

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – URGENT RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Michael Payne

Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

DECISION NO:

20/00074

For Publication: Grant for Kent's road network needs to support Transition

Key decision: YES

As Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, I agree to approve the acceptance of the Section 31 Grant monies award from the Department for Transport (DfT) to procure and manage works to deliver customs checking and freight holding areas and associated infrastructure at sites secured by DfT to support Government Transition arrangements.

This approval includes agreement to;

- a) AGREE to accept the Grants under the terms and conditions required by Government; and
- b) APPROVE the implementation of the necessary works as detailed in this report and the Grant specification to deliver the sites' facilities;
- c) CONFIRM that the projects will be delivered via the KCC Highways Term Maintenance Contract as a Highways Improvement Scheme in support of traffic management plans; and
- d) DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport to, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport and the Leader, take any necessary actions to implement this decision, including but not limited to entering into relevant legal agreements and authorising spend from Grant monies.

Reason(s) for decision:

The decision will support operational traffic management plans relating to Transition from the EU on the 31st December 2020

Financial Implications:

Works at the initial site have been estimated at £37m by DfT. All expenditure on this project, at the initial site or others required by DfT, will only be undertaken subject to receipt by KCC of additional Section 31 grant monies to fund required works and related project delivery activity.

Authority is provided for the use of this and subsequent s31 grant funding only for the purposes of procuring and managing works to deliver customs checking and freight holding areas and associated infrastructure at sites secured by DfT to support Government Transition arrangements.

The initial grant is for £12m and DfT has confirmed this can be spent on capital and revenue activity to prepare the site.

Reason for Urgency:

The site must be delivered in advance of 31 December 2020 in order to allow time for training and testing. Confirmation of the site and offer was only received Mid-July and to achieve the deadline, some enabling works have commenced.

This key decision is now required urgently to ensure appropriate authority is in place to support the delivery of the site which has already been identified and to provide necessary flexibility to allow for swift significant Officer decisions on this project to enable the site to be delivered by the deadline date.

Should additional works be required, at this site at Junction 10a or other sites in Kent and the arrangements catered for within this decision (ongoing s31 grant funding and related scope of activity) still apply, officers will consult the Leader and the Cabinet Member in writing at the time as part of any progression of the project.

Member and other consultation:

No Cabinet Committee consultation possible due to urgency process.

The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, in addition to agreeing that the decision could not be reasonably deferred provided the following comments:

No additional comments.

The Group Spokespeople of the Scrutiny Committee providing the following comments:

No additional comments

The Chair and Group Spokespeople of the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee provided the following comments:

Mr Holden confirmed support for the urgency procedures.

Mr Lewis indicated that he was content with the decision.

Local Affected Members provided the following comments:

Mr Bartlett (Ashford Central) provided a supplementary note outlining his comments (published on the relevant decision page).

Longer-term Member engagement:

Members will be updated in due course as to progress with the project, in particular updates will be provided should any additional sites be secured by DfT that require KCC to manage works in line with this decision.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Information on various locations has been shared with DfT, including traffic impacts, costs and timescales which was used by DfT to inform their business case and agreement to award the Section 31 Grant.

The additional sites and infrastructure required is based on modelling provided by the Government on the operational and management needs to manage freight traffic from 31 December 2020.

The project is in support of a Government programme of Brexit preparation and KCC is not obligated to deliver or commission the relevant works – consideration was given to rejecting the request for KCC to deliver the scheme. This would have resulted in DfT commissioning a different organisation to complete the project instead. This option was rejected as KCC is confident it is best placed to organise and deliver the works effectively and in a co-ordinated manner as the relevant Highways Authority.

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

None

M. J. B. -

14 August 2020

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Signed

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date