

Leader	Ref. No LDR01(18/19)
May 2018	Key Decision Yes
Worthing Public Realm Improvements	Part I
Report by Executive Director Economy, Infrastructure & Environment	Electoral Divisions: Worthing

Summary

The Worthing Growth Programme was provisionally allocated £5m, from a £30m Capital Programme allocation to support growth in West Sussex in 2017. A Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) recommended that, subject to the approval of a detailed business case, the £5m allocation for Worthing should focus on delivering an integral part of the Worthing town centre public realm improvements.

An Options Appraisal covering eight areas of improvements from the station to the seafront has been completed and a further SOBC now identifies the preferred options, a proposed funding approach for delivery of the preferred options and proposals for County Council investment.

It is proposed that the County Council's funding allocation be focused on supporting the development and delivery of improvements in Portland Road, South Street South and South Street North in Worthing.

Recommendations

That the Leader:

- (i) agrees a proposed package of public realm improvements for 8 priority areas in Worthing identified in paragraph 2.1
- (ii) agrees the allocation of £5m from the WSCC Capital Programme to support the delivery of public realm improvements for 3 of the priority areas - Portland Road, South Street South and South Street North.
- (iii) agrees that up to £400,000 funding be allocated, in accordance with a phasing plan to be agreed with the Director of Economy Planning & Place, to progress work to support the development of projects identified in recommendation (ii) through to public consultation and detailed design.
- (iv) delegates authority to the Executive Director Economy, Infrastructure and Environment to progress the delivery of the project to include such action as is required to complete the project in a timely way, such as relevant design authority, planning submissions and procurements.

1. Background and Context

- 1.1 The Adur and Worthing Growth Deal was signed in March 2017 as a partnership deal between Adur and Worthing Council's and West Sussex County Council focusing on specific priority projects to bring local improvements and growth for residents, businesses and visitors.
- 1.2 The Worthing Investment Prospectus, commissioned by the County Council and Worthing Borough Council (WBC) in 2016, formed the backbone of the agreed priorities in Worthing, highlighting the key development opportunity sites (Teville Gate, Union Place, Grafton, Stagecoach, Aquarena and Civic site) and the areas, between the station and the seafront, where public realm improvements would support the delivery of growth.
- 1.3 £5m was provisionally allocated from the Capital Programme to the Worthing Growth Programme and a subsequent strategic outline business case provisionally directed this funding to the public realm improvements in Worthing town centre.
- 1.4 The County Council commissioned consultants to produce an options appraisal study in May 2017. The study looked at potential public realm improvements in 8 priority areas from the railway station to the seafront. For each priority area a range of options and indicative costs were considered ranging from minimal intervention and improvements through to significant intervention and change. A Member workshop and key stakeholder consultation event was held in July 2017 and the options were developed and presented in public at the Worthing County Local Committee (CLC) in November 2017. The options plans and study were exhibited to the public from 2 January 2018 to 12 January 2018 in Worthing Library, with a Public Drop In Session held on 5 January 2018
- 1.5 The Worthing Town Centre Improvements Project Board was established in January 2018 with Officers and Members from both the County Council and WBC with the aim of aiding the delivery of the public realm improvements to support, and act as a catalyst for, the town centre development proposals. Following the public exhibition the board agreed a package of options which have a total indicative delivery cost of £12.08m. The options agreed are set out in the SOBC. A funding package has been provisionally agreed for the full scheme with Worthing Borough Council through the allocation of £5m from the capital growth fund, and CIL and s106 agreement funding alongside direct developer funding.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 The business case proposes the delivery of the preferred package of public realm improvement options covering all 8 priority areas from the station to the seafront at a total estimated cost of £12.08m (the 8 area are set out in Table 4 of business case – Montague Place, South Street South, South Street North, Liverpool Gardens, Town Hall, Chapel Road, Teville Gate and Portland Road).

- 2.2 From this total package the business case proposes an allocation of £5m from the County Council's Capital Programme to support the delivery of 3 key priority areas in the package - Portland Road, South Street South and South Street North.
- 2.3 Up to £400k of the £5m allocation will be required immediately to progress the design work for the 3 priority areas to support the development of a detailed business case.
- 2.4 The project will be overseen by the Council's capital programme governance process and it is proposed that approval of the progression of the projects be delegated to the Executive Director of Economy, Infrastructure and Environment.

3. Resources

- 3.1 Of the £5m allocation £400k will be required to undertake design work to RIBA stage 3 to support the submission of a detailed business case.. The release of this fund will be dependent on the Director of Economy, Planning & Place agreeing a phasing plan. Agreement will be dependent on the phasing plan minimizing WSCC investment until clarity relating to the funding of the wider package of public realm improvements (station to seafront) is in place.
- 3.2 West Sussex County Council will be the lead delivery body for the project working in close partnership with Worthing Borough Council. The Growth Programme Delivery Manager (GPDM) will manage the project with the Highways and Transport Team. The project will be overseen by the Worthing Town Centre Improvements Project Board and the Growth Board that forms part of the Growth Programme Governance and is made up of Members and Officers from both Councils.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 The Business Case has been agreed through the County Council officer governance structure and the Worthing Town Centre Improvements Project Board.
- 4.2 A Member workshop and key stakeholder consultation event was held in July 2017 and the options were developed and presented to the Worthing CLC in November 2017.
- 4.3 The options plans and study were exhibited to the public from 2 January 2018 to 12 January 2018 in Worthing Library, with a Public Drop In Session held on 5 January 2018 where members of the public met with officers from the County Council and WBC to provide initial feedback and ask questions. The scheme was publicised in the local press (Worthing Herald, Worthing Argus and Spirit FM) and through both Council's social media accounts.

- 4.4 The public drop in on 5 January attracted a good level of interest with a steady flow of people through the door asking questions and providing feedback. There was general support with the main questions and comments focusing on the incorporation of cycling routes, disabled parking and car parking. Some concerns were expressed that the money should be spent elsewhere in the public sector. These issues will be considered through the next stage of design.
- 4.5 An email account was also set up to capture feedback and people were directed towards this at the drop in. This account received limited response, with concerns raised relating to the potential loss of bus services in South Street and the potential loss of a taxi rank at Teville Gate and on Chapel Road. These respondents will be included as part of future consultation.
- 4.6 Social media sources provided a mixed response including a suggestion that money should be used for affordable housing and also that a multiplex will impact on local cinemas.

5. Risk Management Implications

- 5.1 There is a risk that, should the Business Case be approved, the County Council cannot deliver the programme and allocate funding within the timeline proposed within the business case. This risk is mitigated by the development of a robust project management plan and monitoring and input from the Worthing Public Realm Improvements Board and Growth Board.
- 5.2 There is also a risk that Worthing Borough Council do not provide adequate assurances that funding for the rest of the scheme will be forthcoming. This has been mitigated by holding back the full revenue funding for the detailed designs which will allow costs to be firmed up and detailed funding assurances to be secured through a funding agreement with WBC.
- 5.3 There is a risk that the outcomes identified in the Business Case are not achieved. This is again mitigated by the development of an extensive project management plan that includes commitments from all the key partners.

6. Other Options Considered

- 6.1 The Strategic Outline Business Case identifies other options that were considered.

7. Equality Duty

- 7.1 Equality will be considered further as the project develops through the detailed design, procurement and delivery.

8. Social Value

- 8.1 The proposal will continue to improve the experience of people, living, working and visiting the town centre and improve the attractiveness of Worthing in terms of wider business investment.

9. Crime and Disorder Act Implications

- 9.1 The improved public realm works will fully consider crime and disorder act implications through the detailed design phase of the project.

10. Human Rights Implications

- 10.1 No human rights implications have been identified.

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Background Papers

WSP Options Appraisal Study -

https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/10794/worthing_public_realm_options.pdf

[Worthing Public Realm Improvements Strategic Outline Business Case](#)