

Record of officer decision

Decision title:	Pontrilas station funding application
Date of decision:	6 October 2020
Decision maker:	Acting Assistant Director for Highways and Transportation
Authority for delegated decision:	<p>The Acting Assistant Director for Highways and Transportation has delegated authority to make any in-year adjustments to the Public realm service annual plan 2020/21 within the overall budget pursuant to the decision of the Cabinet Member Infrastructure and Transport of 29 April 2020</p> <p>http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=6800</p>
Ward:	Golden Valley South, Birch and Wormside
Consultation:	<p>Consultation has been undertaken with finance and legal services and cabinet member for infrastructure and transport.</p> <p>Consultation has also been undertaken with the local community and the DfT in developing the scope of the technical work</p>
Decision made:	To commission a technical study into the Pontrilas Rail Station through the public realm contract and adjust the annual plan budget according by the value of the commission which will support a submission to the next round of the DfT Restoring Your Railways Fund 2020. The value of the commission is £30,647.47
Reasons for decision:	<p>A first submission was made directly by the local community to the DfT Restoring Your Railways Fund March 2020. Whilst this was not successful, DfT provided feedback indicating areas where the bid would need to be developed. The technical study subject to this decision will address that feedback and enable an improved bid to be submitted to round 3 of the Restoring Your Railways Fund.</p> <p>In the event that a revised bid is successful this will enable the council to access development funding from the DfT which would support a business case to be progressed and the potential for the scheme to be considered in the governments new stations programme.</p>
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal / equality considerations:	<p>The Cabinet member has provided a commitment to the local community promoting this proposal to undertake and fund this additional technical work. Failure to undertake the commission will therefore risk reputational damage.</p> <p>This work will be commissioned through the public realm contract noting that it continues on from work undertaken 2019/20 through the annual plan and secures access to rail specialist expertise. The original commission comprised passenger demand forecasting which required specialist consultancy support to progress and BBLP was able to secure the services of the Railway Consultancy Ltd. This additional commission has arisen at short notice following the confirmation by DfT of the outcomes of the assessment of the initial Restoring Your Railways Fund submission and updated guidance and application form provided during August to help inform a revised submission. Procuring further technical support and specialist rail expertise through the public realm contract will ensure that the council will be able to undertake the additional technical work, identified in DfT feedback and set out in</p>

	<p>its updated application form and guidance, by the middle of November to support a revised submission to the next round of the Restoring Your Railways Fund. Technical transport studies are within scope of the PRSC.</p> <p>Scope of the work has been discussed with DfT responsible for administering the Restoring Your Railways fund to ensure that the study is focused on the elements required to support an improved submission and reduce costs of unnecessary works. This has identified the following key elements which need further clarification and development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider socio-economic benefits of the scheme • Why rail is the best solution to the identified transport problems • Detail the transport benefits the scheme will be able to support or deliver • A SWOT analysis of issues considered • Level of funding required to take the proposal forward <p>In the event that a revised bid is successful this will ensure further government funding and technical report which would enable further development of the proposal with the potential to improve access and transport into Hereford and for longer distance travel for residents in the south west of the county.</p> <p>The value of the commission is £30,647.47 which will be funded through annual plan local transport capital budget</p>
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	Not to undertake the technical study. This was rejected as the council has made a commitment to support the proposal and assist with technical work to inform a revised submission
Details of any declarations of interest made:	None

Signed

Date: 6 October 2020

Mairead Lane
Acting Assistant Director Highways & Transport