

OFFICER DECISION RECORD

Decision Title: M49 Link Road drawdown of Economic Development Fund
Decision reference number: ODN23_0019
Decision date: 08/11/2023
<p>Background / reason for decision:</p> <p>The M49 Link Road project is a Department for Transport (DfT) funded project being delivered by South Gloucestershire Council (the Council) in partnership with National Highways. DfT has allocated up to £7m within National Highway's Road Investment Strategy (RIS2).</p> <p>The Council has entered into a funding agreement with National Highways that enables the Council to be reimbursed the costs of the works. The project connects the business park to the new motorway junction (already constructed by National Highways) and includes a permanent diversion of the National Cycle Network Route 4. The scheme will deliver significant economic benefits, reduce congestion and improve road safety in the neighbouring communities.</p> <p>At the West of England Combined Authority Joint Committee meeting in January 2021, £1m of South Gloucestershire's Economic Development Fund (EDF) allocation was approved for the project, subject to business case, which was delegated to the Mayoral Combined Authority Chief Executive in consultation with the West of England Chief Executives (item 14, resolution 2 refers).</p> <p>As set out in the West of England Local Growth Assurance Framework (September 2021) at page 31 paragraph 3.2.1.4, where 50% or more of the funding for the delivery of a particular project has been awarded by Government through a specific application, it may be assumed that the business case and value for money will already have been suitably established by the external funder and a separate business case is not required. As the £1m requested is a contribution of less than half of the £7m already secured by the Council from National Highways/DfT for delivery of the scheme, these provisions apply.</p> <p>Therefore, South Gloucestershire Council submitted a request to the Chief Executive Officers forum to approve the drawdown of £1m from the EDF to increase the available budget for the scheme for the delivery of the M49 Link Road and associated infrastructure.</p>
<p>Options considered:</p> <p>Option 1 – To award funding as recommended.</p> <p>Option 2 – There is a mechanism within the funding agreement with National Highways that enables the Council to apply for extra funding and/or extend the programme. This has been informally discussed with DfT and National Highways. Completing the National Highways change</p>

mechanism would take a several months to complete and would delay the progress of the scheme, the delivery of the works and increase costs due to inflation.

Decision: To approve the drawdown of £1m from the EDF to enable the delivery of the M49 Link Road and associated infrastructure.

Consultation: Consultation has taken place between officers at the Mayoral Combined Authority and South Gloucestershire Council, and with the constituent Councils via the Chief Executive Officers forum. Public Consultation on the project will be undertake as part of the project delivery process.

Officer making decision: Richard Ennis

Position: Interim Chief Executive, West of England Combined Authority