Stoking Employment in North Staffordshire

Applicant Information

Local transport authority names:
Stoke-on-Trent City Council (co-ordinating authority) and Staffordshire County Council

Senior Responsible Owner name and position:
Pete Price: Assistant Director – Technical Services, City Renewal Directorate, Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Clive Thomson: Commissioner for Transport and the Connected County, Staffordshire County Council

Bid Manager name and position:
Austin Knott: Planning and Transport Policy Team Manager, Stoke-on-Trent City Council
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Stoking Employment in North Staffordshire

Outline: Following the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport’s announcement regarding the Tranche 2 Local Sustainable Transport Fund bids on 24 May 2012, Staffordshire County Council and the City of Stoke-on-Trent have been asked to reconsider their joint submission and the City’s single submission to the fund. The Department for Transport has requested that the Local Authorities prioritise the elements within the Tranche 2 submissions and resubmit a single scheme for consideration within a financial limit of £5m for the bid period.

As requested this note outlines the prioritised elements, the geography of those elements and summarises the funding contribution sought from the Department for Transport and the spend profile.

Summary of single submission: this remains a joint bid from Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. It focuses on the existing and growing employment at Chatterley Valley, Etruria Valley, Trentham Lakes, the University Quarter (UniQ) and Keele University & Science and Business Park. These sites currently provide 13,700 jobs with the potential to unlock a further 8,000 jobs by April 2015. The main purpose of the package is to assist existing movement to shift to sustainable transport modes alongside improved accessibility to enable new employees into work. This will tackle congestion, cut carbon and support economic growth.

To reduce the value of the bid we have taken out certain schemes and identified savings by combining the packages. We will deliver more of the package using local contributions such as our Integrated Transport Block, developer contributions, and work with our partnership bodies. Since the LSTF bids were originally submitted the City Council has announced that extra investment has been allocated towards delivering excellent connectivity and infrastructure.

The total sum now sought from LSTF is now £4.961m. The prioritised spend profile is summarised below.

Prioritised Spend Profile and Local Contribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue funding sought</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>614</td>
<td>1,159</td>
<td>1,123</td>
<td>2,896</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital funding sought</td>
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<td>965</td>
<td>715</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>2,065</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Funding sought</td>
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<td>1,579</td>
<td>1,74</td>
<td>1,508</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local contribution</td>
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<td>2,171</td>
<td>1,967</td>
<td>1,314</td>
<td>5,452</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,750</td>
<td>3,841</td>
<td>2,822</td>
<td>10,413</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Sites:

**Chatterley Valley** – This employment development straddling the Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme boundary is a 112 acre site with consent for B1, B2 & B8 development with potential for over 2,500 new jobs by April 2015. Recently completed development includes the 366,000sq.ft Blue Planet warehousing (unoccupied) and the 33,000sq.ft Genesis Enterprise Centre and industrial unit workshops with 500 existing jobs on the development.

**Etruria Valley** – A strategic site located immediately off the A500 with close proximity to the City Centre. The majority of the site, known as Festival Park was formerly a 315 acre steelworks, it now has over 600,000sq.ft of office and business space and over 400,000sq.ft of retail and leisure development already completed. The site includes a four star hotel, five restaurants, a multi-screen cinema, ten pin bowling and an indoor water complex with over 6,000 existing jobs.

The development land available at Etruria Valley formed the central site for Stoke & Staffordshire LEP LEZ bid, it is now a priority development site as an Accelerated Development Zone. It has potential to provide 5,100 new jobs with 3,000 by 2015.

**Trentham Lakes** – A 400 acre mixed use business park with 65 acres of development land remaining adding over 1,000 additional jobs to the 3,500 already on site.

Two million sq.ft of business space has already been developed and has the potential to accommodate bespoke units up to approximately 300,000sq.ft

The adjacent Prologis Park is a 40.6 acre site with planning approval for 640,000sq.ft industrial scheme, speculative units including two covering 500,000sq.ft along with smaller units totalling 105,000sq.ft with potential to create 650 new jobs.

**Keele Science and Business Parks & University** - Keele Science Park has attracted 80 high growth businesses and 600 jobs in medical technologies, ICT and digital media, and research and development related to green technologies. Jobs are expected to grow during the LSTF period with a 70 acre expansion of the Science and Business Park which benefits from outline planning consent for B1 uses, with infrastructure already in place. The County Council is investing in the Science and Business Park and there is also private developer interest. By April 2015, it is envisaged that 50 small and medium businesses will be attracted, creating over 1,000 new jobs.

Keele University is one of the largest employers in North Staffordshire with over 1,600 staff. There are over 10,000 student places and this is expected to grow within the LSTF period. Keele’s acclaimed conference centre and hospitality business also attracts 100,000 visitors and delegates throughout the year.
UniQ - The UniQ project is development of a state-of-the-art learning and enterprise quarter located around Staffordshire University and Higher Education colleges in Stoke-on-Trent - the largest collaborative project of its type in the UK helping to strengthen the knowledge and skills base of the local population. Since 2009, more than £90m has been invested in the UniQ providing new and improved education facilities:

- Stoke College ‘Lifestyle’ building
- Stoke Sixth Form College relocation
- University’s Science Centre – opening September
- St Peter’s Academy (11-16 year olds) – opening September

Projects planned over the next three years:

- University’s estate public realm improvements
- Sports and Fitness Centre
- Knowledge Hub
- Digital Media Hub
- Station Gateway project (phase one of University Boulevard)
- Hanley Park Regeneration
- Fenton Manor leisure development
- Stoke Links conference and employment development

There are 21,900 students in the UniQ studying at Staffordshire University, Stoke-on-Trent College, and Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form. 1,500 staff are employed in the UniQ at these education institutes. Student numbers in the UniQ will increase during the LSTF period with the opening of the 1,300 capacity St Peters Academy, and the University aiming to increase student numbers by 600.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Current Employment (jobs)</th>
<th>Additional Employment by 2015 (jobs)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chatterley Valley</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Etruria Valley</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trentham Lakes</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keele University &amp; Science and Business Park</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UniQ</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,700</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The economic growth and future sustainability of these key sites in North Staffordshire is a priority for the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire LEP. As evidenced in our original bids, surveys from travel plans at the sites demonstrate a high proportion of car use, between 75-95% of mode share, with many short journeys. Letters of support from our partnership bodies at these sites shows a strong commitment to delivering the LSTF scheme elements.
These sites are shown on Plan 1: Stoking Employment in North Staffordshire together with a schematic of the prioritised bid elements which are summarised overleaf.

**Plan 1: Stoking Employment in North Staffordshire**
Prioritised Scheme Elements

Scheme Element 1: Better Buses

Improved Bus Passenger Information

Our workplace partners will assist to deliver and maintain enhanced passenger information that will significantly improve the availability of timetable information at our targeted key destinations for existing and new passengers. Electronic display signs will be installed at key bus stops and travel information screens at the key destinations on the important Keele to City Centre bus corridor. The InfoRoute software operates through a web browser, and so the information will also be available online and via smartphones. This will further support and boost modal shift to bus travel, reinforcing the smart choices work and promote improved bus journey times. Improved passenger information at stops on bus services to the key destinations will tackle lack of information as a barrier to bus use.

Traffic Management and Bus Priority Measures:

- Improved operation of our Advanced Transport Telematics systems to improve traffic management and provide bus priority, working with bus operators as they introduce vehicle tracking technology, helping to improve journey time reliability for operators and reduce journey time for bus users.
- Improved bus facilities at Keele to enable faster turnaround and more efficient bus service operation at this end of the economic growth corridor to the City Centre for science & business park employees, university staff, students, and residents.
- Bus priority measures on George Street and Barracks Road to ensure faster and more reliable bus journey times at these locations where multiple converging bus routes serving Newcastle-under-Lyme bus station, including Keele, University Quarter, and City Centre services, are currently delayed by traffic congestion.

The following traffic management and bus priority measures will now be delivered as a local contribution from our capital programme:

- Station Road and College Road corridor - the “University Boulevard”. This connects Stoke-on-Trent Station and the City Centre via the University Quarter and Central Business District development. Many bus services from the south and east, including Keele and Trentham Lakes services, converge on this corridor to travel into the City Centre and it is a key route for pedestrians and cyclists, forming part of National Cycle Network Route 5.
- Improvements to the A52 Hartshill Road between the recently improved junction with George Street & Shelton New Road and Stoke Town Centre, benefitting Keele, Newcastle Town Centre, University Quarter, and City Centre bus services.
- The core bus network smarter route along the A50 corridor between the City Centre, Burslem and Tunstall. This will tackle the significant congestion and delays for buses our Punctuality Improvement Partnership work has identified improving access to Chatterley Valley, Etruria Valley and the City Centre.
**Bus Service Improvements**

We will work with our bus operator partners so that the local commercial network better serves the growing employment sites:

- Services to Etruria Valley will be extended from the deprived areas to the east, turning existing commercial services that currently terminate in the City Centre into cross city services. The frequency of services between the City Centre and Etruria Valley will also be increased.
- At Trentham Lakes the existing Plumline service will be increased from an hourly service to twice hourly with increased hours of operation to better meet the demands of commuters to Trentham Lakes using a high quality and low emission vehicle. The existing hourly service was started using developer contributions and connects the City Centre via Stoke-on-Trent railway station to Trentham Lakes and on to deprived residential areas in the south of the city using a high quality vehicle provided by the City Council. Following the initial cost of doubling the frequency the improved service will be maintained on a commercial basis by the end of the LSTF period.

These improvements to existing commercial bus services require funding only to meet identified initial costs and the enhanced services will be commercially operated before the end of the LSTF period through patronage growth. The projected modal shift of existing journeys resulting from the improved bus passenger information and smart choices element of the package, together with new journeys to jobs created at the large employment sites the package helps to unlock, will help ensure the commercial viability of the improved services is reached within the LSTF period. We have worked with operators to surpass targets to grow bus patronage through similar work on quality bus partnership routes, and successfully started improved services that have become commercially.

The following local contributions will support bus service improvements to the sites:
- Secured Section 106 funding from development at Chatterley Valley will be used to commence extended services from the local commercial network to the growing employment site, which currently lacks bus services. It is expected that the services will be commercial within 3 years of commencement as part of the prioritised LSTF package.
- We will work with our bus operator partners to improve bus services in the package area, in particular improving bus journey times to the key destinations enabled by improved journey time reliability from the work of the package to tackle congestion.
Scheme Element 2: Smart Choices

The smart choice element targets the significant movement to the key destinations shown on the Stoking Employment in North Staffordshire plan above, helping to achieve the decongestion benefits and improved access to the growing employment sites.

Marketing and Promotion of Smart Choices

We will carry out targeted marketing of sustainable transport options with the residents within walking and cycling distance of key destinations and those with access to the improved bus routes. We will target on the ‘people, place, purpose’ to make sure we consider all parts of a person’s door-to-door journey, to reduce reliance on the car. Experience gained through the Cycle Stoke promotional work will be valuable in guiding the delivery of this element, including the continuation of the community developed ‘Cycle Stoke’ brand.

There will be launch events of new cycle routes and public transport improvements. Other events will be held to raise the profile of the benefits of sustainable travel and we will make use of the internet, social media, posters and route maps. Every opportunity will be used to further understand people’s barriers to sustainable travel to ensure that the improvements we make lock in changes in travel behaviour that last a lifetime. Working in partnership with our health professionals and Universities will be essential when promoting and monitoring the health benefits of sustainable travel.

Enhanced Home to Work Project

We will continue to work with Job Centre Plus, the local Jobs Enterprise and Training (JET) service, and local employers through our wheels to work projects to help unemployed residents overcome transport barriers they face accessing employment and training opportunities. Over £700k has been approved from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) towards the Stoke scheme and LSTF funding will unlock this funding stream in full. The additional funding will reduce waiting lists and assist more job seekers referred to the projects to access employment. Linked to engagement with workplaces and travel planning work at the growing employment sites, this will grow the benefits that these projects can bring to accessing training and jobs. This work will ensure that information about the improved sustainable transport offer delivered by the package is delivered directly to meet the needs of local job seekers.

Workplace Travel Planning

Existing area wide travel plan frameworks are in place at the key destinations with the full travel plans in place at the majority of employers. However there is limited work being carried out to ensure that their delivery is making real changes to the way local people get to work.
We will work intensively with the employers at Trentham Lakes, Etruria Valley, Chatterley Valley, Keele University and Science and Business Park, UniQ, University Hospital, together with ensuring Newcastle Borough Council and the City Council lead by example.

Maximum use will be made of postcode data to tailor travel planning to the needs of individual employers. LSTF funds will enable sustainable travel plan co-ordinators to establish initiatives, including car sharing, bike loans, home-working, flexible working, driver training, adult bikeability training, cycle to work challenges, local cycling maps and linking to the improved bus passenger information. The wheels to work projects above will link job seekers with these travel plan initiatives helping tackle access to work barriers, and maintain sustainable travel patterns.

We will take the burden of starting initiatives from the employers. Employers will be engaged by the North Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry as they are best placed to emphasise the benefits, such as reduced congestion on routes to employment sites, resolution of parking issues and the improved health and productivity of employees.

**Stoke-on-Trent Rail Station Travel Planning**

Stoke-on-Trent Railway Station has seen significant increases in patronage in recent years due to development in the package area surrounding the station and improvement to rail services. Patronage has increased by 38% between 2008 and 2011 to over 2.3m. The Station Travel Plan has been developed as part of the national pilot programme and is managed by a working group of stakeholders and the station operator. LSTF funds will enable the Travel Plan working group to implement the sustainable transport promotion actions identified, building on the successes of the Travel Plan actions already implemented such as improved bus stops, cycle parking and new bike hub, and linking with the *Improved Bus Passenger Information* to improve the use of sustainable transport options to access the station.

**School Travel Planning**

Nearly 40% of journeys to targeted schools are by car adding over 2,500 school run miles to the congested road network to the employment sites each morning. Nearly 80% of these journeys by car are short distances (less than 2 miles). The majority already have a school travel plan in place. We are committed to working with the schools to refresh their travel plans and provide resources to support initiatives such as Bike It, Bikeability, Walk Once a Week (WoW) and Walking Buses. Packages of initiatives will be tailored to suit travel needs to help tackle congestion on the highway network in the package area. Encouraging schools to take greater responsibility for the way their pupils get to school will help to reduce the impact of the many short journeys to school by car in peak travel times – helping to make operating conditions even more efficient for improved bus service timings. A smarter travel choices officer will work to meet targets within travel plans to increase sustainable travel amongst pupils, parents and staff. The role of the officer will build on existing initiatives such as Bikeability training. It will be particularly important to ensure that sustainable travel
patterns are achieved at the new St. Peter's Academy as the current St. Peter's CE (A) High School and Berryhill High School merge onto a new site in the University Quarter.

**Scheme Element 3: Cycling and Walking**

*Completion of Cycle Network*

This scheme element builds on the successful implementation of the Cycle Stoke programme, completing the most important identified gaps in the cycle network to the key destinations. It includes schemes identified as a priority needed to complete key missing connections between deprived residential areas and the employment sites:

- Connecting deprived residential areas to the South East by joining the Berryhill Greenway to the City Centre via City Waterside and to the new St. Peter's Academy in the University Quarter.
- Extending cycle and pedestrian routes in the City Centre between NCNS5, the Business District and City Sentral developments alongside the A53 Etruria Road to the Trent and Mersey Canal serving the large employment and residential areas at Etruria, Etrutia Valley and Festival Park, and Cliffe Vale.
- Directional signage to key destinations to improve the conspicuousness and legibility of our 'hidden gem' of over 100km of cycle routes away from the road network helping residents navigate to employment, retail and leisure opportunities.
- Cycle parking at the key destinations to complement travel plans.
- Cycle permeability measures: introducing contra-flow facilities for cyclists on one-way streets and 'cycle gates' opening road closures for new and existing cyclists, to improve access to the key destinations.

We will use local contributions including our Integrated Transport Block allocation and developer funding, to deliver further identified improvements to the cycle network, including at Etruria Valley improved cycling and walking access provided through mandate for change and Regional Growth Fund investment.

*Pedestrian Enhancements*

Measures to deliver a safer pedestrian environment will be delivered to encourage modal shift from short car journeys to walking including convenient access to bus stops, and complementing locally funded public realm schemes in the key destinations.

**Prioritised Package Costs**

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<th>Scheme Element</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>2014-15</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Better Buses</td>
<td>Revenue</td>
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<td>278</td>
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<td>658</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Capital</td>
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<td>855</td>
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<td>1579</td>
<td>1874</td>
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<td>4961</td>
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Value for Money

This prioritised package for North Staffordshire will contribute towards delivering LEP objectives and will help to accommodate significant wider economic growth and carbon reduction that will continue beyond the LSTF period. Significant reductions in vehicle kilometres are expected generated by the transfer of car trips to more sustainable modes of travel, which is predicted to result in significant decongestion benefits and carbon reduction.

The efficiency of commercial bus services, in particular within the Keele to City Centre corridor, will be improved through continued partnership working with the bus operators. The assumed journey time savings for bus passengers in the value for money calculations will be achieved by this partnership work improving timetables in response to the prioritised package.

The two original Tranche 2 submissions for North Staffordshire provide detailed evidence that both packages would achieve good value for money. The calculated benefits in both bids were based on conservative and robust modal transfer assumptions. Care was taken not to double count the benefits of the mutually supporting elements.

By combining the two bids and prioritising the parts of the elements that were most important in delivering the benefits, the cost of the combined package has been reduced. We are confident the same benefits will be achieved, particularly with some key schemes removed from the LSTF bid now being funded locally during the LSTF period.