

Matter which the Chairman has decided is urgent by reason of the need to provide clarity and to avoid undue delay in advising Cabinet of the views expressed by the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee in considering this matter at its meeting held on 7th March, 2019

Agenda Item No. 15(i)

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 15TH APRIL, 2019

REFERENCE FROM ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE: 7TH MARCH, 2019

“828 STRATEGIC TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENTS IN DINAS POWYS - UPDATE
(REF) -

The Committee was presented with a reference from Cabinet regarding an update on the draft WeITAG Stage 2 report for Dinas Powys.

The Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport advised that the report provided to Cabinet was an update on progress of the transport assessment being undertaken in Dinas Powys and identified, following a meeting of the Review Group for the study, the further work needed to be undertaken in respect of:

- Engaging with Network Rail to understand the constraints and potential costs associated with the construction of a by-pass and junction in the vicinity of the railway tunnel;
- Undertaking concept design, modelling and costing of suggested improvements to the Merrie Harrier junction to improve capacity. To consider costs in context of the by-pass scheme costs (blue and green options);
- Commissioning strategic modelling using the South East Wales Transport Model of the by-pass proposals (via Transport for Wales who managed the model);
- Updating the economic appraisal for the green alignment and providing an appraisal for the blue alignment and update the transport case and the Stage 2 report;
- Undertaking public consultation on the findings of the Stage 2 report and finalising the Stage 2 report and making recommendations for option(s) to be taken forward to the WeITAG Stage 3 Full Business Case.

The report recommended that should grant funding not be available from Welsh Government (WG) for the completion of the work, that the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport be authorised to seek new ways of funding it.

The Officer also added that the WeITAG Stage 1 report considered the problems, opportunities and constraints, established objectives and apprised a long list of

options. The Stage 1 Study was presented to Cabinet whereby the following options were confirmed to be taken forward for further consideration, following recommendation by the Committee on 14th September, 2017:

- Do minimum;
- By-pass;
- Multi-modal option; and
- By-pass and multi-modal option.

The Officer added that the Council had made great progress with the project over the last couple of years, however, the WelTAG report was not yet finished and following the completion of the additional work it would be necessary to update the Stage 2 WelTAG report. With regards to WG funding for the schemes, bids had been made but there was no further information to report at the time of the meeting.

The Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport advised that she required approximately £80,000 to progress the additional work associated with Stage 2 of the scheme and given the considerable amount of work on the project to date, wished to progress to the end of Stage 2 to afford the local authority the opportunity to apply for additional funding for Stage 3 moving forward.

The Chairman thanked the Officer for her introduction to the reference and attached report and invited Mr. Rod Harrod and Mr. Roger Pattenden to provide their verbal representations to the Committee.

Mr Harrods representations were as follows:

“As Chair of Dinas Powys By-pass Steering Group I would like to thank everyone for their work, help, support and assistance in getting behind this project. It is more advanced now than at any time in the last 30 or even 90 years. Of course there have been differing views and observations along the way however, we have tried to steer a course that could be of overall potential benefit to the community and likely to gain cross party support. The Cabinet report requests Arcadis investigate ways to increase capacity of the Merrie Harrier junction and we hope this work will include consideration of a new entrance for Llandough Hospital. The Hospital has trebled in size over recent years growing even bigger with the inclusion of Rookwood. It's the second largest hospital in Wales and the second biggest employer in the Vale of Glamorgan. A new entrance to the hospital from the remodelled junction and by-pass would give benefits to ambulances, patients, staff and visitors. The report expresses concern however that the by-pass could increase traffic congestion at the Barons Court junction. A park and ride facility at the Merrie Harrier near Hazelhurst Nursing Home could mitigate this problem and justifies investigation by Arcadis. This facility would benefit traffic from all points whereas the proposed park and ride next to Bryn a Don field would primarily only benefit Barry traffic. The report recognises the study should consider local benefits but it seems to concentrate only on benefits to through traffic and reduction of congestion in Dinas Powys. A by-pass could also be of real value to adjacent communities by the provision of a very limited number of connections between local roads, however, none have been yet proposed. For example, a connection to the top of Murch Crescent would enable

traffic from Barratts 220 house development at the St. Cyres School site to access the by-pass. This would avoid increasing congestion at the traffic light junction between Murch Road and the A405 Cardiff Road. From the same point on the by-pass there could also be a connection to Dinas Powys Road, Penarth. Further down the by-pass is the opportunity to provide a link to Sully Road near the soon to be built 540 house Cog estate. That would further benefit Sully residents by reducing traffic on the B4267 Lavernock Road where another 567 houses are proposed at Cosmeston. Less pressure on all neighbouring roads would benefit the Dinas Powys traffic corridor and therefore we recommend the benefits as well as the costs of these connections are taken into consideration.”

The Chairman subsequently invited Mr Pattenden to provide his verbal representations which were as follows:

“I am a Chartered Civil Engineer, a member of the Dinas Powys Steering Group and the Community Representative on the WelTAG Review Group for this study. I support the proposed Strategic Traffic Modelling which will show the likely traffic situation over the whole Barry to Cardiff corridor for each of the options up to the year 2036. However, to enable the most meaningful comparison of by-pass options, it is important that the model includes all relevant roads. One of these roads is the route from Sully roundabout to Ffordd y Mileniwm via Hayes Road and Wimborne Road. This route also has the potential to relieve rush hour congestion on the section of A4055 between Biglis Roundabout and Ffordd y Mileniwm. Another relevant road is Pen-y-Turnpike from Dinas Powys to Leckwith Road. This narrow unclassified road currently carries significant rush hour traffic and it will be important to assess the extent to which a by-pass relieves this congestion. I hope that Committee will seek confirmation that the model will include these routes. The Cabinet report states that traffic modelling for the by-pass route to Sully Roundabout and on to Ffordd y Mileniwm will take into account the wider benefits and potential development in South East Barry. It also states that these prospects are expected to feature in the next LDP review. To enable such benefits to be taken into account in conjunction with the comparison of journey times using each by-pass option, the journey start and end points need to be defined as the Merrie Harrier and Ffordd y Mileniwm. Arcadis previously considered journeys only between the Merrie Harrier and Biglis Roundabout, but this omits consideration of South East Barry. For the comparison to be meaningful it is important journey times are taken to Ffordd y Mileniwm. Arcadis’ draft Stage 2 report referred to possible extra parking adjacent to Eastbrook Station. Following my query it was confirmed that this would be corrected in a revised report to read the Green Wedge north west of Dinas Powys Station. This could mean a slice of Dinas Powys common beneath The Southra. I hope Arcadis will be asked to clarify this proposal before the public consultation as residents and the Community Council are sure to question this point.”

Following both public speakers, both the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport and the Leader of the Council thanked both gentlemen for their representations and advised Members that all comments raised by the public speakers could be raised by the individuals as part of the formal public consultation process if agreed. The Head of Service also clarified that Mr Pattenden was the representative appointed by Dinas Powys Community Council rather than a Community representative.

To begin Member debate on the item, a Member thanked all officers for their historical and continued hard work on the project and thanked the Leader of the Council for the Cabinet's backing of the scheme and advised that he did not wish to comment on any points within the Stage 2 report as his comments would appear premature as the report was not yet complete. However, the Member wished to point out that within the Welsh Government Capital Transport Grants FT2019 - 20 Scheme Application Form, as contained at Appendix D to the papers, that the response provided by officers regarding the cultural impact, environmental impact and economic impacts of the project were identical and therefore appeared incorrect.

The Officer advised that the Council had still not received any feedback from Welsh Government regarding finance and apologised for any repetition, however, she wished to point out that the forms were particularly challenging to fill in within a short deadline which was often the case as Welsh Government only allowed a short period of time for the form to be completed and returned. Despite a short turn around to produce the document, officers were currently facing an extremely long waiting time for a decision back which remained the situation at the time of the meeting.

A Member thanked the public speakers present at the meeting and wished to address a comment that was raised during their representations in that there was a common perception that the by-pass would be constructed without any interlinks on it. However, this was not currently written into the WeITAG Study at the current time and would presumably add an immense amount of money to its cost to build further roads which would meet at the by-pass. Therefore, the Member offered his support in the consultation exercise resulting in additional interlinks being added to the by-pass scheme. The Member also wished to highlight that the junction at the Merrie Harrier was a long standing point of traffic congestion and was a natural pinch-point for the route to and from Dinas Powys and referred to a statement within the report that suggested that some works would be carried out at the Merrie Harrier junction before the research and traffic modelling had been undertaken in other areas and questioned whether said works were practical and/or feasible to complete. The Member also wished to raise his concerns regarding the lack of documented impact on the south east areas of Barry. The Member also wished to raise the concern that officers had indicated that approximately £80k was required to complete WeITAG Stage 2 but that there were not currently funds available from Welsh Government and therefore Recommendation (2) of the reference gave the impression that despite Welsh Government funding, the Local Authority would continue with its own in-house funds. With the estimated cost of the by-pass being between £39m and £72m, the Member asked whether the Local Authority was confident that it would acquire the money to complete the project in its entirety.

The Officer wished to reply to the Member's comments by first addressing the funding available for the project and advised that the money was available within the section's budget to complete Stage 2 however, future bids would be required to acquire Stage 3 funding. The Officer wished to reiterate that any additional junctions to the by-pass could be suggested as part of the consultation exercise and any works to take place regarding future possible development could be done under the remit of the Local Authority's Local Development Plan. Therefore, if any future

extensions were made to the project, then this should be handled via a Local Development Plan review.

At this point in the meeting, the Leader wished to address the Member's point regarding the second recommendation as set out in the reference and advised that an original recommendation was altered to minimise the message that the Local Authority had the funds available.

A Member then wished to highlight that there was a need to emphasise how the project as a whole would help the Vale of Glamorgan as a whole and that the Local Authority should be encouraging the additional interlinks to benefit the local as well as wider communities of Dinas Powys

A Member also requested further information regarding the status of the railway tunnel study, to which, the Officer advised that her section did not currently have the funding to undertake the study fully and it had to date proved difficult to engage with Network Rail. However, the study was much larger than just relating to the Dinas Powys by-pass as there were lots of other complimentary measures that needed to be looked at in terms of Active Travel, Park and Ride and the work that was underway with Transport for Wales in terms of the railway. The consultants were required to analyse several factors, not just the by-pass road itself, which they had done despite comments made to the contrary and within certain budget constraints. In response, the Member wished to make the point that if Network Rail were to respond saying that they were not going to be able to accommodate a by-pass then the entire project would be in jeopardy and therefore questioned whether this point in the study needed to be considered before moving forward.

In response to a Member's question regarding whether the additional modelling that was required was subject to the future funding as well, the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport advised that that was the case and could prove very expensive costing between £30k-£40k.

The Chairman then wished to raise the following points:

- The by-pass would have a great positive effect on commuters to and from the Cardiff area however there was uncertainty as to how long the modelling would take;
- The project would open a whole new inlet to the Cardiff City Deal and there were previous discussions of the project running alongside the J34 project for the City Deal and queried whether this was still the case;
- If the project was no longer running parallel with the J34 project, there was a concern that the additional modelling work was no longer necessary and therefore more emphasis could be placed on additional routes that were not initially part of the focus which could delay the Local Authority's progress.

The Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport advised that, with regards to the Chairman's first point on the timeframe for modelling, there was a possible window of opportunity to begin the process later in March or early April 2019 and that Council funding was currently available to progress with the extra modelling required,

however, Cabinet approval was required to commission the modelling in the first instance.

The Leader then wished to respond to the Chairman's second point regarding the project's links with City Deal and advised that several requests had been received for City Deal funding however to make a feasible bid to the City Deal it was necessary for the Local Authority to have a strong business case. Therefore, it was imperative that the Local Authority progress and finalise this WeITAG Stage in order to make future funding bids. The Leader also wished to highlight that the funding available through City Deal was not extensive and was distributed across the ten Local Authorities committed to the City Deal.

With regard to the Chairman's third point, the Officer advised that the Local Authority would be further ahead with the project if it had not extended the commission from Biglis through to Ffordd y Mileniwm as requested by Dinas Powys Community Council. The results of that Cabinet resolution had cost extra money and time however, the original focus was for improving strategic transport in Dinas Powys. The Officer then apprised the Committee of the future steps if and when she had received permission to move forward and advised that work would be commissioned as quickly as possible to move the WeITAG Stage 2 report through to consultation and then for the results to be fed back to both Scrutiny and Cabinet. Despite the multiple stages ahead, the Local Authority had not paused on making funding bids for the next financial year.

The Chairman thanked the officer and Leader for their input and expressed his support for the scheme, however, his concerns over the lack of time and funding available in contrast to the broadening of the works involved continued to be relevant. Therefore, the overarching concern was that if the Local Authority did not take up the opportunity now to progress and finalise the WeITAG Stage 2 study, then any potential City Deal money may not be available when required and that could delay the completion of the project overall.

Picking up on the Chairman's concerns, a Member stated that he was also concerned that WeITAG Stage 2 project had not been completed to date and that he was a strong advocate for the project moving forward and he understood that that was not due to the efforts of the Local Authority officers. However, he wished to highlight that the J34 project seemed confusing in contrast to the Dinas Powys project as there was currently no lobbying surrounding the J34 project which was progressing at speed but yet the public drive behind the by-pass project was in contrast to this.

The Officer advised that the J34 project was a regional scheme so the impacts were on a much larger regional scale and benefits would be felt by a neighbouring Authority whereby the Dinas Powys project would benefit people on a more local scale. Both schemes were important to the Vale of Glamorgan to move forward and officers wished to finish the WeITAG Stage 2 works as soon as possible to progress onto consultation so that the Local Authority would have an opportunity to bid for City Deal funding whilst the funding was still available.

In response to a Member's query whether the latest stages of the project could be delivered via the NDF, the Head of Regeneration and Planning advised that the scheme was not large enough to generate regional funding and the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport wished to add that WelTAG was about transport and not development.

With the Chairman's permission, a Member wished to ask a point of clarification from Mr. Pattenden on the start and end points for journey durations using each by-pass option but in particular the Blue Route. Mr Pattenden clarified that his opinion was that Members had been slightly misled. At the moment the journeys that were used to compare the value for money of the different by-pass routes were taken from the Merrie Harrier to Biglis Roundabout. That meant that, for the Blue Route, individuals would have to come down the by-pass to Sully Roundabout then along Sully Moors Road to get to Biglis which meant that the Blue Route took longer to travel and a longer distance and therefore it was prejudiced in comparison to other routes. If individuals were to take the journeys to Ffordd y Mileniwm, which was the request, then the Green Route comes down to Biglis Roundabout and then had to go through the congested part of Cadoxton whereas on the Blue by-pass route individuals carried on down Hayes Road to Wimborne Road to get to Ffordd y Mileniwm. Therefore the Blue Route stands on its own without any development. It does not require the development to show that it has a positive benefit. It doesn't require development to be an advantage and the Study needs to properly evaluate that fact.

The Chairman confirmed that the concern had already been raised by a Member of the Committee and it was noted that the additional work would slow down progress on the scheme. There was great risk that the Committee could debate at length on the matter by which point there would be no funding left to apply for.

In response to a Member's repeated concerns over the timescales regarding decisions made, the Officer advised that if the Committee were to approve as per the recommendations in the reference before it, then the aim was for the consultation exercise to begin prior to the autumn recess, the results of which would be fed back to the Committee. The consultation exercise would need to be 12 weeks in length which would result in the report being brought back to the Committee approximately around October 2019 with the ideal outcome being that the Committee would endorse the Stage 2 report and officers would be in a position to progress with Stage 3.

A Member of the Committee, who was also a local Ward Member, advised that the Dinas Powys project was something that was desperately needed and welcomed by the residents of Dinas Powys. However, there was concern over dispersal of assets and various other points in the process of looking at too many options at any one time. The Member advised that he was not in agreement with the comment raised by Mr. Pattenden with regards to the need to direct commuters, particularly to Mileniwm Way as, in his experience, the majority of traffic that went to the Biglis Roundabout travelled up the link road through to Port Road as they wished to travel mainly to Llantwit Major or the St. Athan area. It was important that the Council maintained direction for the project and therefore recommended that the Local Authority look exclusively at the Green and Pink Routes for the additional work that

was to be undertaken. The recommendation was subsequently seconded by the Committee Chairman.

On verbal agreement, the Committee also agreed to progress with the recommendations as set out in the Officer's report.

At this point, a Member wished to highlight his concerns as to whether there had been enough consideration given to the traffic along from Mileniwm Way to Biglis Roundabout and also those vehicles travelling on Windsor Road and Redlands Road and down by the Barons Court as the by-pass project would have a massive impact on all of the traffic routes, however recognised that concerns would be mitigated with research conducted in the future.

In response, the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport advised that the model would generate the required research and that the original commission was just looking at a by-pass for the Dinas Powys area. With regards to the additional recommendation raised by the Committee, the Officer advised that basic investigative work had already taken place regarding the Blue Route and therefore that work would still remain within the Stage 2 WeITAG report, however, any permissions for her to not continue with the work regarding the Blue Route would have financial, resource and timing benefits for her section.

In conclusion, the Chairman wished to bring the Committee's attention to the written representations as tabled from a member of the public and Councillor Burnett.

With no further questions raised from the tabled written representations, the Officer wished to provide assurance that with regards to the point raised in the public representations regarding the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Council was required to complete documentation and assess its work against the Act and that that scheduled works had already taken place. With regards to the representations received from Councillor Burnett, the Officer wished to answer the question contained regarding the gender split of the consultants and review group. The Officer advised that there was both male and female interest on the review group and confirmed that the lead consultants were female as well as herself also acting as the Chair of the group.

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the progress made on the WeITAG studies relating to improving strategic transport in Dinas Powys be noted.
- (2) T H A T should grant funding not be available from Welsh Government for the completion of the Stage 2 WeITAG work, as identified in paragraph 4.7 of the report, the Committee endorses the authorisation from Cabinet to the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport to seek an alternative funding source.
- (3) T H A T the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport progress with Stage 2 works for the Green and Pink Route exclusively.

(4) T H A T the comments of the Scrutiny Committee, as well as the recommendations raised above, be referred to Cabinet for consideration.

Reasons for recommendations

(1) To update Members on progress made on the scheme.

(2&3) To secure funding to deliver a final Stage 2 report for the project.

(4) To ensure Cabinet is aware of the views of the Scrutiny Committee regarding the strategic transport improvement in Dinas Powys.”