

Cabinet

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Dorset County Council



Date of Meeting	18 July 2007
Officer	Director for Environment
Subject of Report	Weymouth and Portland Olympic Transport Package
Executive Summary	This report gives details of the objectives and content of the Olympic Transport Package and invites the Cabinet to approve the arrangements for member involvement in the progression of the procurement of the Package.
Budget Implications	The estimated cost of the Olympic Transport Package is £18m, which subject to a successful Major Scheme Bid to the Department for Transport, will be wholly funded from the South West Regional Allocation for Local Transport (LTP) schemes.
Recommendation	<p>It is recommended that the Cabinet:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) notes the objectives and content of the Package as set out in Paragraphs 2.6 to 2.8.(ii) agrees to the creation of an Olympic Transport Package Board to oversee the progression of the procurement of the Olympic Transport Package Project to Contract Award(iii) agrees the membership and terms of reference for the Olympic Transport Package Board including local member involvement as set out in paragraphs 2.16 to 2.18 of this report;(iv) gives the Director for Environment delegated authority to make decisions, after consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning and Transportation, on those procurement issues listed in paragraph 2.19 of this report;(v) notes the intention to consider an invitation to 4Ps to undertake a Gateway Review of the project in due course.

Reason for Recommendation	To inform members of the content of the Olympic Transport Package and secure best value in the procurement process, supporting the corporate aims to improve Dorset's infrastructure and strengthen Dorset's economy.
Appendices	None
Background Papers	None
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Members were advised at the 6 June Cabinet that the South West Regional Assembly had given regional support for the funding of £18m for the Olympic Transport Package as a priority within the regional local/small schemes allocation in the period to 2016. The award of this funding will be subject to the submission and approval of a Major Scheme Bid to the Department for Transport which will need to quantify the economic, accessibility and safety benefits of the Package, the project costs and the procurement and risk management strategy. The Major Scheme Bid process comprises three stages of submission, the first of which will give Programme Entry status and the subsequent stages Conditional and Full Approval respectively. The work will require significant resource effort involving public and stakeholder consultation and, in view of the 2012 timetable constraint, will require effective project management through a Project Board and Steering Group structure in accordance with PRINCE2 project management principles if it is to be delivered effectively within the time available.

2. Olympic Transport Package

Background and Objectives

- 2.2 The Olympic Games are the world's largest sporting event and the Paralympic Games the second largest. The sailing events for the London 2012 Games to be hosted by the Weymouth & Portland National Sailing Academy will take place in Portland Harbour and Weymouth Bay between 27 July and 9 September 2012. Sailing will be the only complete event to take place outside London and is Britain's most successful Olympic event.
- 2.3 The Venue Transport Plan submitted for incorporation into the London 2012 Candidature File set out proposals for the transport of the Olympic Family and spectators during the sailing events. The demand forecasts assumed that 1,250 athletes and officials would attend the Weymouth venue each day and that a further 15,000 spectators would be attending the events at any one time.
- 2.4 Unlike many other events with finite seating capacity, there are numerous viewing points around Weymouth Bay. Although the Venue Transport Plan identified six likely viewing locations in the area the demand forecast assumptions for spectator numbers in the Venue Transport Plan could be significantly exceeded and the problems that this will create will be compounded by road congestion within the town centre and its impact on public transport reliability.
- 2.5 The Second Local Transport Plan for Dorset highlighted the need for substantial improvements in transport infrastructure in the A354 Dorchester-Weymouth-Portland corridor through an integrated transport strategy, incorporating the Weymouth Relief Road and the Olympic Transport Package. These are considered to be of key importance for completion in advance of the Olympic Games, particularly having regard to the Green Games objective of the Olympic Delivery Authority. Bus services in Weymouth frequently suffer delay due to congestion and timetables must be designed to take account of this, imposing significant costs on operators. There is also no convenient interchange between bus and rail at Weymouth Station because operators have developed routes to avoid congestion in the vicinity of Weymouth Rail station at King Street.

- 2.6 The aim of the Olympic Transport Package is therefore primarily to improve public transport accessibility to the town and also to focus on ensuring the sustainable and safe movement of people within the town and to Portland. The priority is for a sustainable Olympics ensuring measures are in place to allow as many visitors as possible to use public transport, cycling and walking as the main mode of travel. Public transport will be assisted by junction capacity improvements within a designated Bus Showcase Corridor from King Street in the town centre where a new bus/rail transport interchange is to be provided through to Portland. This will be complemented by Intelligent Transport Systems to maximise existing highway capacity, again with priority for public transport, and improved communications and real time data/information, enabling visitors to make smarter journey decisions.

Scheme description

- 2.7 The main elements of the Package which are to be funded through a Major Scheme Bid to the Department of Transport are as follows:-
- Junction Improvements to King Street / Portland Road Corridor
 - Junction Improvements to Lanehouse Rocks Road Corridor
 - Intelligent Transport System (ITS) Improvements to traffic signals and signal controlled crossings in the two Improvement Corridors to achieve
 - Increased capacity and reduced delays/queue lengths for all traffic
 - Bus priorities where achievable
 - Selective Vehicle Detection for buses
 - Turning bans at critical locations
 - Removal of On-Street Parking at critical locations
 - The following ITS components for the whole of the Dorchester-Weymouth-Portland Corridor :
 - Real Time Car park and Strategic Variable Message Signing providing information on car parking availability, traffic conditions, road closures, queue location and other traffic incidents
 - Real Time Passenger Information for buses to be available at bus stops, public kiosks, websites and mobile phones
 - Website travel information
 - CCTV based incident management
 - National/Regional Traffic Control Centre links
- 2.8 The Second Local Transport Plan includes the following additional ITS proposals within the Olympic Transport Package to be funded through the Local Transport Plan Block allocation (amounting to approx £1m):-
- Information database to enable the ITS Systems to communicate with one another
 - Automatic Number Plate Recording for monitoring of journey time/congestion
 - Air quality monitors
 - Journey Planner facilities
- and proposals for traffic management, walking and cycling improvements and improvements for the disabled to complement the proposed Major Scheme Bid.
- 2.9 The detailed design of the form of junction improvements proposed within the two Improvement Corridors is to be subject to a comprehensive process of analysis as an essential part of the Major Scheme Bid preparation process. This will be carried out by Atkins who have recently been appointed to assist the County Council in formulating the Bid.

- 2.10 The major traffic congestion locations in King Street and Boot Hill are of particular concern and an iterative analysis and design process will be undertaken at each junction currently contributing to this congestion in developing an optimum solution. The key objective in improving the junctions will however be to assist public transport movement while at the same time improving conditions for all traffic, having regard to the key theme of a "Green Games" in the successful London 2012 bid and the fact that the £18m of funding agreed by the Regional Assembly has been justified on the basis that the proposal is for a public transport package. Discussions with the public transport operators are taking place to ensure that the proposals will meet their requirements.
- 2.11 The timescale for delivery of the project precludes the acquisition of land, other than by negotiation, and so dedicated bus lanes will be difficult to achieve. Under these circumstances, the most effective means of securing bus priorities will be through the conversion of existing roundabouts to traffic signal control, allowing buses to call signal priorities using selective vehicle detection at signal approaches. Conversion to signals at key locations such as Kings Roundabout and Harbour Roundabout will also facilitate minimising overall traffic delay by controlling entry flows into the junction and hence benefit all traffic. An overriding requirement of the Major Scheme Bid will be the demonstration of clear and quantifiable traffic benefits for all of the bid components, and so a solution involving conversion to signals at any of the proposed locations will only proceed if this benefit can be shown.

Timetable

- 2.12 The currently intended timetable for progression of the Project is as shown below.

Activity	Target Date
Prepare and Submit Programme Entry Bid	September 2007
Public and Stakeholder Consultation	October/December 2007
DfT Approve Programme Entry	March 2008
Scheme Modifications following Consultation	January/March 2008
Update and Submit Conditional Approval Bid	April/June 2008
DfT Conditional Approval	September 2008
Invite Tenders	July 2008
Update and Submit Full Approval Bid	October 2008
DfT Full Approval	December 2008
Award Contract	December 2008
Construction (avoiding peak holiday traffic)	January/April 2009 September/December 2009 January/April 2010

Dates shown are as yet tentative as they are subject to DfT approval and programming.

Project Governance

- 2.13 In preparing the project to its current stage, county council officers have thus far dealt with key decisions, with the Project Director reporting progress of the project at key stages to Cabinet members.

2.14 For the remainder of the procurement process, a new three-tier structure is proposed as follows:-

- Olympic Transport Package Board comprising the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning and Transportation as Project Sponsor, the local Dorset County Council members, the Project Director and supporting officers
- Olympic Transport Package Steering Group comprising the Project Director and the chairpersons of each of the Working Groups below
- Working Groups comprising county council officers with the following responsibilities
 - Communications, Consultation and Committee Process
 - Technical Appraisal
 - Project Delivery and Risk

2.15 The County Council's executive decision making arrangements mean that the proposed Olympic Transport Package Board cannot be a decision making body in its own right. It is therefore proposed that the Board should exercise a project oversight and monitoring role, making recommendations to the Director. The Project Board is proposed to be the primary vehicle through which the Director will consult with the Portfolio Holder prior to exercising his delegated authority.

2.16 The Olympic Transport Package Board is not a committee which the strict rules on political proportionality need apply. The intention is instead to achieve local representation having regard to the significant potential for the project to improve transport conditions in the Weymouth and Portland area and the need to ensure that the local Dorset County Council member champions are properly engaged in its development. It is therefore proposed that the composition of the Board should be as follows:-

- Mr A Ackerman (Head of H & T Client) (Chair)
- Mr M White (Project Director)
- Col G Brierley (as Portfolio Holder)
- 2 local Dorset County Council Members (one each to be nominated by the Liberal Democrat and Labour Group Leaders)
- Mr M Winter (Head of DEC)
- Mr C Mercer (Project Manager)

It may also be advantageous for the two local members to be involved in the consultation process referred to in 2.14 above through membership and/or chairmanship of focus groups yet to be established. Further information will be provided on this when reporting to the Cabinet the detailed proposals for public consultation.

2.17 As this process, by its very nature, will require an exemption from the Authority's 'usual' Contract Procedure Rules, it is important to establish those delegations which should be given by the Cabinet to the Director for Environment to exercise after consultation with the Board and those day to day delegations he should exercise through the Steering Group.

2.18 The Olympic Transport Package Board will need to provide strategic direction in accordance with the following terms of reference:-

- to champion the project and disseminate the likely benefits;
- to monitor the satisfactory advancement of the Project within agreed parameters and timescales;

- to consider and monitor the application of the Gateway Review process.

and through the Director for Environment to recommend to the Cabinet

- the content of the Major Scheme Bid at each bidding stage;
- the proposals for public consultation;
- changes to the project arising from public consultation;
- the procurement process to be followed;
- the award of the various elements of the contract.

- 2.19 In parallel with the above terms of reference for the Olympic Transport Package Board, it is proposed that delegation be given to the Director for Environment, after consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to control and spend the budget for the procurement process including the management of external advisers without referral back to the Cabinet.

Gateway Review

- 2.20 Members will be aware that the Authority recently invited 4Ps to carry out Gateway Reviews on its Modernising Schools and Street Lighting PFI Projects. Given the importance and value of the Olympic Transport Package, it may be appropriate to consider extending the 4Ps involvement to include Gateway Review of this Project, although this would undoubtedly have further resource implications, particularly as it would require council officers to undertake reciprocal reviews of other authorities. No firm commitment needs to be given at this stage but the Cabinet should note the intention of reporting on the potential benefits of Gateway Review to the Board in due course.

Miles Butler

Director for Environment