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CABINET REPORT

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Service Area	Community Regeneration
Committee Division	Cabinet
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	25 th March 2020

To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen

REGIONAL TRANSPORT AUTHORITY METRO PLUS PROGRAMME

1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The South Wales Metro is a major infrastructure project and signals an ambitious 'modal shift' in connecting people and places and enhancing the functional economic geography of the region. It represents forward thinking on the future of mobility and its mission it to provide contemporary public transport that will promote behavioural change.
- 1.2 The Cardiff Capital Region in collaboration with Welsh Government and Transport for Wales, has identified a proposed integrated programme of local future transport schemes that fit within a wider Metro Plus programme. These proposals have been drawn from the priorities surfaced by individual Councils and mirror the 'Metro spine' – creating both short and longer-term opportunities for place-shaping. They bring together a diverse range of projects, spanning regeneration, town centres, housing and economic growth, with transport as the central component or 'enabler' in allowing growth, expansion and opportunity to be unlocked.
- 1.3 The proposed package of schemes totals some £50m. A £15m contribution each from Welsh Government's Local Transport Fund and the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal's Infrastructure Fund will be supplemented, where available, by additional funding provided from sources such as s106 and council's own capital monies. The Metro Plus Phase 1 co-investment programme was agreed by Regional Cabinet on 18th February 2019 as part of the wider metro infrastructure. 2020/21 is year 2 of the Metro Plus Phase 1 delivery programme.

- 1.4 In relation to the Local Transport Fund, MTCBC successfully bid on behalf of the region for £3.5M in 2019/20 (Phase 1, Year 1). This enabled the progression of each scheme within the programme, which MTCBC has successfully managed. The MTCBC element of the programme supported land acquisition and rail feasibility work at (Hoovers) Pentrebach.
- 1.5 In addition to bidding for Metro Plus Phase 1 (Year 2) funding, MTCBC has also bid for monies for development work on both a Metro Plus Phase 2 programme and the Metro Enhancement Framework (which sets out priority transport corridors for review, and as agreed at the Regional Cabinet on 28th November 2019). The MTCBC scheme in the proposed Phase 2 programme is the Merthyr Tydfil Transport Interchange (that is, linking the new bus station with a revamped, modern rail station).
- 1.6 MTCBC has therefore submitted a 2020/21 Local Transport Fund bid to Welsh Government for £7,063,553 (£3,983,553 is towards the delivery of the Metro Plus Phase 1 (Year 2) and £3,080,000 to enable the development of Metro Plus Phase 2 and the Metro Enhancement framework). If successful, the Programme will be managed on behalf of the region by MTCBC Community Regeneration.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION that

- 2.1 The progress that has been made regionally be noted and the submission for MTCBC to manage this on behalf of the region be approved.

3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The South Wales Metro is a major infrastructure project and signals an ambitious 'modal shift' in connecting people and places and enhancing the functional economic geography of the region. It represents forward thinking on the future of mobility and its mission is to provide contemporary public transport that will promote behavioural change. With commitments to renewable energy provision and sustaining the pace of new technological developments, the proposed Metro Plus programme has the potential to make a significant contribution to inclusive growth and provide a core means of enabling sustainable business growth and facilitating shared prosperity. At a very practical level, the emphasis is on regular, reliable, and resilient infrastructure. In terms of its wider 'enabling' impact, it is set to encourage inclusion and connections – enabling people to both move around and come together.
- 3.2 The Regional Transport Authority and Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, in collaboration with Welsh Government and Transport for Wales, has identified an integrated programme of local future transport schemes that fit within a wider Metro Plus programme. These proposals have been drawn from the priorities provided by individual Councils and mirror the 'Metro spine' – creating both short and longer-term opportunities for place-shaping. They bring together a diverse range of projects, spanning regeneration, town centres, housing and economic growth, with transport as the central component or 'enabler' in allowing growth, expansion and opportunity to be unlocked.

- 3.3 The Metro Plus Phase 1 co-investment programme was agreed by Regional Cabinet on 18th February 2019. The MTCBC specific project is Pentrebach Station and Park and Ride – the focus at Pentrebach is the regeneration of a significant brownfield site (Hoovers) that has been largely vacant for 10 years. The South Wales Metro, with high frequency light rail connections, will be the catalyst for the development of a sustainable, mixed use, neighbourhood with new businesses, homes, shops and parkland, the Taff & Trevithick trails and on the doorstep of Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre.
- 3.4 Redevelopment of the area has the potential to maximise opportunities provided from planned transport infrastructure investment (increases in service capacity, Pentrebach station and park and ride improvements and a potential future new metro station) and to support 440 homes and employment land. Electric charging points will be included within any future proposal implemented. Funding in 2019/20 has supported land acquisition and rail feasibility work.

4.0 SCHEME OUTPUTS

- 4.1 The proposed Metro Plus Phase 1 package of schemes totals £50m. A £15m contribution is being sought from the Welsh Government's Local Transport Fund and the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal's Infrastructure Fund, and it is anticipated that the remaining £20m will be sourced through local developer contributions; third party and private sector funding, other potential government programmes and capital contributions from Councils. It will be supplemented by additional funding provided from sources such as s106 and council's own capital monies. One demonstration of wider leverage potential is the work the Valleys Taskforce has commissioned on integrated transport hubs. These programmes must be joined-up in order to maximise leverage, alignment and co-ordination opportunities. In addition, there are several opportunities through bodies such as Welsh Government 'Transactional Capital' and Energy Savings Trust around investment opportunities in low carbon pathways.
- 4.2 This exciting package of Metro Plus Phase 1 schemes will be future proofed by the inclusion of the latest technological advances in vehicle charging for bus, taxis, car clubs and cycles, including energy generation where possible. In addition, the wider City Deal priorities around economic growth, the skills agenda, digital inclusion and open data will form a key aspiration.
- 4.3 The programme comprises the following projects:
- **Abertillery Interchange** - the current Ebbw Valley Railway service is one train per hour, with a further hourly service committed as part of the new rail partnership. A long standing aspiration of local residents of Ebbw Fach and Abertillery is the provision of a link to the EVR, so the initial work is focussed on identifying the current accessibility problems and issues, identifying smart, strategic objectives and developing a short list of options to provide this link. Electric charging points will be included within any future proposal implemented.

- **Caerphilly Interchange** - at an early stage of development, the provision of a new transport interchange for Caerphilly, on the site of the current bus and rail stations. High quality passenger facilities to be provided including electronic information, EV charging for buses and a larger park and ride facility. The initial stage development will also consider the wider business and green technology hub opportunities.
- **Porth Interchange** - the vision is to transform Porth into a prosperous and attractive town, which offers a wide range of opportunities for visitors, residents and businesses, with improved connectivity to and from the surrounding areas being anchored by a Transport Hub and a regenerated “Station Quarter”. A site has been identified for this Transport Hub, which will house a seven bay bus interchange, taxi rank and cycle racks, with direct access to the rail station platforms and the Park and Ride, which will be further extended. Electric charging points will be included within the future proposal.
- **Barry Docks Interchange** - the development of bus and rail interchange at Barry is a key aspiration, especially given its location in relation to Cardiff Wales Airport. It is anticipated that the interchange would include 4-5 bus bays, have provision for taxis and potentially extend the existing Park and Ride site (currently at capacity) as the new rail partnership includes line frequency enhancement. Electric charging points will be included within any future proposal implemented.
- **Pyle Interchange** - implementation of a Park and Ride facility as part of the development of an integrated transport hub that serves the local community of Pyle and the nearby settlements of Porthcawl, Kenfig Hill, Cefn Cribwr and Cornelly. The existing 23-space car park at Pyle is currently at capacity and a minimum of 75 additional spaces are being considered as part of the future development. The scheme will include the design and delivery of an additional P&R facility that can cater for current demand and future growth based on an updated business case. The proposal will also include appropriate Active Travel connections and will also give full consideration to the inclusion of EV charging points, and the provision of additional cycle parking facilities.
- **Pentrebach Station and Park and Ride** - the focus at Pentrebach is the regeneration of a significant brownfield site (Hoovers) that has been largely vacant for 10 years. The South Wales Metro, with high frequency light rail connections, will be the catalyst for the development of a sustainable, mixed use, neighbourhood with new businesses, homes, shops and parkland, the Taff & Trevithick trails and on the doorstep of Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre. Redevelopment of the area has the potential to maximise opportunities provided from planned transport infrastructure investment (increases in service capacity, Pentrebach station and park and ride improvements and a potential future new metro station) and to support 440 homes and employment land. Electric charging points will be included within any future proposal implemented.

- **Severn Tunnel Junction Park & Ride** - an additional 150-200 space park & ride facility on the south side of Severn Tunnel Junction station. There is currently a substantial shortfall of spaces, which creates problems within the existing car park and nearby streets. The scheme will enable reconfiguration of the existing (north-side) station car park including more than 40 additional bike & ride spaces, safer walking & cycling access, a revamped bus-rail interchange, EV charging spaces and potentially an improved station building (with ticket office, café, shop, WC).
- **Pontypool and New Inn Station Park and Ride** - the proposed enhancements at Pontypool and New Inn Rail Station include a new Park and Ride (200 spaces) which will be accessed from the A4042 trunk road, DDA compliant platform access and improved station facilities including cycling facilities. The station is a potential interchange point with passengers from the 'Eastern Valley' including Blaenavon, Abersychan, Pontypool, New Inn, and also for Usk and the West of Monmouthshire. This station will support the nearby proposed Mamhilad development with a current allocation of 1,800 dwellings. EV charging spaces provided within the new P&R.
- **Newport to Cardiff Bus Priority** - the Newport to Cardiff Bus Corridor links a number of significant trip attractors - Cardiff City Centre, the St Mellons Business Park, Cleppa Park/IQE Semi-conductor plant, the Office of National Statistics and Patent Office, the Royal Gwent Hospital, Newport City Centre and the Wales International Conference Centre. Services on this corridor suffer from extended journey times (current schedules indicating a time of circa 1 hour to undertake the 15-mile journey), with operators confirming services are subject to considerable journey time variability. Initial work is ongoing on an improvement package that includes high-quality roadside infrastructure to promote and facilitate increased bus use. The scheme will also provide the foundation for a Park and Ride facility to be developed on the eastern side of Newport, where EV charging could figure prominently.
- **East Cardiff Bus Priority** - this project incorporates a series of sustainable and active travel packages that will enable improved bus connections in Cardiff City Centre, improved active travel infrastructure and pedestrian safety improvements. The infrastructure improvements will benefit local and regional transport through providing improved sustainable connections to key transport hubs, employment zones and visitor destinations. Improvements include new bus priority measures to connect local and regional buses through the east and south of the city, installation of Central Cycle Superhighway that will connect and link all 4 cycle superhighways to the city centre, 20mph Zone and traffic calming measures, air quality improvements, cycle parking and Next Bike, and EV charging points.

4.4 The Metro Plus Phase 2 (Year 1) bid is for development funding. A request for a WG/City Deal co-investment Programme to Regional Cabinet is required for future years once they have been developed to WelTAG Stage 2. The schemes include:

- Abergavenny station interchange & improvements
- Cardiff Bus Priority
- Cwmbran Interchange

- Cogan Interchange
- Ystrad Mynach P&R extension
- Hirwaun Rail extension and P&R
- Cardiff Bus priority between Newport city centre and the International Conference Centre Wales
- Brackla Railway Station
- Pencoed Crossing
- Merthyr Rail – Bus Connectivity
- Brynmawr Transport Interchange.

4.5 The Metro Enhancement Programme bid is also for development funding for the first four priority corridors, namely:

- North West Cardiff - This scheme was funded through LTF 2019/20 and is ready to progress to the next stage.
- Cardiff - Vale of Glamorgan - WeITAG 1 to be carried out to make case for change and identify problems and opportunities and identify potential solutions.
- Cardiff - Maesteg - Bridgend - Porthcawl - WeITAG 1 to be carried out to make case for change and identify problems and opportunities and identify potential solutions.
- Newport - Chepstow - TFW are currently undertaking WeITAG 1 works to identify problems and opportunities and to make the case for change. Once complete, it is anticipated that funding will be required to progress through WeITAG.

5.0 REGIONAL COORDINATION AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

5.1 MTCBC will again be the lead partner responsible for the overall project & finance management on behalf of the partnership, delivering claims and progress reports to Welsh Government. This will be led by the Strategic Infrastructure Programme Manager.

5.2 The Regional Transport Authority's monthly management group will monitor and manage the overall progress of the project.

5.3 MTCBC in its capacity as lead partner will coordinate agreed partnership agreements with all partners. All partners will prepare agreed financial claims against their profile & submit progress report templates. MTCBC will collate all financial claims and reports to Welsh Government.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 MTCBC has submitted an application for £7,063,553 on behalf of the region that will enable continued progress of the programme in the financial year 2020/21.

6.2 If the application is successful, it is anticipated that WG will fund up to £7,063,553 in 2020/21, but should this be unaffordable within the LTF budget, it may be necessary for the Cardiff Capital Region to fund up to 50% match fund to enable the progression of the programme in a timely manner.

7.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1

	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Not Applicable
1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives	4 of 4	0 of 4	0 of 4
2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term • Prevention • Integration • Collaboration • Involvement 	5 of 5	0 of 5	0 of 5
3. Protected Characteristics <i>(including Welsh Language)</i>	10 of 10	0 of 10	0 of 10
4. Biodiversity	1 of 1	0 of 1	0 of 1
<p>Summary: People will have better access to transport hubs and interchanges to improve their working and everyday life, bringing people and places together in a way that promote behavioural change.</p> <p>No negative impacts have been identified.</p>			

ALYN OWEN
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

COUNCILLOR GERAINT THOMAS
CABINET MEMBER FOR
REGENERATION & PUBLIC
PROTECTION

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?		No

Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.

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