

Extract of Executive Board Minutes relevant to the Environment & Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2023

EXB56	MERSEYLINK – AUTHORISED HIGHWAY FUNCTIONS
--------------	--

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment and Regeneration, that outlined a request from Merseylink Limited, for the renewal of the Authorisation Period for the delegated Highway Functions, from 27 March 2024, for a period of ten years. Under the terms of the Mersey Gateway Bridge Project Agreement (Section, Part 2 of Schedule 18) there was set of defined Authorised Highways Functions which were delegated to the Project Company (Merseylink Ltd).

The Mersey Gateway Project Agreement defined that this arrangement was limited until the duration of the Authorised Period (ten years from Financial Close) and Merseylink were required to seek renewal of the authorisation period by up to a further ten years on or before the expiry of the Authorisation Period, which would be 27 March 2024. It was reported that Merseylink had provided the necessary written request to the Council and the Mersey Crossings Board had confirmed that they considered there was no reason not to confirm the renewal and this should be for the full ten year period.

RESOLVED: That the request from Merseylink Limited, for the renewal of the Authorisation Period for the delegated Highway Functions, from 27 March 2024 for a period of ten years, be approved.

EXB57	WAIVER REQUEST FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A NAMED SUB-CONTRACTOR TO CARRY OUT SPECIALIST RESTORATION OF RAILINGS AT BIRCHFIELD GARDENS, WIDNES
--------------	---

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which sought approval for a waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 iv of Part 3 of Procurement Standing Orders, to appoint Lost Art Ltd as a Named Sub-Contractor for the refurbishment of historic park railings at Birchfield Gardens, Widnes.

The Environment Services Division was currently tendering a package of works for the refurbishment of Birchfield Gardens and the pre tender estimate value for the project was £500k. The majority of the refurbishment works would be undertaken by a Principal Contractor and their domestic sub-contractors, however the restoration of the historic boundary railings element would require a specialist sub-contractor.

It was noted that Lost Art Ltd had been commissioned to undertake a survey of the railing and had provided a quotation for the works of £110,091.50. It was proposed that Lost Art Ltd would be appointed as Named Sub-Contractor to be used by the

Principal Contractor due to cost certainty and the quality and workmanship they could provide.

RESOLVED: That the Board gives delegated authority to the Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration, in consultation with the Executive Member for the Environment and Urban Renewal, to approve the waiver, ref: 134W23, to appoint Lost Art Ltd as the Named Sub-Contractor to undertake the restoration of historic park railing as part of the wider refurbishment project at Birchfield Gardens, Widnes.

EXB58	EAST RUNCORN CONNECTIVITY SCHEME
--------------	---

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which sought approval to accept the funding to complete the full business case in support of the East Runcorn Connectivity Scheme (ERC) project elements that were deliverable within the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) 1 period (ending March 2027). These proposals comprised two of the four elements that constitute the ERC and are:

- A56 major maintenance – A558 Junction to M56 Junction 11;
- ERC Active travel routes
- Silver Jubilee Bridge to Shopping City
- Runcorn East Station Access
- Chester Road (A56) to Daresbury Park
- Halton Brow, Main Street and Norton Lane
- Bridge Street to Windmill Hill Avenue North
- Leira Way Connectivity Upgrades/Cycle Loop

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the funding from the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement be accepted and the Council be recommended to amend the Capital Programme accordingly;
- 2) Mott MacDonald Ltd are retained as external consultant for the project up to a value of £1.61m, via the Warrington Consultancy Framework; and
- 3) the Operational Director – Policy, Planning and Transportation, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Environment and Urban Renewal, be delegated to procure and implement the necessary works to deliver the A56 East Runcorn Connectivity (ERC) Scheme and active travel routes within funding deadlines.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 7 DECEMBER 2023

EXB68

HALTON FREEPORT RETAINED RATES FUND

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, that sought approval for the Council to implement the Halton Freeport Retained Business Rates Fund. In 2021, the Council supported the development of a Freeport application in support of the Liverpool City Region’s economic aspirations. The Freeport had two major elements: to provide connectivity to Port of Weston and to raise project funding to deliver the Council’s economic aspirations in the form of Tax Incremental Financing (TIF). TIF is a method of raising revenue to pay for regeneration.

The report provided an update on how the Council intended to establish the Retained Business Fund on a similar basis to the TIF Fund established for the local Enterprise Zone using a prescribed number of projects as outlined in the Full Business Case and Retained Rates Strategy. A list of the initial nominated projects were detailed in the report.

It was noted that projects confirmed as ‘in scope’ would be managed by the billing authority. Projects would be invited to prepare a business case, proportional to the scale of the project, in line with the requirements of the billing authority. Each billing authority would set out its own governance process for the approval of funds allocated from retained rates.

The Board was advised that initial estimates suggested that the 25 years (2046 to the lifetime end point) Halton Retained Business Rates Fund rates retention period could support the delivery of the masterplan through approximately £40m of Tax Increment Financing.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted;
- 2) the Board supports the progress made on the Freeport and specifically the retained business rates fund to deliver local regeneration priorities;
- 3) delegated authority be given to the Executive Director for Environment and Regeneration, Operational Director - Finance, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to take the necessary steps to develop a Halton Freeport Retained Business Rates Fund; and
- 4) the Operational Director Finance, be authorised to enter into and manage the processes required to facilitate the Business Rates Retention and Tax Increment Financing processes.