

Cabinet – 18 November 2009

A4148 Red Route Scheme – Pleck Road/Bescot Road – Approval to Proposals

Portfolio: Councillor Ansell, Transport

Service: Regeneration

Wards: Pleck

Key decision: Yes

Forward plan: Yes

1. Summary of report

This report details the recommended scheme proposals for implementation of the A4148 Pleck Road/Bescot Road Red Route. This scheme will make a significant contribution towards achieving the objectives of the West Midlands Local Transport Plan which intends to reduce congestion, improve public transport, improve road safety and air quality and encourage economic growth.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet note the outcome of the public consultation exercise undertaken in June 2009, demonstrating full public support for the scheme.
- 2.2 That Cabinet approve the proposals as shown in the plans attached at **Appendix A** to be taken forward to detailed design and implementation.
- 2.3 That Cabinet delegate responsibility for resolving any minor scheme amendments to the Executive Director Regeneration in consultation with the portfolio holder. Specifically this will include: -
 - Finalising the location of any loading bays and parking arrangements along the route.
 - Finalising any agreements with adjoining land owners for any environmental mitigation and improvement measures required along the route.
 - Finalising the location of crossing points.
- 2.4 That Cabinet approve the undertaking of either the Maintenance or Transportation framework contractor in accordance with the Council's Financial and Contractual Rules, to construct the Red Route proposals.

3. Background information

- 3.1 This report seeks approval for the implementation of the A4148 Pleck Road/Bescot Road Red Route.
- 3.2 The proposals are shown in plans attached at **Appendix A**.
- 3.3 Using the feedback from the public consultation exercises the proposals have been shaped to balance the needs of route users, (drivers, cyclists and pedestrians) residents, schools and businesses based along the corridor. The consultation is outlined in the consultation section of this report.
- 3.4 This scheme will be one of the key schemes for Walsall in contributing towards the delivery of the second Local Transport Plan (LTP2).

4. Resource considerations

4.1 Financial:

- 4.1.1 The proposals for this Red Route scheme are outlined in plans attached in **Appendix A**. The total cost of the Red Route works along the Ring Road is estimated to be £1.233m; this figure is subject to confirmation following the completion of the detailed design and tender stages of the project, and obtainment of all information and costs regarding any diversions of utility company equipment in the areas of affected highway.
- 4.1.2 The funding for this scheme is made up of DfT Major Scheme funding for the delivery of package 1 Red Routes network in the West Midlands. Walsall has been allocated £5.6m of the package 1 funding with £1.233m allocated to the A4148 Broadway.
- 4.1.3 The expenditure profile for the scheme is outlined in table 1 below: -

	2005/ 06 (£k)	2006/ 07 (£k)	2007/ 08 (£k)	2008/ 09 (£k)	2009/ 10 (£k)	2010/ 11 (£k)	2011/ 12 (£k)
<i>Red Routes Package 1 Funding – A4148 Red Route</i>	2	9	16	196	85	600	325
Cumulative TOTAL (£k)	2	11	27	223	308	908	1,233

- 4.1.4 The approval of this scheme does not expose the Council to significant financial risk, as the scheme will only be progressed to the implementation stage if the scheme remains within budget limits following tender assessment.

- 4.1.5 In the Transport Capital Programme report, Cabinet are asked to endorse a review of how staff fee elements are utilised in the development and implementation of capital projects to ensure that resources are used as efficiently as possible at a time when the staff time and construction costs required to implement schemes are increasing significantly. Any change in working practices identified as part of that review will need to be utilised as this project is progressed through detailed design and implementation stages, recognising the likely increase in construction costs over the lifetime of this scheme.
- 4.1.6 The enforcement of the Red Route Orders will be complemented by the Council's adoption of Civil Parking Enforcement powers. These powers will enable the Council to appropriately control and manage the enforcement of vehicle infringements to ensure that the highway operates as effectively and as safely as possible.

4.2 Legal:

- 4.2.1 To deliver the project the Council will utilise either the Maintenance or Highway Framework Contractor; the selection of a preferred contractor will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Financial and Contractual Procedure Rules.
- 4.2.2 Given the nature of the concept of Red Routes and the need to maximise flexibility, it is proposed that all Red Route TROs will be implemented as experimental TROs. This will allow the Council to respond rapidly to modify these where operational experience reveals alterations are necessary in order to deliver a scheme of maximum benefit to route users and residents/ businesses along the A4148 corridor. Any responses or objections to the TROs will be handled in accordance with the Council's constitution.

4.3 Staffing:

There are no direct staffing impacts as a result of this report.

5. Citizen impact

Improvements to the A4148 will provide benefits for all route users - motorists, pedestrians, local residents/businesses and freight. The proposals have been developed to minimise any negative impact to citizens along the route; this is in relation to changes to the highway, such as the junction improvements and revisions to loading immediately outside a limited number of properties. Before and after traffic surveys will be conducted to ensure that the proposals do not encourage increased levels of inappropriate use of residential roads by through traffic.

6. Community safety

- 6.1 The Red Route proposals for the A4148 include the following improvements: -
- More consistent journey times through traffic enforcement.
 - The introduction and formalisation of safe crossing facilities at all junctions which currently do not include: blister surfaced paving to warn the visually impaired and dropped kerbing for disabled/pram access.
 - Improved lining and signing with a reduction in street clutter.
- 6.2 All proposals will be subject to Road Safety Audits, in accordance with guidance set out by the Institute of Highways and Transportation. This may require the proposals to be amended.

7. Environmental impact

- 7.1 Environmental and safety factors are considered in the development and delivery of transport schemes. With this scheme we will seek to retain the existing trees. Where any alterations may require the removal of a tree we propose to replace this elsewhere along the route.
- 7.2 The proposals for the overall scheme have been developed to take account of the wider street-scene and environment. The scheme will also be using the Council's new standard details for street furniture which specifies that all new street furniture as being black in colour, as black is recognised as being a less conspicuous colour for street furniture and equipment.

8. Performance and risk management issues

8.1 Risk:

- 8.1.1 Failure to deliver Walsall's element of the Package 1 Red Route network will put at risk Walsall's eligibility to be included in future funding submissions for Red Route funding from the DfT; this is likely to be of the order of £20m of investment in the strategic road network over the next seven years based on current projections.
- 8.1.2 The scheme will be managed using the West Midlands Capital Programme Management System and reported to the West Midlands CEPOG Management Board to track progress and also the Regeneration Directorate's project register.
- 8.1.3 The key risks associated with this project are: -
- a) The performance of statutory undertakers in diverting equipment that is located in the highway to allow the Council's contractor to construct the civil engineering elements of the work.

b) The ongoing management and engagement of stakeholders affected by the scheme (residents, businesses, drivers, public transport users, cyclists and pedestrians) to ensure that they are all informed and aware of progress in developing and implementing the scheme. As with all schemes of this nature there will be a degree of disruption during the implementation stage, therefore continued communication through the project development and implementation stage will be used to manage any concerns raised by stakeholders.

8.2 Performance management:

8.2.1 The delivery of the Red Route scheme will be a significant step in progress towards achieving the existing objectives and targets specified in the LTP. Future transport funding will be dependent on the level of progress towards achieving the targets which specifically include limiting the increase in congestion, improving public transport usage and reliability and improving accessibility to key West Midlands's town centres, including Walsall.

8.2.2 Failure to deliver Package 1 of the West Midlands Red Route network on budget and within timescale could put future major scheme funding for Red Route schemes at risk.

8.2.3 The scheme is managed in accordance with the requirements of the West Midlands Capital Programme Management System, which follows the principles of the Walsall Project Approach. A risk register will be updated as the scheme is progressed to implementation. The significant risks for the scheme are based around the costs of utility companies diversion works.

9. Equality implications

9.1 The proposals have been designed to maximise the benefit for as many users of the route as possible. In particular, upgrading any existing crossing point that does not currently include dropped curbs and blister surface paving to help formalise safer crossing locations.

10. Consultation

10.1 A public consultation was undertaken on the Red Route proposals in June 2009. The consultation exercise included:-

- Delivery of literature outlining the proposals to 800 properties along the route.
- Publishing the proposals on the Council's website.
- Holding three public exhibitions, attended by 14 people.
- Press adverts and posters promoting the proposals.
- Presentation of these plans to local residents and traders.

10.2 The consultation responses revealed full support for the proposals.

Background papers

Objection to Red Routes Response – **Appendix B.**

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Tim Johnson
Executive Director
Regeneration

9 November 2009



Councillor Tom Ansell
Portfolio Holder
Transport

9 November 2009

From M6 Junction 9.

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No	Revisions	By	Cnd	Date	Purpose of Issue	Rev	Auth	Date
A4148 Red Route - Pleck Road/Bescot Road.								
Drawn: RUB								
Checked: MC								
Date: 08/09								
Scale: -								
Original drawing size A0 If this drawing is at any other size, then scale shown does not apply.								
File:								
ENGINEERING & TRANSPORTATION SERVICES MAJOR PROJECTS & MINOR IMPROVEMENTS								
Drawing No.								
Rev								

To the Evans Halshaw garage.

NOTE
NOT to National Grid.
All levels to TBM Stn. 1 as shown.