

# Report of the Strategic Director, Regeneration & Culture to the Bradford South Area Committee Meeting to be held on 28 March 2013

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**Subject:**

Low Moor Rail Station

**Summary Statement:**

This report provides an update to the Bradford South Area Committee on the current progress towards delivery of Low Moor Station. It provides information about the on-going discussions with industry partners in relation to development of a robust business case and also discusses developments in relation to bidding for additional funding to secure the station's delivery.

The report also describes a proposed arrangement for the engagement with members and representatives of the local community to develop proposals for the delivery of additional car parking required to support a 3 train per hour level of service as part of a wider programme of actions arising from the Single Issue Neighbourhood Forum on 23 January 2013.

**Wards:** 30 Wyke

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## 1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report updates the Bradford South Area committee on the recent progress made on the development and delivery of proposals for a new railway station at Low Moor including:
- a) Outcomes of discussions with Industry Partners on the development of a robust business case in support of the station delivery for the Department of Transport.
  - b) The recent bid to Network Rail's New Station Fund to secure funding to supplement the current LTP allocation of £5.5m to the full projected station delivery costs.
  - c) Describes proposed arrangements for the establishment of a Low Moor Station Working Group comprising Members and representatives of the Friends of Low Moor Station group.
  - d) Progress of actions arising from the recent Public Meeting in relation to the delivery of the station held at Trinity Church on Wednesday 23 January 2013.

## 2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Proposals to develop a new passenger railway station at Low Moor have been in development for a number of years and in 2009 were prioritised by the five West Yorkshire Authorities through the West Yorkshire Strategic Programme of Schemes (WYSPS) with an allocation of funding of £5.5m. This funding is now incorporated into the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan programme and remains allocated to the delivery of the station.
- 2.2. The station has been progressed by Metro in accordance with the Network Rail Governance on Rail Investment Projects (GRIP) process, which splits design development into logical stages, at the end of which development decisions can be taken. The project is currently at the GRIP4 stage (single option development) which takes the single option selected at the previous stage and develops it to an outline design to allow 'approval in principle' before developing a detailed design for construction (the GRIP5 stage). At the GRIP4 stage, design and cost estimates are firmed up, the business case updated and formal technical approval to the scheme needs to be sought from Network Rail and the affected train operators.
- 2.3. At this committee's meeting of 24 January 2013 an update on key issues facing the delivery of the project identified through the GRIP4 stage were presented to the committee for information together with details of how Metro and Bradford Council officers planned to mitigate these. Issues included:
- a) Track curvature;

- b) Project cost;
  - c) Level of proposed train services to the station; and
  - d) Car park provision.
- 2.4. Metro remain committed to delivering the station and previously committed funding remains ring-fenced.

### 3.0 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

3.1. Since the committee last considered a progress report on Low Moor Station there has been a significant amount of work undertaken by Metro and Council officers to progress the delivery of Low Moor Station. This section of the report updates members on this work and the direction of travel towards a satisfactory solution to the issues identified.

#### 3.2. Outcomes of Public Meeting

Prior to the committee's last meeting a Single Issue Neighbourhood Forum was held at Trinity Church. A brief verbal report of the main issues arising out this forum was presented at this committee's meeting of 24 January. This event was hosted by senior officers from Metro, Network Rail and Northern Rail and the West Yorkshire Integrated Transport Authority Chair, Cllr James Lewis, to brief the local community on the progress of the station's delivery. The event was well attended by more than 60 members of the public and four elected members (3 from Bradford South and 1 from Kirklees). After a wide ranging debate the following three key actions were agreed to be taken forward by officers:

- a) ***Metro will improve its public communication about the development of the Low Moor station proposals.*** To this end the information about the scheme on Metro's web site has been updated and is regularly reviewed to provide the latest information on developments about the scheme.
- b) ***Establishment of a working group to improve communication and involve local ward councillors in the development of station designs.*** This report contains information about the proposed structure, terms of reference and desired outcomes from such a working group for consideration by the committee.
- c) ***A further single issue neighbourhood forum to be arranged in summer 2013 for Metro to present an update on the station delivery proposals following completion of industry discussions.***

#### 3.3. Railway Timetabling

A second, and final, workshop with industry partners has now taken place to clearly determine how and when an appropriate level of service can be provided to the station. Whilst the station has always been able to support a 1 train per hour (tph) service this level alone results in a weak business case, with a stronger business case at the higher 2tph and 3tph levels.

3.4. However, it has been determined that the ability to move to the higher level of service depends heavily on the availability of additional rolling stock, and the current indication is that this will only become available progressively between 2016 and 2018 following the electrification works proposed in the North West and Transpennine routes. Therefore the current strategy incorporated within the business plan is to open the station at 1tph in 2015 in line with construction timescales, and progress to 2tph by December 2018.

### 3.5. Capital Costs

Further discussions have been held between Metro and Northern Gas Networks (NGN), and Metro have now secured agreement that a gas governor to mitigate potential safety conflicts associated with the gas mains across the site is no longer required subject to detailed design measures to be incorporated into the station platform design. This represents a significant reduction in cost risk and programme saving to the project.

3.6. A further aspect of these discussions relates to the safe working zones associated with the high pressure gas main that runs to the south of the Halifax-bound platform. NGN have advised that they would likely object to any proposal to straighten the tracks that would reduce the already sub-standard required maintenance access 10 metre clearance between the existing track alignment and adjacent buildings. As such the case to avoid track straightening works is increasing and a robust justification for seeking a derogation from the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) is being built (see paragraph 3.8 of this report).

### 3.7. Track Curvature/Derogation Issue

A meeting has been held between Metro and Network Rail's relevant Route Asset Managers and Northern Hub project team to agree the steps to resolve the track curvature/derogation issue and understand timescales and potential conflicts with the line speed improvements proposed as a part of the Northern Hub project.

3.8. It was agreed that Metro would commission further survey work to robustly confirm the precise position and route of the high pressure pipeline beyond the extent of the buildings to the south of the track, which would confirm whether the maintenance zone would be impacted by any straightening of the tracks to avoid a derogation application to the RSSB and thus determine whether a derogation would be submitted or the track straightening proposal.

### 3.9. New Station Fund Bid

On 24 January 2013 the bidding process for Network Rail's New Station Fund (NSF) was announced with a closing date of 25 February 2013. The scheme funding is to be allocated through an open competition and the bids will be assessed by an awards panel of the Department for Transport (DfT), Network Rail, Association of Train Operating Companies and Campaign for Better Transport. To be eligible to bid to the fund, schemes must be at Network Rail's GRIP3 stage of development; Low Moor is currently at GRIP4 and hence meets this eligibility criteria.

- 3.10. The NSF Guidance Note highlights that the DfT's Business Case approach is exacting and requires a threshold Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of 'medium' value for money or greater. The definition of 'medium' BCR is a value of between 1.5 and 2.
- 3.11. Metro's approach has been based on a locally funded scheme that does not need to fully meet all the business case requirements for this new fund. Metro's approach is based on the overall positive revenue which would allow the proposed new station to be operated without revenue support. This approach supports the political priority to deliver the station and benefit local residents rather than a full BCR appraisal which is normally used to assess value for money and rank schemes.
- 3.12. The challenging bid timescale meant that there was insufficient time to rebase the business case as the NSF requires, but the opportunity was taken to submit a bid to supplement the allocated LTP funding. In the bid Metro set out the approach adopted, which takes into account the wider Gross Value Added and economic benefits, based on 2 tph serving the station. Metro believe that a strong case was put forward.
- 3.13. Scheme costs have previously been advised to the Committee as now being of the order of £7.2m, compared to the £5.5m allocation secured via the LTP. The bid was actually submitted for £3.4m additional monies from the fund to supplement the allocated LTP funding to cover the shortfall in delivery cost plus an inclusion for contingency and inflated to 2015 prices.

3.14. Low Moor Station Working Group

As part of the Overview and Scrutiny recommendations of 18 December 2012 officers were directed to involve local ward members in the further development of the project, this was re-iterated as a key action arising out of the Single Issue Neighbourhood Forum. To this end proposals shown in Appendix A describe the establishment of a Working Group to assist with the development of the preferred station option.

- 3.15. The proposed working group will initially be involved in assisting with the development of station proposals, including car parking, through to the end of the GRIP4 stage and 'approval in principal' of scheme proposals, led by Council Officers and supported by Metro. It is also proposed that the group will comprise representatives of the recently formed Friends of Low Moor Station group to provide a further local community interface, together with representatives of the planning service to provide advice on implication of any proposals in relation to planning policies of the Council.
- 3.16. Other aspects for the working group to consider / be involved in include:
- a) Exploring options for maximising access potential to the station from the adjacent Spen Valley Greenway;
  - b) Assisting with the flow of information to, and from, local residents.
  - c) Soliciting support for the delivery of a station at Low Moor from major employers in the area including (but not limited to) BASF, Marks & Spencers and industries located on the Euroway Industrial Estate, together with local attractions including Odsal Stadium and nearby hotels.

#### **4.0 OPTIONS**

- 4.1. Members can decide to approve the recommendations as detailed in this report in relation to the establishment of the Low Moor Working Group, or amend them, or suggest alternative recommendations in which case technical advice will be provided by Officers on their proposals.

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

##### **Financial**

- 5.1. A budget of £5.5m has been allocated by the West Yorkshire ITA to the delivery of the station at Low Moor. The latest estimated cost of delivery of the station exceeds the available budget. Significant work has been undertaken already, and continues, on reducing one-off risk contingencies which has recently led to the avoidance of a need for a gas governor to be constructed within the car park site saving around £300,000.
- 5.2. A bid for gap funding of £3.4m (including contingency and inflated to 2015 prices) has recently been made to Network Rail's New Station Fund which is part of a £20m funding pot recently announced by the Secretary of State for Transport to encourage construction of new stations (or reopening of stations promoted by third parties) which if successful would secure all the funding required to deliver the station at Low Moor.
- 5.3. Irrespective of the outcome of the NSF bid, efforts continue to be made to reduce the project cost through changes to the design and exploration of justification for a derogation of standards associated with the station design. Previously committed funding remains ring-fenced.

##### **Staff Resources**

- 5.4. Resources to deliver the highway access improvements are available within the Council's existing staff resources.

#### **6.0 LEGAL APPRAISAL**

- 6.1. Delivery of the planning aspects of the project and improvements to the highway network necessitated by the new station are within the Council's powers as Highway and Planning Authority (subject to due consideration of and grant of planning permission).

#### **7.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

##### **7.1. Area Committee Action Plan Implications**

The development and implementation of the proposals in this report support priorities within the Area Committee Action Plans.

##### **7.2. Equal Rights and Diversity Implications**

Design of the station car park, platform approach ramps to the station platforms and footbridge will be designed in accordance with the prevailing accessibility standards to afford equal opportunity to access the train service to all users.

### 7.3. Sustainability Implications

The Local Transport Plan and District Transport Strategy anticipate the development of sustainable transport modes (public transport, cycling and walking) and associated traffic management improvements. The introduction of a station at Low Moor will contribute to reducing carbon emissions as it will offer commuters and other travellers access to a fast and safe connection to locations served by the Caldervale line and other parts of the wider rail network.

### 7.4. Community Safety Implications

The Local Transport Plan and District Transport Strategy aim to control traffic movements within the community and to enhance safety for vulnerable road users. Any highway construction associated with the development of the new railway station would be designed to reduce conflicts between vehicles and vulnerable road users.

### 7.5. Human Rights Act

There are no direct Human Rights implications arising from this report.

### 7.6. Trade Union Implications

There are no Trade Union implications arising from this report.

## 8.0 NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

## 9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1. That the Bradford South Area Committee note the contents of this report.
- 9.2. That the Strategic Director (Regeneration & Culture) be authorised to establish and nominate representatives to be part of the Low Moor Station Working Group in accordance with the terms of reference set out in Appendix A.
- 9.3. That a summary of the final business case is brought to the Bradford South Area Committee for information.
- 9.4. That a further single issue neighbourhood forum is held in Summer 2013.

## 10.0 APPENDICES

- 10.1. Appendix A – Proposed Terms of Reference for Low Moor Working Group

## 11.0 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 11.1. Report of the Strategic Director (Regeneration) to the meeting of Bradford South Area Committee held on 24 January 2013 – Update on Issues Surrounding the delivery of Low Moor Rail Station

- 11.2. Report of the Strategic Director (Regeneration & Culture) to the meeting of the Environment & Waste Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 18 December, 2012 – Low Moor Rail Station Progress Report.
- 11.3. Report of the Strategic Director (Regeneration & Culture) to the meeting of Bradford South Area Committee held on 16 March, 2011–Low Moor Station Progress Report.
- 11.4. Report of the Strategic Director (Regeneration & Culture) to the meeting of Bradford South Area Committee held on 25 June, 2009 – Low Moor Rail Station.
- 11.5. Report of the Strategic Director (Regeneration) to the meeting of the Environment and Waste Management Improvement Committee held on 21 October 2008 – Low Moor Station.



## CITY OF BRADFORD METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

### LOW MOOR WORKING GROUP

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### Introduction & Background

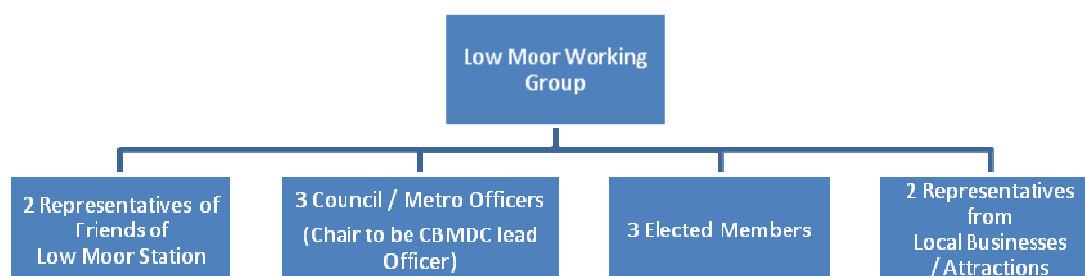
1. Proposals to develop a new passenger railway station at Low Moor have been in development for a number of years and in 2009 were prioritised by the five West Yorkshire Authorities through the West Yorkshire Strategic Programme of Schemes (WYSPS) with an allocation of funding of £5.5m. This funding is now incorporated into the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan programme and remains allocated to the delivery of the station.
2. The station has been progressed by Metro in accordance with the Network Rail Governance on Rail Investment Projects (GRIP) process, which splits design development into logical stages, at the end of which development decisions can be taken. The project is currently at the GRIP4 stage at which an outline design is developed from the single option selected at the previous stage to allow 'approval in principle' before developing a detailed design for construction (the GRIP5 stage), design and cost estimates are firmed up and the business case updated.
3. The Working Group has been established to support Metro at the District level, specifically to provide the input of local knowledge to the development of the new station and business case.

#### Scope of Works for the Low Moor Working Group

1. Review alternative sites to facilitate a 300+ car park facility for Low Moor Station to service a 3tph (trains per hour) service frequency within the context of sustainability and existing planning policies at Low Moor.
2. Assist with the identification and assessment of project risks associated with the development of a single option solution together with recommendations towards risk mitigation and reduction.
3. Secure letters of support from local businesses and employers and identifying any further significant latent demand from local industries in support of Low Moor Station.
4. Explore opportunities to maximise connectivity of Low Moor Station to the Spenn Valley Greenway.
5. Participate in local site visits in connection with the above.

#### Composition of the Working Group

1. The Group shall comprise a cross section of elected Members, Council/Metro Officers, Local Interest Groups and representatives of the local community business groups.



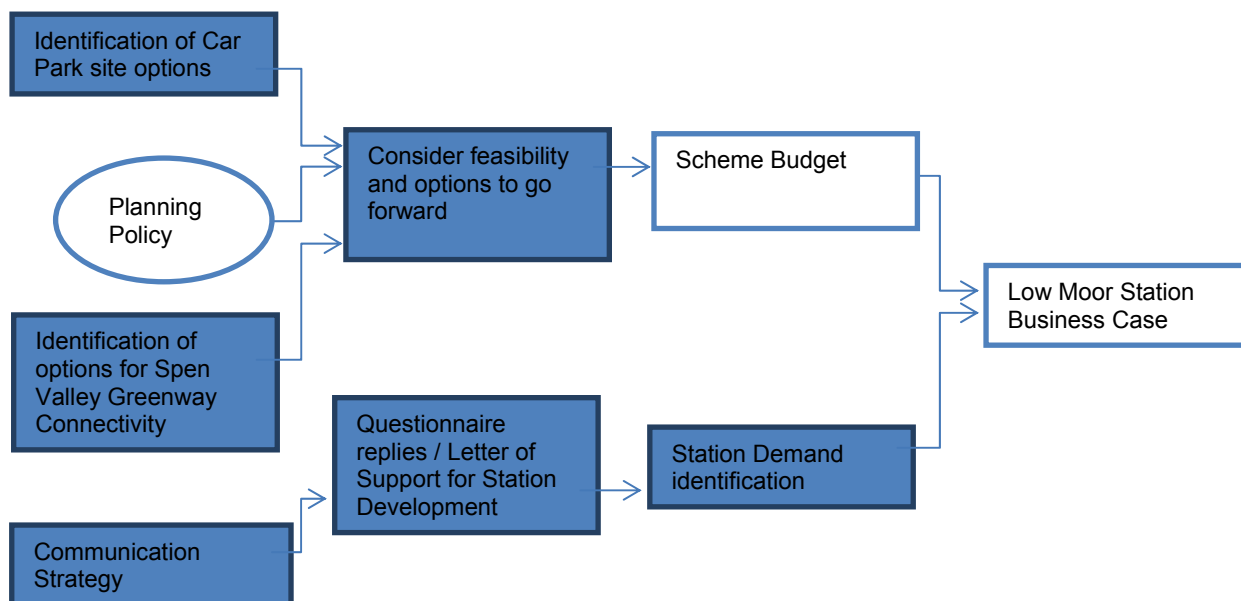
2. The Working Group shall be led by a Council Officer, and will report to the Low Moor Project Group via Council officers who in turn are responsible to the Low Moor Project Board.
3. As the Working Group will be required to produce proposals to a tight timescale the maximum number of participants will be 10 members as panels with more participants than this can become unworkable.
4. Additional technical resources from Bradford Council may be seconded to the Working Group to assist in the provision of advice and output relating to their particular area of expertise.

**Frequency and timing of Meetings**

1. Wherever possible meetings will be held outside core working hours, will commence at 6pm at venues around Low Moor and will last no longer than 8pm to allow representation from members of the public who work.
2. During the development of GRIP4 information regular meetings of the Working Group will be required and initially these will be every month. However, this will be reviewed as the Group becomes established and the scope of work required is better quantified.
3. Venues for meetings may vary but will be advised to members of the Working Panel once known.
4. At this stage it is anticipated that the Working Party will be disbanded following completion of the GRIP4 stage and attainment of 'approval in principal' of station proposals. The final stage of this Working Group's involvement will be participating in the Single Issue Neighbourhood Forum to be held in the summer following completion of the business case development.

**Programme and Methodology**

1. The programme for delivery is extremely tight and assumes that a final agreed proposal will be ready for presentation to Network Rail and the Department for Transport by summer 2013.
2. The outline methodology for the Working Party's delivery is depicted below:



*Shaded items are Work Packages for the Work Group*