

ST NEOTS RAILWAY STATION FOOTBRIDGE

(Report by Head of Planning and Housing Strategy)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend that Cabinet approves a capital contribution of £316,069 towards the funding package (total project cost being £6,036,000) for the new St Neots Railway Station Footbridge.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The new St Neots Railway Station Footbridge has been designed by Network Rail to both enhance access to the station and also, most importantly, to provide direct connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists travelling between the St Neots Eastern Expansion area, the railway station, and to the rest of the town. The new footbridge has been designed with lifts as well as stairs in order to allow full accessibility for disabled people.
- 2.2 The project was initiated in 2005/6 and it was originally envisaged that it would be totally funded by Section 106 contributions secured from the Loves Farm, St Neots development along with direct Network Rail funding. The Section 106 Agreement provided a total of £2,676,000 towards the project, subject to indexation.
- 2.3 Detailed project development and design work has been undertaken by Network Rail, in consultation with Huntingdonshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council. All necessary consents have been obtained and the project is now ready for implementation. The overall project cost is £6,036,000.
- 2.4 Network Rail now intends to implement the project from April 2013 with completion envisaged by March 2014. The project includes works over the operational East Coast Main Line railway, which are anticipated to commence in May 2013.

3. THE PROPOSED FUNDING PACKAGE

- 3.1 The proposed overall project funding profile is as follows:

Network Rail investment	£2,561,300
Public sector investment (S106, CCC, HDC)	£3,474,700
Total	£6,036,000

- 3.2 To enable the project to proceed there is a need for a further capital contribution of £316,069 from this Council. This is needed to cover a combination of increased project costs (at an additional £198,700) and as a result of a reduction in the amount of S106 funding that is now available. The reduction in the S106 funding has been caused by the need to recalculate the original agreed S106

contributions against the BCIS Index. This has unfortunately resulted in a reduction in the value of that contribution that equates to £117,369.

- 3.3 This development is a critical element of the new infrastructure that is required to support the sustainable growth of St Neots. The District Council needs to cover the further capital funding project contribution of £316,069 as the contributions from Network Rail and the County Council are fixed, and it will not be possible to seek further S106 funds from the developer.
- 3.4 The District Council is able to identify existing budgets which can be transferred to fund this shortfall. No specific schemes have been identified to proceed from the Town Centre Developments capital provision of £290,000 and therefore these monies can be transferred with any desired replacement funding being considered in next year's MTP Review. Due to efficiencies elsewhere, the balance can be found from the 2013/14 revenue budget for Planning Services.
- 3.5 Subject to this approval, the breakdown of the proposed overall project funding profile would be as follows:

Network Rail	£2,561,300
S106 Railway Bridge and Station contributions	£2,558,631
CCC Cambridge / St Neots Transport Corridor	£300,000
CCC St Neots MTTs	£300,000
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>£5,719,931</i>
HDC	£316,069
Total	£6,036,000

- 3.6 As the District Council is providing the necessary additional funding in this instance, we will be looking for this to be balanced out by the County Council within other partnership schemes.
- 3.7 The Code of Financial Management allows the Cabinet to approve budget transfers up to £300,000. As the required contribution is slightly in excess of this, the Cabinet will need to recommend that the Council for approves the transfers.

4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 It is recommended that Cabinet recommends to Council that approval be given for a capital contribution of £316,069 towards the St Neots Rail Footbridge project which is to be funded by the transfer of £290,000 from the capital provision for Town Centre Developments and £26,000 from the Planning Services revenue budget.

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