

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Cabinet

DECISION NO:

19/00085

For publication

Thanet Parkway Railway Station – Scheme Delivery

Key decision: YES

Key decision criteria. The decision will:

- a) result in savings or expenditure which is significant having regard to the budget for the service or function (currently defined by the Council as in excess of £1,000,000); or
- b) be significant in terms of its effects on a significant proportion of the community living or working within two or more electoral divisions – which will include those decisions that involve:
 - the adoption or significant amendment of major strategies or frameworks;
 - significant service developments, significant service reductions, or significant changes in the way that services are delivered, whether County-wide or in a particular locality.

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

Thanet Parkway Railway Station – Scheme Delivery

Decision:

The Cabinet agrees to the progression and delivery of the Thanet Parkway Railway Station project (up to a total KCC contribution of £17.81m), which will include the following key activities;

- a) undertaking detailed design; and subject to planning approval;
- b) completing acquisition of the land; and
- c) entering into contracts as necessary for construction.

And;

Agrees to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment & Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, to take appropriate actions necessary to implement this decision, including but not limited to, deciding the preferred procurement route and entering in relevant contracts (of which KCC's contribution is to the maximum value of £17.81m) or other legal agreements.

Governance:

The Executive Scheme of Delegation for Officers set out in Appendix 2 Part 4 of the Constitution (and the directorate schemes of sub-delegation made thereunder) provides the governance pathway for the implementation of this decision by officers. It specifies at 1.9 of the scheme that once a Member-level decision has been taken, the implementation of that decision will normally be delegated to officers.

In this instance, the Director Growth Environment and Transport is the lead officer seeking to ensure that all such steps as are necessary to implement the decision are undertaken.

Reason(s) for decision:

Background

A previous Key Decision was taken by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport on 1 August 2014 (14/00056) which approved the delivery of Thanet Parkway Station in the location to the west of Cliffsend, involving:

- a) Commencing land acquisition work;
- b) Undertaking public consultations to support the project development process; and
- c) Undertaking project development work to enable the submission of a planning application and design work for the scheme.

The feasibility design for the scheme received Approval in Principle (equivalent to Network Rail's 'Governance in Railway Investment Projects Stage 3' [GRIP 3] status) in August 2017. Following that milestone, the scheme was progressed through outline design (GRIP 4) and planning application was submitted in May 2018.

Comments received during the planning process regarding the visual impact of the scheme led to changes in the scheme design. As a result, the design work and planning application documents have been amended and are being readied for a resubmission of the planning application in November 2019.

Negotiations for land acquisition have been ongoing with the intention to enter into a contract following this decision approval.

A decision is required to proceed with the delivery of the scheme in order to meet the project delivery programme.

How the proposed decision meets the objectives of 'Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council's Strategic Statement (2015-2020)'

Since 2010, Thanet Parkway has been a key strategic transport priority for Kent County Council, with the ambition to deliver the station first mentioned in Growth without Gridlock (December 2010), the third Local Transport Plan (2011-2016), the Rail Action Plan for Kent (April 2011) and most recently in Local Transport Plan 4: Delivering Growth without Gridlock (2016 – 2031) (LTP4). The delivery of the station continues to be of significant importance to the County Council and is a strategic priority in LTP4 because of its ability to improve rail connectivity between East Kent, other Kent towns and London; to improve the attractiveness of the area to employers and thereby address the historic economic disadvantage of East Kent.

The delivery of the station will help meet the overarching objective of LTP4:

To deliver safe and effective transport, ensuring that all Kent's communities and businesses benefit, the environment is enhanced, and economic growth is supported.

Financial Implications

The total cost of the project is estimated to be £34.51m based on a 2019 estimate.

The scheme funding comprises of £14m from the Local Growth Fund (administered by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership), £2m from Thanet District Council, £0.7 from the East Kent Spatial Development Company.

KCC has committed £2.65m and will therefore commit to a further investment of up to £15.16m (a maximum total of £17.81m), whilst continuing to explore further external funding opportunities.

The business case work has been completed, showing that the project offers very high value for money and that the station is commercially viable (net fares revenue is in excess of the on-going cost). Depending on the operating model, there is the potential for the station car park to provide a future income to KCC over a number of years.

Growth Environment & Transport, Section 4 – Capital Investment Plans 2019-20 to 2021-22 By Year, Row 6, page 70.

Growth Environment & Transport, Section 4 – Capital Investment Plans 2019-20 to 2021-22 By Funding, Row 7, page 74.

Legal Implications

Invicta Law is providing advice and the land acquisition will be completed by KCC Infrastructure. Any further legal implications to be established through continued engagement with Invicta Law Ltd and Strategic Commissioning

Equalities implications

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and will accompany the report to Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee.

Data Protection implications

A Data Protection Impact Assessment is not required as this project does not require the processing of personal data

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

Cabinet Committee consultation planned or undertaken

The project was taken to Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee in July 2014, at which the proposed decision (14/00056) was endorsed. The scheme has also featured in many transport strategy documents, including the statutory *Local Transport Plan 4: Delivering Growth without Gridlock (2016-31)* which was adopted by County Council on 13th July 2017.

The proposed decision will be taken to the Environment and Transportation Cabinet Committee on 29th November 2019. The committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport on the proposed Cabinet decision.

Is any public consultation planned or has already been undertaken?

Public consultations were held on 2nd February – 27 March 2015 and 25 January – 19th March 2017. A statutory planning consultation was held in 2018 following submission of a planning application in May 2018. Further stakeholder engagement has/is being carried out during autumn 2019. This included a public meeting with Cliffsend Parish Council, and the residents of Cliffsend on 10th October 2019.

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/travelling-around-kent/thanet-parkway-railway-station>

Which Divisions / Local Members are particularly affected:

All Thanet Electoral Divisions notably;
Ramsgate
Birchington and Rural

Have views been sought from local Members?

The views of Members were sought through the consultation which ran from 25th January – 19th March 2017. All members were supplied with a copy of the consultation booklet and questionnaire and a KCC Member briefing was held on the 10th January 2017. All current affected Members were informed of and invited to the public meeting in Cliffsend on 10th October 2019.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

A full options analysis has been carried out as part of the scheme business case. Below is a summary of the options considered as alternatives to delivering Thanet Parkway.

Option	Outcome
1 Do nothing	rejected as it would fail to accommodate increasing demand for rail travel, accelerate the delivery of housing and fail to improve access to jobs and employment space.
2 Increase car parking provision at Ramsgate Station	shortlisted for further investigation but rejected due to the lack of land in the residential area around the station.
3 Increase car parking provision at Minster Station	rejected due to unsuitable local highway network, impact on Minster village and poorer rail service at Minster.
4 Shuttle bus from the Birchington-On-Sea Station	rejected due to unattractive journey times and lack of rail access to Ashford, Canterbury and Maidstone.
5 Direct coach service from London	rejected due to long journey times and low impact on economic growth.
6 Shuttle bus from Ramsgate Station	rejected due to lack of suitable terminus at Ramsgate and low impact on economic growth.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

None.

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signed

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date