

Agenda Item No. 4(g)

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**MEETING FOR CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE**

23 January 2020

Report of the Executive Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**TO NOTE THE URGENT DECISION TAKEN BY THE EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR – ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT TO
ACCEPT THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR
ENGLAND GRANT AWARD**

(1) **Purpose of Report** To note the urgent decision taken by the Executive Director - Economy, Transport and Environment to accept the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) grant offer of £403,977 to deliver the Visit. Sleep. Cycle. Repeat (VSCR) Cycling Trails Programme before the grant offer expiration date.

(2) **Information and Analysis** In 2018, VSCR produced a Destination Plan to support the development of the local visitor economy in the north-east of the County. The Plan identified the need to develop a coherent visitor proposition, to promote cycling alongside world-class heritage and attract more visitors in order to grow the overnight-stay market.

An RDPE Expression of Interest (EOI) bid to deliver the VSCR Cycling Trails Programme within the Parish of Pleasley was submitted by the County Council at the end of May 2018. This EOI was successful and a full application was submitted in September 2019. The bid was to support the initial delivery phase of VSCR by creating 5.7km of new and improved cycling infrastructure, as part of the ongoing development of the Key Cycle and Local Cycle Networks within the locality.

In a letter dated 29 November 2019, the Council was offered a grant of £403,977 by the RDPE to deliver the initial phase of the VSCR Cycling Trails Programme.

This offer expired on 10 January 2020, before the next available Cabinet Member meeting.

Under the Council's Constitution, Executive Directors have the power to take such actions to safeguard the interests of the Council if the timescales do not

allow for the matter to be dealt with by the next available meeting of the Council, Cabinet or Cabinet Member.

Due to the grant offer expiration date, an urgent decision was taken by the Executive Director - Economy, Transport and Environment to accept the RDPE grant on behalf of the County Council.

(3) **Financial Considerations** The RDPE grant is for 100% of the costs associated with the capital phase of the Programme. Table 1 outlines the total grant offer, below.

Table 1 - A summary of the RDPE Grant Offer

Item	Grant Offer	Comment
Cycling Trails Programme capital build costs	£373,737	Based on prices derived from tender CETE059
Third-party engineering services costs	£30,240	Based on prices obtained through written quotation
Total	£403,977	

It is estimated that a further £37,900 of costs is required to conclude landowner, rights of ways and legal work, and provide technical engineering compliance. These are outside the scope of the RDPE grant and would be met through an existing Local Transport Plan allocation.

The Council is already liable for the maintenance of 92% of the routes. The RDPE grant is likely to reduce the cost of future capital maintenance for at least 10 to 15 years, the cost of which is estimated to be in the region of £80,000 at today's prices.

The Council has a duty under its public liability responsibilities to maintain these routes, however, as more people use them, the cost of revenue maintenance is likely to increase. It is estimated that future revenue maintenance costs would be in the region of £1,000 per kilometre per year at today's prices, so an estimated £6,000 per year. This would be met through existing Rights of Way budget, supported by partners and volunteers engaged with VSCR and the maintenance of the Archaeological Way.

(4) **Legal Considerations** The Council's Constitution provides that *"notwithstanding any other provision of the Constitution Executive Directors shall have the power, after discussion, if practicable, with the Leader of the Council or the relevant Cabinet Member or Chair, to take such actions deemed to be necessary and expedient in matters requiring urgent consideration and which, because of the timescale involved, or the need to*

safeguard the interests of the County Council, cannot be dealt by submission to the next meeting of the Council, Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Committee".
Approval for acceptance of the grant was sought by way of urgent decision in order to meet with the timescales of the grant offer.

Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property, social value and transport considerations.

(5) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Environment Department.

(6) **Key Decision** No.

(7) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(8) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That the Cabinet Member notes the urgent decision taken by the Executive Director – Economy, Transport and Environment, in accordance with the Council's Constitution, to accept the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) grant offer of £403,977 to deliver the Visit. Sleep. Cycle. Repeat (VSCR) Cycling Trails Programme, as detailed in this report.

Mike Ashworth
Executive Director – Economy, Transport and Environment