

NOTE TO WARRINGTON LOCAL PLAN EIP INSPECTORS

Date: 9/9/22

This note is written in response to the request shown below following the discussions on Matter 3C held on Wednesday 7th September.

8	3c	Council to correct IDP schedule in relation to the Western Link. Council also to provide up to date documentary evidence of funding arrangements, including Council commitments for the Western Link.	By 5pm on 12.09.22	To be allocated by PO	
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Please accept the Council's apologies for the error made in the IDP schedule regarding the Warrington Western Link scheme.

The entries in the table should have been:

- Scheme cost - £212.7m.
- Funding available £212.7m, made up of a conditional offer of £142.5m of funding from the Department of Transport plus an approved funding commitment of £70.2m from Warrington Borough Council.
- And therefore at the time the IDP was prepared in September 2021 there was no shortfall of funding for the Warrington Western Link scheme.

The attached note shows the two Executive Board / Cabinet approvals secured for the scheme based on the contributions shown above (the Council changed the name from Executive Board to Cabinet between the two decisions).

The first decision was made in November 2017 and the minute EB99 refers to this.

The second decision was made in July 2019 and the minute CAB45 refers to this.

Both of these approved the £70.2m council contribution towards the scheme costs.

Following this the attached file also shows the letter from the Department for Transport dated 10th April 2019 which confirms the conditional offer of funding of £142.5m for the scheme and the conditions attached to this offer which require the council to have an approved Full Business Case and to have secured all the required consents and permissions for the delivery of the scheme.

This attachment also reproduces the November 2017 and July 2019 reports in full for reference.

Between September 2021 and September 2022 a Gateway Review has been undertaken on the scheme and this has identified that due to the extreme inflationary pressures and in particular exceptionally high construction price inflation rates (which were already in place and which have been exacerbated by the Russia – Ukraine war), that the latest cost estimate which the Council has supplied to the DfT amounts to c.£269m, an increase of c.£57m on the previous £212.7m estimate.

As Mr Tucker and Mr Hunter advised during the examination the Council is now in active dialogue with Government on this and this will now continue with the change of Prime Minister and Department for Transport ministers now confirmed.

And that further to this the Council remains fully committed to the delivery of the Warrington Western Link scheme and is exploring all possible sources of additional funding including from the Department for Transport and other sources mentioned such as CIL or Business Rate Retention and as part of this all other funding options will be explored.

As referred to above the Council's position remains fully committed to deliver the Warrington Western Link scheme and the strong view as stated at the examination is that there is a reasonable prospect of its delivery.