

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 15th September 2022

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director Planning & Transport

SUBJECT: Contractor Involvement in the East Runcorn Connectivity (ERC) Project

PORTFOLIO: Environment and Urban Renewal

WARDS: Runcorn-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The report seeks approval to utilise the SCAPE framework to secure Balfour Beatty to provide contractor involvement in the development of the four schemes that comprise the ERC project.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 1) Approval is given to procure, via the SCAPE framework, contractor input into the ERC Project, up to and including 'Pre-construction Stage'; and**
- 2) Delegated authority is given to the Operational Director (PPT), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Environment and Urban Renewal, to implement activities to pass the formal SCAPE gateways up to and including 'Pre-construction Stage'.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Executive Board received previous reports on the ERC scheme on 17th June 2021 and 16th June 2022. The project consists of 4 elements:-

- Widening of the A558 Daresbury Expressway from the junction of Pitts Heath Lane to Innovation Way, taking into account four structures and canal / railway crossings.
- The major maintenance of the A56 from the junction at Keckwick Lane to M56 Junction 11. Reconstruction of existing road due to failing ground conditions.
- The introduction of a direct cycle superhighway from Pitts Heath Lane junction to the existing A56 cycle corridor connecting Halton with Warrington and a number of sustainable transport improvements.
- Potential for a new loop road connecting M56 J11 at Preston Brook to the A533, which will relieve congestion, HGV traffic, and provide new accesses.

- 3.2 The Scape Framework has been used successfully for the completion of works on Silver Jubilee Bridge, Runcorn Delinking and Runcorn Station Quarter projects.
- 3.3 Utilising early contractor involvement ensures costs for project are as accurate as possible. The purpose of this is to decrease the risk of cost overruns once a contractor is engaged to complete the project.
- 3.4 This commission will support the business casework being undertaken by Mott MacDonald, as approved in the earlier reports, and in line with UK Government Construction principles.
- 3.5 The Scape process has six stages as shown in Appendix 1. This report seeks permission to utilise the Scape process to the end of Stage 3 (pre-construction).
- 3.6 Once Stage 3 is complete, and provided technical considerations are favourable and funding is available, a further report will be presented to Executive Board seeking approval to sign a 'delivery agreement' and proceed onto construction. At this point, in order to proceed with the scheme, all of the Council's scheme requirements would be met and construction funding would be available.
- 3.7 The SCAPE framework provides for the commissioning of a feasibility study (Stage 2) with no commitment or obligation to place a works contract and it is available at no cost to the Council. There is, however, a non-contractual expectation that, if the proposals examined in the feasibility study achieve the Council's objectives in terms of quality, affordability and deliverability, and if the project is taken forward, the Council would propose to enter into a further contract(s) relating to pre-construction and construction activities with Balfour Beatty. The Framework provides hold points prior to moving forward into 'Preconstruction' and 'Construction' to ensure that the Council is satisfied that the project requirements are met.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The significant infrastructure investment described in this report aligns with the Council's strategic policies contained in the Local Plan, the Mersey Gateway Plus Regeneration Strategy, Local Transport Plan 3, Local Cycle and Walking Infrastructure Plan, and aligns with the priorities of the Liverpool City Region. The new infrastructure delivered by the ERC project will provide the additional capacity in the local transport system to support the sustainable growth of the Borough set out in the Local Plan.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council has the right to stop works at any stage in the processes outlined above and therefore retains complete control over the project.

- 5.2 The cost of Balfour Beatty completing these early phases under the Scape Framework is nil. Any other costs will be met within existing budgets and the LCR CRSTS allocation.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The highway network is utilised and relied upon by Children and Young People in similar ways to any other demographic of the population. Safe sustainable travel modes are to their long term benefit.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None at this stage, Opportunities to contribute to employment and skills would be expected if the scheme proceeds to Construction Stage.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Improved sustainable links should encourage more people to walk and cycle, and hence develop healthier lifestyles.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Improvements to walking and cycling links will be designed to improve the safety of the traveling public.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

Providing improved sustainable links predominantly across the east of Runcorn will improve the public realm and the reputation of the borough, thereby making it potentially more attractive to investors, visitors and to those who live here.

The scheme contribute towards tackling climate change by improving route options for active travel and public transport. The scheme seeks to encourage modal shift and reduce congestion, leading to improvements in local air quality.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 The SCAPE Framework is a public sector owned and competitively tendered process that Halton have successfully engaged to deliver other schemes. Pursuing alternative procurement options would prolong scheme development and implementation and miss the opportunities of early contractor involvement that this proposal seeks to secure. The Framework is also being used by other LCRCA Authorities including Merseytravel and St Helens Council

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None

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

None

Appendix 1 Scape Process Map

Civil Engineering National Framework Process Map



