

To: Cabinet
Date: 13 July 2022
Report of: Executive Director (Development)
Title of Report: Variation to Previously Approved Allocation of Growth Funding to Cycle Routes

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To approve variations to schemes which were not able to be delivered (variations agreed with Oxfordshire County Council under Section 10 of the Agreement).
Key decision:	Yes
Cabinet Members:	Cllr Louise Upton (Cabinet Member for Health and Transport)
Corporate Priority:	Pursue a Zero Carbon Oxford through supporting sustainable travel
Policy Framework:	Oxford Local Plan, Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan Active and Healthy Travel Strategy
Recommendations: That Cabinet resolves to:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve a variation to the schemes to be funded from the £1m Growth Deal funding (previously approved in March 2020) as set out at Appendix 2; 2. Delegate authority to the Executive Director (Development) in consultation with the Head of Financial Services/Section 151 Officer, The Head of Law and Governance and the Cabinet Member for Health and Transport to make any further variations to the schemes, and any amendments to the funding agreement, that are within the approved budget and comply with the requirements of the Growth Deal Funding Agreement; 3. Agree the return of £140k to Oxfordshire County Council for the delivery of the Marston Road Crossing improvement which has been absorbed into a larger scheme; and 4. Delegate authority to the Executive Director (Development) in consultation with the Head of Financial Services/Section 151 Officer, The Head of Law and Governance and the Cabinet Member for Health and Transport to appoint contractors and award contracts to deliver the Growth Deal cycle schemes in accordance with the contract rules contained in the Council's constitution. 	

Appendices	
Appendix 1	List of Original Schemes
Appendix 2	List of Proposed Schemes
Appendix 3	Risk Register

Introduction and background

1. At a Cabinet meeting on 11 March 2020 approval was given to enter into a funding agreement with Oxfordshire County Council to deliver city cycling schemes at Cuckoo Lane, Marsh Lane, Marston Road & Boundary Brook, Oxford, financed by Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Funding. An agreement was entered into and £1m funding was transferred to the City Council to enable the schemes to be delivered.

Original Approved Schemes.

2. The original schemes were proposed by Oxfordshire County Council, but were to be delivered by the City Council. However when the schemes were looked at in further detail they were found to be undeliverable, either due to local opposition or other approvals needed. As a result negotiations have taken place with Oxfordshire County Council to identify revised schemes or other walking and cycling routes to replace those that were previously identified.

Proposed Schemes

3. Several schemes were researched to ensure that they met the Growth Deal Funding requirements and could potentially link to future projects across the city when further funding was available. This has resulted in schemes at Donnington Recreation, Boundary Brook, Marsh Park and Oatlands Park being identified to be improved with the funding available. The funding agreement requires these schemes to be delivered by March 2023 so it has been important to ensure they are deliverable within the timescales. See Appendix 2 for details of the schemes.
4. In relation to one of the original schemes, (Marston Road Crossing), Oxfordshire County Council has requested the return of the funding, as they will deliver the scheme as part of a wider improvement. This will deliver efficiencies and therefore it is recommended that £140k is returned to Oxfordshire County Council for this scheme. Oxfordshire County Council have agreed to the return of this amount.

Change Control

5. A request for a variation of the funding agreement is required under Section 10 of the Funding Agreement. In view of the limited timescales to deliver the schemes discussions have been initiated to vary the agreement to cover the revised schemes and the return of the £140k to Oxfordshire County Council. If approved, the changes to the agreement will be formalised in a deed of variation

6. Other implications

- A series of Consultations and communications activities have commenced on existing schemes and will be put in place for those proposed but not yet commenced.
- The schemes will be delivered by ODS under a Design and Build Contract and in line with the agreed approach for their involvement.

- All consideration has been made in terms of Sustainability for construction and any potential lighting
- Consultation has taken place with Environmental and Arboriculture Officers and where trees will need to be removed there will be a replanting scheme.

Financial implications

7. This request seeks to retain the funding and budget as previously agreed (less £140k for Marston Road Crossing). As such it has no additional financial implications for the Council.

Legal issues

8. There are no legal implications that differ from the original approval, save that the amendment of the Funding Agreement would be undertaken if these proposals are approved, which would require a deed of variation to be entered into by the City Council and Oxfordshire County Council.

Level of risk

9. The funding for the schemes is from the Growth Deal but there is a risk if it is not spent within the funding timescales that it could need to be returned. The programme will be managed to avoid this risk. There are some risks in undertaking construction works and these will be managed through the Project Manager and contractor.

Equalities impact

10. The proposals are to improve walking and cycling routes which will be delivered to meet accepted standards to ensure they are accessible to everyone.

Conclusion

11. The variation of the schemes to be delivered with the Growth Deal funding is necessary to ensure the benefits of the funding are delivered. The proposed schemes will deliver improvements and support the Council's wider ambition to encourage walking and cycling within the City. They have been negotiated with Oxfordshire County Council to ensure they are deliverable within the requirements of the funding agreement. Delegation is sought to agree the final details and the letting of contracts to enable the schemes to be delivered.

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Background Papers:

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| 1 | Agenda Item 10, Cabinet 11 March 2020: Allocation of Growth Deal Funds |
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