

**Divisions Affected – Wolvercote and Summertown, St Margaret's,
University Parks**

**DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR
INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

21 March 2024

**Woodstock Road Sustainable Travel Contracts Procurement and
Award**

Report by Corporate Director of Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to:**
 - a) **Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Environment and Place to procure the design and construction (subject to consultation) of the A4144 Woodstock Road Sustainable Transport Measures scheme through appointment of Milestone Infrastructure Ltd (MIL) under the Highways Partnership Contract to a Task Order value up to £ £3,050,000 inc VAT.**

Executive Summary

2. This report seeks to ensure authority is in place to enter into procurement of MIL under the Highways Partnership Contract for a 'Walk and Talk' co-production design approach and delivery of the A4144 Woodstock Road Sustainable Transport Measures scheme up to a Task Order value of £ £3,050,000 inc VAT.

Background

3. £3.2 Million of the allocated Oxfordshire Growth Deal funding remains to deliver the scheme comprising scheme development, design, consultation, construction and monitoring & evaluation, inclusive of internal staff costs throughout each stage and procurement of MIL.

Project Overview

4. The A4144 Woodstock Road is a radial route that stretches 3.69km (2.29 miles) northwest from Oxford city centre. The corridor sees significant flows of cyclists, pedestrians and bus users both from within Oxford and to/from external urban areas extending from the A44 and A40. Over future years, these flows are expected to rise with (amongst other factors) development of the committed Oxford North, Eynsham Salt Cross and Cherwell allocation of Oxford unmet need housing development sites.
5. Sustainable travel enhancements to the Woodstock Road would complement wider significant investment in sustainable travel currently committed and being delivered along the onwards A40 and A44 routes. Measures will also be expected to complement the approved Oxford Traffic Filter trial.
6. There has been longstanding feedback from active travel groups, bus operators and local councillors that current active travel (cycling and walking) provision along the Woodstock Road is very poor and that there are currently poor outcomes for bus reliability and punctuality.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

7. The Woodstock Road Corridor Improvements will support the council's nine priorities and in particular:
 - Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work.
 - Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents.
 - Invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network.
 - Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit.
8. In July 2022, Oxfordshire County Council adopted its new Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) which sets a clear vision to deliver a net-zero transport system that enables Oxfordshire to thrive, protects the environment and makes the county a better place to live for all residents. This includes ambitious targets to:
 - replace or remove 1 in 4 car trips in Oxfordshire by 2030
 - deliver a net-zero transport network by 2040, and
 - have zero, or as close as possible, road fatalities or life-changing injuries by 2050.

9. The Woodstock Road Corridor improvements will support the Traffic Filters Trial which is one of the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (COTP) core actions to build a more sustainable, reliable transport system.
10. The scheme will improve bus journey times and increase provision for active travel regardless of the outcome of the Traffic Filter Trial, through amending the bus lanes to reduce northbound queuing and providing formal crossings and side road entry treatments to improve conditions and increase walking and wheeling.

Project Procurement Strategy

11. A project Procurement Strategy has been developed in March 2024 and is with Senior Managers. The strategy sets out the recommended routes to market to enable the progression of future project stages – preliminary design and detailed design & construction.
12. It sets out that the detailed design and construction works are proposed to be undertaken through Council's Highways Partnership Contract. After early engagement with the supplier, resource and availability to carry out the work has been confirmed for the next financial year. The value of contract to be awarded is anticipated to be more than £1m.
13. The key driver for use of the councils Highways Partnership Contract is time, local knowledge and familiarity with local processes; this route will produce the shortest time to commence construction and deliver the works by the end of March 2025.

Network Management Plan

14. The delivery of the bus lane reversal element of this scheme will support efficient management of the network during the Traffic Filter Trial including bus journey reliability.
15. The active travel measures such as formal crossings and side road entry treatments that require temporary traffic management will be timetabled to ensure minimal disruption to the network and will not compromise the monitoring of the Traffic Filters. MIL have a long-standing relationship with our Network Management team and are familiar with our road space booking procedures.

Financial Implications

16. The Woodstock Road Improvements are projected to amount to £3.2 million allocated from the remaining Growth Deal Funding.

17. The scheme has secured funding as summarised in the table below. The funding that has been allocated and secured has been confirmed by OCC's Finance Team.

Source of funding	Remaining Funding value	Deadline for spend	Held/Secured
Oxfordshire Growth Deal	£3,203,708	March 2025	Confirmed secured
Total	£3,203,708	As above	As above

18. The spend deadline for the Oxfordshire Growth Deal funding is 31 March 2025, meaning that time is of the essence in terms of commencing construction.
19. Project Budget:
20. There is £153,708 included within the budget split across each the stages for internal staff costs. The remaining £3,050,000 is for the Task Order to MIL.

Stage	Amount (£)
Stage 0: Options Appraisal	£20,000
Stage 1: Concept Design	£155,000
Stage 2: Design & Procurement	£265,000
Stage 3: Delivery / Construction	£1,910,000
Stage 4: Close Out	£45,000
Contingency	£808,708
TOTAL	£3,203,708

Comments checked by: Ian Dyson, Director of Financial Services
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Staffing Implications

21. The design, engagement and delivery if approved will require involvement from various services across the council. As set out above, sufficient allowances have been made in the costings for OCC time and resource. It is crucial to continuously evaluate staffing levels to enhance resilience within the involved services. This includes proactive planning, prioritisation, and recruitment of both permanent and temporary staff.

Risk Management

22. There is a risk of reputational damage if the Council does not procure the design and delivery for Woodstock Road Corridor Improvements expediently as this could compromise the effectiveness of the Traffic Filter trial if the bus lane reversal element is not delivered ahead of trial commencing.
23. As this is funded through Growth Deal, there is also a risk that we will not be able to deliver the scheme if we do not meet the delivery programme, as funding will become unavailable after March 25

Legal Implications

24. When procuring goods, services or works, the procurement must be conducted in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and, where applicable, the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCRs).
25. Following a public procurement exercise the Highways Partnership Contract was entered into between Oxfordshire County Council and Atkins Limited on 13th July 2010. The Highways Partnership Contract has been novated on two occasions. On the first occasion from Atkins Limited to Skanska Construction UK Limited. On the second occasion from Skanska Construction UK Limited to Milestone Infrastructure Limited.
26. Task Order may be issued under the Highways Partnership Contract. Two Task Orders will be issued; a Stage One Design Services Task Order and a Stage Two Construction Works Task Order.
27. The estimated value of the Stage One Design Task Order is £265,000, which is above the PCRs threshold for services which currently stands at £214,904 inclusive of VAT.
28. The Highways Partnership Contract expires on 31st March 2025. The services and works being delivered under both Task Orders must achieve completion before such expiry.
29. The Council will be delivering A4144 Woodstock Road Sustainable Transport Measures scheme in its capacity as the highway authority for Oxfordshire under the Highways Act 1980.

Comments checked by: Anita McEleney (Locum Solicitor, Legal Services)
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Procurement Implications

30. The procurement strategy for goods, services, and works for this scheme will be developed to ensure that the procurement process reflects the Council's core values, corporate aims and objectives.

31. Contracts shall be procured in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and relevant procurement legislation. Where payments are under a grant funding agreement, the Council's Financial Procedure Rules and Financial Regulations will also be followed.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

32. An [Interim Equalities and Climate Impact Assessment report](#) has been developed by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC). This will remain under review and will be updated as the scheme is developed.
33. The scheme supports the introduction of the Traffic Filters Trial in Oxford and is anticipated to induce positive impacts on health and the local environment. By reducing traffic volumes and vehicular emissions, encouraging sustainable modes of transportation, and enhancing access to key areas within Oxford. It is expected to promote mental, physical, and general wellbeing.
34. Further impacts will be subjected to a full Equalities Impact Assessment and Climate Impact Assessment along with other assessments to inform the scheme design. These studies will guide the pricing structure, exemptions, discounts, and any necessary supportive measures to counter any significant negative impacts.

Consultations

35. This decision is for a procurement exercise, and as such no public consultation is required.

Bill Cotton
Corporate Director Environment and Place

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