

**SUBJECT: SINCIL BANK GATEWAYS AND GREENWAYS PROJECT**

**DIRECTORATE: MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS**

**REPORT AUTHOR: KATE BELL, CLIMATE CHANGE MANAGER**

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To provide an update on the delivery of the Town Deal Sincil Bank Green Corridor project, including the arrangements for delivery of the gateways and greening improvements.
- 1.2 To seek agreement to delegate final approval of the delivery and contracting arrangements for this project to the Section 151 Officer, Director of Major Developments and City Solicitor.
- 1.3 To approve inclusion in the General Investment Programme of the capital expenditure to enable delivery of the Sincil bank Gateways and Greening project under the Towns Fund programme.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 Sincil Bank has been a priority area for neighbourhood renewal and support within the City since 2016 when a Place Shaping Framework was undertaken and strategy produced. Several themes for intervention were identified within the strategy including 'Streets for People,' 'Gateways' and 'Greening.' These were incorporated into the Lincoln Investment Plan and Government funding submission in 2020 and approved as part of the £19M Town Deal Funding through a signed Heads of Terms with Government in May 2021.
- 2.2 Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) is the lead delivery partner for the Sincil Bank Regeneration Scheme as proposed in the City's Towns Investment Plan (TIP). The scheme will support the fund's objectives through driving the economic development and growth of Lincoln as well as aligning with two of the Town Fund's intervention themes including the 'urban regeneration' and 'connectivity.'

## **3. The Project – Sincil Bank Regeneration: Transport Improvements**

- 3.1 The project involves improvements to the walking and cycling infrastructure and urban realm within Sincil Bank incorporating the plans and proposals developed by the Sincil Bank Revitalisation Partnership. The project (see Figure 1) includes a range of interventions including the creation of a green corridor to support pedestrian and cyclist movements, gateway treatments, landscaping and urban realm improvements and alterations to the existing one-way system.
- 3.2 The project will complement the recently introduced residents parking scheme by reducing the level of traffic within the area which will in turn act as a catalyst for further investment. The intended outcome is to improve access to the Lincoln City Football Club stadium by walking and cycling, improving the visitor experience and supporting the wider regeneration programme.

3.3 The project forms a key part of the Lincoln Transport Strategy and aims to contribute to the wider development of central Lincoln enabling the city to grow as a thriving place to live and work. It will support the regeneration of the Sincil Bank area of Lincoln, which suffers from poor accessibility, poor quality urban realm and high levels of traffic which impacts on the air quality and resident's quality of life.

3.4 Introducing gateways and enhancing the green spaces in the area will complement the new Community Hub currently being built at Sincil Bank stadium which will be opening in 2024. The Community Hub will provide a space for training and skills as well as a safe space to promote health and wellbeing. This will compliment improvements to outside spaces to give the local community much needed opportunities to live happier, healthier and more fulfilled lives in Lincoln.

#### **4. Revision to the Sincil Bank Regeneration Scheme Business Case**

4.1 Following the approval of the business case by the Lincoln Town Board in December 2021 Lincolnshire County Council were conditionally awarded £2,997,952 Towns Funding to deliver highways improvements as well as improving place-setting and the urban realm along Sincil Bank.

4.2 Following initial scheme development, LCC have progressed proposals for improvements to the highway along Sincil Bank at an estimated cost of £2,423,986. These proposals will deliver the traffic reduction and cycling improvements identified in the original project proposals.

4.3 Following a report to the September Town Board it was identified that additional works were required to achieve the wider improved place setting and environmental objectives of the Investment Plan. Following further discussions between County and City officers, to ensure that the programme remained on track for completion by March 2025 the Lincoln Town Board approved, subject to an assured revised project business case, an option for the City Council to support the development of these elements, on a sub contract basis to the County. This will ensure that proposals build on the previous community development undertaken through the Sincil Bank 'Place Shaping' work and include enhancement of between 4-6 'gateways' to and wider greening and environmental improvement delivery within the area. The estimated cost of these works is £573,966, which would be fully funded from the Town Deal Programme. This project is to be referred as the 'Sincil Bank Gateways and Greening Project.'

4.4 The project will be fully funded by the LCC Towns Fund allocation and the City of Lincoln Council (CoLC) will not be required to provide any funding towards the project. Any risk to budget will be managed through procurement and cost planning by both the County Council and City Council and the scope of responsibility formalised through a Grant Funding Agreement/sub agreement between the County and District Councils. All proposals are to be assurance checked through an independent review of the revised Business case in January, which will form the basis of the Grant Funding/sub agreements.

#### **5. Sincil Bank Gateways and Greening Project**

5.1 The City of Lincoln Council are proposing to procure the services of a project manager to work alongside the council's Neighbourhood Manager and CoLC project lead to undertake ongoing community consultation, site identification and assessment, develop and refine gateway and green site design plans, secure planning approval and oversee delivery of agreed works.

- 5.2 The appointed project manager will liaise closely with LCC Highways Team to ensure that the gateways and greening element of the project is incorporated into the final Highway improvements plans and there is a coordinated approach to the delivery of works.
- 5.3 The project will be overseen by the Sincil Bank Steering Group made up of Towns Board representatives, City Council officers and LCC Highways officers. Where appropriate some gateway projects may be included in LCC's procurement for highways works to ensure maximum value for money.
- 5.4 Procurement of a project manager is expected to take place in January 2024 and further community consultation and design plans are to be completed by April 2024.
- 5.5 LCC's procurement of highways improvement works has been scheduled for April 2024, where possible gateways designs are to be included in the tender for delivery of works.

## **6. Strategic Priorities**

### **6.1 Let's drive inclusive economic growth**

This is a key project within the economic portfolio as part of the Town Deal programme. The scheme will support the fund's objectives through driving the economic development and growth of Lincoln as well as aligning with two of the Town Fund's intervention themes including the 'Urban Regeneration and Connectivity.'

### **6.2 Let's reduce all kinds of inequality**

This project contributes to the Sincil Bank Revitalisation Programme and Vision 2025 aspiration to help make people feel safe and welcome in their communities.

### **6.3 Let's enhance our remarkable place**

The scheme will help deliver urban regeneration to support the Sincil Bank area by reducing rat running traffic and reducing commuter parking making the area more appealing to residents and local businesses and enhancing the vibrancy of the immediate area and the wider City of Lincoln.

### **6.4 Let's address the challenge of climate change**

Ultimately the scheme will directly support the Lincoln Transport Strategy and the Sincil Bank Regeneration programme and help to:

- Rebalance movement towards walking and cycling.
- Enhance the health and wellbeing of communities through improved air quality increased physical activity and safety.
- Reduce carbon emissions to enable the County Council to reach its zero emission target in 2050 and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

## **7. Organisational Impacts**

### **7.1 Finance (including whole life costs where applicable)**

### 7.1.1 Capital Implications

As the Accountable Body, the Council will fund the total project value of £2,997,952, from the Towns Fund through a Grant funding Agreement with LCC as per the original financial model and approved business case. An additional form of agreement clarifying the terms of the £573,966 sublet works will also be put in place between the two parties prior to expenditure of any substantive contracted works.

As LCC will remain as the grant recipient, they will be responsible for the submission of all grant claims with the Council ensuring it provides all relevant information to enable the claims to be made.

The Council will be required to transfer the capital budget of £573,966 from external schemes to its directly delivered projects within the General Investment Programme, as follows.

	<b>2023/24 £000</b>	<b>2024/25 £'000</b>
TF externally delivered schemes	(73,000)	(500,966)
Sincil Bank Gateway and Greening Project	73,000	500,966

The project remains fully funded from the Towns Fund.

### 7.1.2 Revenue Implications

There are no direct revenue implications arising from this project.

### 7.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules

Due to LCC sub- contracting the gateways and greening element of the Sincil Bank project to CoLC, a subsidy control assessment will need to be completed prior to commencement of the project.

All contracting and procurement activity is being undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and all other relevant legislation.

### 7.3 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination.
- Advance equality of opportunity.
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

An Equalities Impact Assessment is included as part of the business case for this project. Some specific examples of promoting inclusive growth are summarised below:-

- The Sincil Bank project will improve quality of the immediate local environment (public realm) and support access to education and job opportunities.
- The Urban Regeneration project will help to enhance social and cultural cohesion within the Sincil Bank community.
- Sustainable transport, public realm and air quality improvements supporting the delivery of sustainable, high quality and liveable places.

As part of the site design process, it will be necessary to review the existing EIA and update if required.

#### **7.4 Human Resources**

The project lead, contract management, stakeholder engagement and neighbourhood management support on behalf of City of Lincoln Council will be covered by existing roles. Project management and design services will be procured due to lack of required skills and capacity within the City Council.

#### **7.5 Land, Property and Accommodation**

As part of the final designs for the gateways and greening all projects will require agreement with LCC/CoLC as to the required ongoing maintenance of newly improved green spaces. The priority 'greening' sites identified are owned by Lincolnshire County Council. The City of Lincoln Council will not be creating any new assets or maintenance responsibilities.

#### **7.6 Significant Community Impact &/or Environmental Impact**

The project is not anticipated to generate any significant negative Environmental Impact in the construction and delivery of works and will create an improved cycling and pedestrian route for the benefit of the community and support model shift to improve local air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with the Council's Environmental Policy.

#### **7.7 Corporate Health and Safety implications**

The contractor responsible for the delivery of the regeneration project will be subject to the Council's control of contractors' process.

### **8. Risk Implications**

#### **8.1 (i) Options Explored**

The Council have considered the option for LCC to deliver the highways improvements without any public realm works including the gateways and greening as set out in the original Towns Fund Business case. However, this would likely risk failing to deliver some of the key project outputs and as a result the Towns Board not being able to sign off the project and £2,997,952m funds being returned in full to Government. The Investment in Sincil Bank would be significantly reduced and opportunities to address issues raised previously by residents lost.

#### **8.2 (ii) Key Risks Associated with the Preferred Approach**

**Resource Risk** - The preferred approach places additional work load on existing officers who will now be required to manage the contract to deliver the project.

**Mitigation** - To minimise this risk the council will be appointing a project manager to provide additional support and necessary skills required to deliver the project.

**Project Costs Risk** - The project is dependent on funding from the Towns Fund, of which initially £573,966 has been allocated to the gateways and greening project. This would only increase subject to an underspend from the highway's improvement works.

**Mitigation** - The project will be carefully managed to ensure that the scope and outline designs are developed in line with the cost constraints. Risk of budget overrun will be managed through legal agreements between the two delivery parties LCC and CoLC. The project will be monitored on a quarterly basis through the Town Deal Programme management processes. These processes have been audited and approved independently in December 2021.

**Outputs/Outcomes – Risk that the project will not deliver on outputs/outcomes which may impact funding.**

**Mitigation** – Specialist advice to inform appropriate quantification and monitoring of outputs; sensitivity built in and regular monitoring to review. Town Deal is the key funder and decisions in respect of this funding ultimately rest with the accountable body, City of Lincoln Council.

**Timescales – Risk that the project will not deliver within the proposed timescales for Town Deal.**

**Mitigation** – Town Deal programme extends to 2025/26; current forecasting for this scheme, subject to a number of dependencies, is to complete during 2024/25 allowing for contingency within the programme.

## **9. Recommendations**

- 9.1 To acknowledge the update in respect of proposals to retain the gateways and greening element as part of the Sincil Bank Regeneration Project.
- 9.2 To agree to delegate the final approval of the delivery and contracting arrangements for this project to the Section 151 Officer, Director of Major Developments and City Solicitor to a final scheme cost that can be financed and delivered viably.
- 9.3 To agree the transfer of a £573,966 capital estimate to schemes directly delivered by the Council, in the General Investment Programme.

**Is this a key decision?** No

**Do the exempt information categories apply?** No

**Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?** No

**How many appendices does the report contain?** None

**List of Background Papers:** None

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