

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION

Decision No: (CAB 24/25 45924)

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET
PORTFOLIO AREA:	Environment and Transport
SUBJECT:	Northam Rail Bridge
AUTHOR:	Iain Steane

THE DECISION

- (i) To delegate authority to the Head of Supplier Management to direct award a contract for design and build in relation to the Northam Bridge Project via a procurement exemption to Network Rail to support the development of the Outline Business Case (for the design and other products).
- (ii) To accept the initial Outline Business Case grant of £1.45M from Department for Transport, to adjust the Northam Rail Bridge capital budget, and authorise spend of the funding across 2024/25-2026/27 financial years.
- (iii) To delegate authority to the Executive Director of Growth and Prosperity in consultation with the Executive Director of Enabling Services (s.151 Officer) to accept any future grants in relation to this project and make the necessary budget adjustments (including spend approvals within budget) arising from the acceptance of such grants.
- (iv) To approve the change in the local contribution (an increase of £0.416M to now a total of £1.377M consisting of SCC Local Transport Plan, Revenue, and S106 Developer Contributions funding from 2024/25 and 2025/26) and change the allocation for Northam Rail Bridge OBC in the Capital Programme.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

1. The condition of Northam Bridge is deemed to be extremely poor and mitigation measures that will be needed if the current structure is retained (such as weight restrictions or restricted motor vehicle access) will have significant impacts on the wider city transport network, and as such a replacement bridge is preferred.
2. To enable the Council to direct award via a procurement exemption to Network Rail to deliver the necessary design, assurance, rail surveys, engagement with the train and freight operating companies, and to deliver accurate and compliant bridge structure design that is acceptable to Network Rail achieving financial best value without compromising the required service specification.

3. To enable the grant monies received from the DfT to be added to the Capital Programme and enable spend.

DETAILS OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

1. Not to proceed with the project. Due to the condition of the Northam Bridge, additional mitigation measures would be needed such as additional weight restrictions or possible restriction on all motor vehicle access over the Bridge. This would have significant impacts on the wider city transport network and reduce the number of east / west crossings.
2. Use an open tendering exercise. Network Rail are not on any framework that the Council has access to, therefore an open tender would have needed to be carried out. Given the value of the potential work this would be through a longer tender process which would elongate the scheme development. The tasks required can only be carried out by Network Rail and as such a tendering exercise may lead to an award to Network Rail in any case.
3. Use the Highways Services Partnership (HSP). The Council has a 5 year Highways Service Partnership (HSP) with Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) for highways design, construction and maintenance. The current contract is due to end in 2025 and while BBLP are part of the wider Balfour Beatty company and have access to Balfour Beatty Rail – who work with Network Rail on delivery of rail infrastructure projects – the nature of the work at Northam Rail Bridge means this is not an optimal route. BBLP would have to engage with Network Rail to carry out many of the activities that the direct commission would do. This would incur additional costs to the project.

OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS CONCERNING THE DECISION

None.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None.

CONFIRMED AS A TRUE RECORD

We certify that the decision this document records was made in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 and is a true and accurate record of that decision.

Date: 17 September 2024

Decision Maker:
The Cabinet

Proper Officer:
Judy Cordell

SCRUTINY

Note: This decision will come in to force at the expiry of 5 working days from the date of publication subject to any review under the Council's Scrutiny "Call-In" provisions.

Call-In Period expires on

Date of Call-in *(if applicable) (this suspends implementation)*

Call-in Procedure completed *(if applicable)*

Call-in heard by *(if applicable)*

Results of Call-in *(if applicable)*