

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting17th December 2009

1. Title of Item/Report

Connect2 - Update

2. Record of the Decision

Cabinet was advised of progress on the Connect2 project; which was a scheme designed to link Ingleby Barwick with Eaglescliffe, Preston Park, Thornaby and Yarm via a series of pedestrian and cycle routes, including new bridges across the River Leven and Tees.

As a result of a successful bid for Big Lottery funding in December 2007, Sustrans secured £50 million of grant funding for 'Connect2', a national initiative designed to link communities currently severed by a physical barrier such as a road, river or railway. Each of the 79 Connect2 schemes across the UK would receive a share of this grant over the five years from 2008/09 to 2012/13 inclusive, with the Stockton Council in line to receive £600,000 towards the cost of providing the bridge links between Ingleby Barwick and Yarm and Ingleby Barwick and Eaglescliffe.

The estimated costs for the two schemes was £6million leaving a funding shortfall of £5.4million. A number of options to plug that gap had been explored, such as the Regional Funding Allocation from the Department for Transport and landfill tax funds, alas to no avail. There was also an expectation that some of the funding would come from developer contributions on sites within Ingleby Barwick which was now not going to be possible in the near future.

Despite this, the design of the linkages had been taken to the stage where routes had been examined and reviewed or re-aligned in order that there was a clear understanding of the total costs and the deliverability of the schemes. Details of the results of the feasibility studies for each link were submitted, along with a new link identified from The Rings along the west side of Queen Elizabeth Way, to link with the existing cycleway/footway. It was hoped that this latter scheme could be delivered in 2010/11 with funding allocated from the Local Transport Plan, and hopefully links 3 and 4 would also be achieved via this funding route. Officers would now look to engage in further detailed discussions with Sustrans to seek opportunities to look for underspend on other Connect2

projects nationally, in order to reduce the identified funding gap.

RESOLVED that:-

1. Officers continue to actively seek the necessary funding for the pedestrian and cycle linkages that connect the communities of Ingleby Barwick, Thornaby, Yarm and Eaglescliffe.

2. The Acting Head of Technical Services work with Sustrans to explore other opportunities to deliver the objectives for which the £600k was allocated within the timescales set and should this prove to be more challenging, then Sustrans be informed accordingly.

3. The community are informed of the continued commitment to deliver these schemes as and when resources become available.

3. Reasons for the Decision

The funding gap of £5.4 million is unlikely to be met within the time period set by the Big Lottery fund and Sustrans.

There is a need to retain good working relations with our partners Sustrans to ensure future schemes are not jeopardised.

Detailed designs have been worked up for these schemes which places the council in a good position to bid for alternative funds as and when they become available.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

Not applicable

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Not later than Midnight on Tuesday, 29th December 2009

Proper Officer
21 December 2009