

**REPORT TO:** Mersey Gateway Executive Board  
**DATE:** 15 March 2012  
**REPORTING OFFICER:** Chief Executive  
**PORTFOLIO:** Leader  
**SUBJECT:** Mersey Gateway Bridge –  
Procurement Progress.  
**WARDS:** All

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 This report advises members of the progress made in implementing the agreed procurement process.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: no decisions are required but the Mersey Gateway Executive Board are invited to note:-**

- (1) that the six candidates who participated in prequalification have been advised of the selection result and meetings with each group have taken place to provide feedback on performance; and**
- (2) the documentation required to support the formal Invitation to Participate in Dialogue (ITPD) has been completed and issued to the three Bidders.**

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 At the special meeting of the Mersey Gateway Executive Board on 15 February 2012 members agreed the prequalification result and authorised the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to move to commence the tendering process by issuing the ITPD document to Bidders.

3.2 On 16<sup>th</sup> February the six Bidders were informed of the prequalification result by letter from the Project Director. The letter offered the unsuccessful candidates a debriefing opportunity, which all accepted. The debriefing meetings took place on 29<sup>th</sup> February. Letters to the three successful candidates also offered to provide feedback on performance and these debriefing meetings took place on 1<sup>st</sup> March. Any issues arising from these meetings with successful and unsuccessful candidates will be reported orally at the Board meeting

3.3 A press release announcing the results of prequalification was released on 17<sup>th</sup> February. The Department for Transport press office was consulted on the draft release. The selected Bidders were reported in

local news and appear across the national technical journals and media. A copy of the press release is at annex 1.

- 3.3 The letter to the three Bidders set out the expected timetable for commencing the tendering process. The ITPD is planned to be issued to Bidders during the week of 12 March, to be discussed at a Dialogue Commencement meeting with each Bidder during the following week. Over the coming year, Dialogue meetings are envisaged to be held at the Stadium with the occasional meeting held in the offices of DLAP in Manchester or London. On average we expect to meet with each Bidder once every three weeks. The ITPD sets out the Council agenda covering a schedule of meetings up to November 2012. The Project organisation to progress the Dialogue process is attached at annex 2.
- 3.4 Instructions to Bidders, as part of the ITPD, include measures to ensure that communication between the Council and Bidders are classified as commercial in confidence, to ensure competition is protected so that the Council receives bids that maximise the potential to secure value for money. The integrity of the competition relies on the security of information and discussions during an extended procurement process. The governance arrangements agreed with this Board envisage the confidential nature of issues arising during Dialogue and are reflected in the Chief Executive being delegated authority to deliver procurement in consultation with the Leader. This delegation provides the project team with access to a streamlined chain of authority where decisions can be taken expeditiously in circumstances that maintain confidentiality. The regular meetings of the MGEB, at every two months will enable reports on progress to be made to keep the Board up to date with key issues arising in the Dialogue process. Alongside these arrangements, the portfolio holder Cllr Stockton holds regular meetings with the Project Director.
- 3.5 The high level procurement programme is attached at annex 3. The projections are in line with advice given to members previously and progress will be monitored against this programme.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The project is a key priority for the Council which will deliver benefits locally and across the wider region.

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 All substantive implications are reported above and in the report annex.

#### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

- 6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton**

Mersey Gateway provides an opportunity to improve accessibility to services, education and employment for all.

## **6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

Over 500 construction jobs will be required for MG and matters are in hand to ensure the local community has access to these job opportunities. In the longer term, several thousand jobs are forecast to be created in the sub-region due to the wider economic impact of the project.

## **6.3 A Healthy Halton**

Mersey Gateway provides an opportunity to improve accessibility to services, education and employment for all, including improved cycling and walking facilities.

## **6.4 A Safer Halton**

The project will produce road safety benefits for road users including improved cycling and walking facilities.

## **6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

Mersey Gateway Project is a priority project in the Urban Renewal Programme.

## **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

The project structure supported by the proposed delegation and decision authority will reduce the risk of delay and improve the quality of the project control.

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

Mersey Gateway provides an opportunity to improve accessibility to services, education and employment for all.

## **9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

9.1 None under the meaning of the Act.