant) is sought alongside £0.5m of City Council match funding and £1.5m of third-party contributions. The City Council match funding is provided from Clean Air Zone (CAZ) net revenue income. This is consistent with the recommendations of the Clean Air Zone Charging Order report as approved by Cabinet on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2019. Should the submission be shortlisted and successful in Phase 2 of the LPPF, scheme costs and associated funding will be developed and confirmed as part of the Outline Business Case (OBC) and Full Business Case (FBC) reports.

### Revenue

- 7.3.2 The preparation of the EoI and any subsequent bids/business cases, should the EoI be successful, will be undertaken by staff within Transport and Connectivity, funded from existing revenue budgets.
- 7.3.3 Subject to successful submission and approval to progress through the respective governance processes, the scheme will create assets that will form part of the highway upon completion. As such, there will be revenue implications associated with the on-going maintenance of assets. These implications cannot be quantified at present but will be included in any future OBC and FBC reports and supporting bids/ business cases where applicable.

## 7.4 Procurement Implications (if required)

- 7.4.1 This report has no direct procurement implications. Subject to successful submission and approval to progress, any future procurement strategy will be detailed in subsequent reports in line with the Council's Governance and Financial Approvals Framework.

## 7.5 Human Resources Implications (if required)

7.5.1 This report has no human resources implications as it will be covered within current staff resources.

## 7.6 Public Sector Equality Duty

7.6.1 An Equality Analysis (EA) has been undertaken for this report and is attached in Appendix B.

7.6.2 Should the Eols and further business cases be approved individual scheme proposals will be further screened for equalities analysis as part of standard Council governance and approval processes, and EAs will be completed at Options Appraisal and FBC stage for individual projects and programmes.

## 8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A –Expression of interest

8.2 Appendix B – Equality Analysis

## 9 Background Documents

9.1 Information Briefing – Local Highway Improvements (25/07/19)