

## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **CABINET**

**15<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2017**

### **SOUTHERN GATEWAY – MOUNTAIN ASH CROSS VALLEY LINK ROAD PROJECT UPDATE**

#### **REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR CORPORATE AND FRONTLINE SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

**Author :** Roger Waters, Service Director Highways and Streetcare Services  
01443 494702

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Cabinet on current progress related to the development and delivery of the major transportation project; Mountain Ash Cross-Valley Link Road and to seek approval to commit additional funding to the project.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the progress made and endorse the next steps.
- 2.2 Update the Council's Capital Programme for the additional funding and reallocation of resources referred to in Section 4 of the report.

#### **3. BACKGROUND AND UPDATED POSITION**

- 3.1 Cabinet approval to initiate the statutory processes necessary to deliver the project was secured via a report to Cabinet in September 2016.
- 3.2 Consequently, a planning application for the link road and associated bridge is due to be considered by the Council's Planning Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016.
- 3.3 A further planning application involving the relocating 4 single garages as part of the accommodation works for the project has also been submitted following detailed negotiations with the owners.
- 3.4 Subject to gaining planning consent for the main project, statutory processes related to the compulsory purchase of land will commence to secure the necessary land to deliver the project.

- 3.5 Good progress has already been made in securing land by mutual agreement, specifically, 1 Miskin Cottages has been acquired and the acquisition of 2 Miskin Cottages is well advanced. This approach will continue where land is in known ownership.
- 3.6 There is developer interest in bringing forward housing development on the site immediately adjacent to the northern boundary of the link road. Detailed liaison is ongoing regarding accommodation works necessary to provide appropriate access to the site and the funding of such works to ensure a mutually beneficial outcome.

#### **4. PROPOSED WAY FORWARD**

- 4.1 The project team is currently finalising a tender package to invite tenderers to submit design and build proposals for the link road and bridge. The successful tenderer will be required to work up detailed designs, costings and a programme. This will involve liaison with key parties such as Network Rail to ensure that the rail track possessions necessary to carry out the works are secured in advance. This will reduce overall project risk.
- 4.2 The contract will include a break-clause between the design and construct elements to allow the Council to re-tender the construction phase if it is considered that better value could be obtained.
- 4.3 In addition, separate tenders will also be prepared to let contracts to improve the junction with the A4059 and to improve the northern junction and access off the link road.
- 4.4 The verbal update on funding provided to Cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2017 is hereby confirmed; comprised of an additional £0.350M of funding directly allocated by Welsh Government towards the scheme. This brings the current Welsh Government funding for the project up to £1.001M.
- 4.5 In addition, £1.200M of Welsh Government funding has been awarded to the A4119/A473 roundabout improvement that is currently progressing well at Talbot Green. This external project funding will allow £1.100M of internal funding to be reallocated within the Council's existing Capital Programme.
- 4.6 It is proposed that the £1.100M referenced in paragraph 4.5 is reallocated to the Mountain Ash Cross Valley Link project. This brings the total current funding allocated to the project to £6.051M, of which £2.101M can be directly or indirectly attributed to the Welsh Government.
- 4.7 A further bid for £1.500M in 2017/18 has been submitted to Welsh Government under the Local Transport Fund grant scheme. The outcome of the bid is expected to be announced imminently.

## **5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment screening form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full report is not required. The Mountain Ash Cross Valley Link will enhance existing movements across the valley between communities.

## **6. CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 Consultation has been undertaken with the stakeholders and parties affected by the Mountain Ash Cross Valley Link proposals and these include the Council's departments, statutory bodies, statutory undertakers, Network Rail and third parties whose land is required for the proposals.
- 6.2 A pre-consultation exercise in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedures) (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2016 was concluded prior to submission of the main planning application.
- 6.3 A public exhibition was held in two venues at Penrhiwceiber and Mountain Ash on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> November respectively.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The current funding position is as set out at 4.4 – 4.7, with confirmation of the outcome of a current bid for further Welsh Government funding imminent. The design and build contractor will develop detailed costings for the construction phase of the project which will inform additional funding requirements.

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 8.1 The Council has the power to make the CPO under the provisions of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 and Sections 239,240,246,250 and 260 of the Highways Act.

## **9. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/ SIP.**

- 9.1 The Mountain Ash Cross Valley Link supports the Council's Corporate Plan Priority 'Place – creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work'.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

- 10.1 The project offers the opportunity to improve accessibility and connectivity in an area where limited cross valley linkage causes significant congestion on the local and strategic transport network affecting all highway users, including commercial delivery services and public transport.



- 10.2 The submission of a planning application and subject to a successful determination, the publication of the CPO for the project will continue the development of the project.