

To: Leadership Board

On: 16 June 2021

Report by: Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources

Heading: Levelling Up Fund Bid 2021

1. Summary

- 1.1 The report seeks approval from the Board to authorise the Chief Executive to submit an application on behalf of the Council to the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund to support the delivery of the AMIDS South project as set out in the details of this report.
-

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Leadership Board is asked to:

- (i) Authorise the Chief Executive to submit a bid to the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund under the Transport theme, as outlined in this report, for £38.73 million of funding and to note and agree the requirement in doing so for the Council to commit to the provision of a local authority contribution as detailed in para 3.23.
- (ii) To note that the draft final bid application and outline business case are available to elected members for their review in advance of the Board meeting as required, and in recognition of the tight timescales for their development, to authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make any minor changes that may be necessary prior to submission to the UK Government on 18 June 2021.
- (iii) To note the written support of Gavin Newlands MP, the Constituency MP for the area covered by the bid, in line with the bidding guidance; and also the written support of a wide range of partners across Renfrewshire in support of the Council's proposed application as detailed in paragraphs 3.20 and 3.21

- (iv) To note that a presentation on the scope of the bid proposals will be provided at the Board meeting on 16 June.
 - (v) To note that even if this bid should be successful, that the Council is still eligible to make two further bids in future years of the Levelling Up Fund, and that officers will continue work to develop options for consideration by elected members in due course
-

3. AMIDS South Project

- 3.1 Renfrewshire Council and its partners are delivering an ambitious regeneration agenda, focused on creating the infrastructure and business environment that will generate economic growth, jobs and ensure that the area is a fairer, more inclusive place where all our people, communities and businesses thrive.
- 3.2 In early 2019 the City Deal project team developed a strategic business case to complement the Glasgow Airport Investment Area City Deal project now most commonly referred to as the AMIDS site (Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District Scotland). This was approved at Leadership Board in May 2019 along with approval to progress development of an Outline Business Case (OBC).
- 3.3 The OBC for AMIDS South was developed and then paused in April 2020, to consider the immediate impacts of the global COVID pandemic. In the interim work continued on the delivery of the AMIDS site and is now nearing completion. Whilst the development of AMIDS has been possible as a consequence of the enabling infrastructure provided by the City Deal investment no one could have predicted the scale of the global economic shock we would experience from the pandemic and how central this has become to the recovery of the Renfrewshire economy. The Renfrewshire economy needs investment at the scale provided by AMIDS, bringing with it the generation of jobs in the short to medium term and so maximising the opportunity is paramount. Success at AMIDS is a key component in the Renfrewshire Economic Strategy 2020-2030 and in the Glasgow City Region economic strategy.
- 3.4 The delivery of AMIDS includes transport infrastructure for that locality. However, this infrastructure does not extend to all nearby settlements where ideally the AMIDS workforce will be accommodated or whose residents might expect to benefit most from the economic and employment opportunities being created. In particular, whilst Clyde Waterfront provides links to Renfrew and funds have been identified to provide a new active travel route between Paisley and Renfrew that will join with this, the links to AMIDS from Paisley and Inchinnan (as well as Erskine and Bishopston beyond this) are poor.

- 3.5 AMIDS South will put these connections in place such that, together with the infrastructure provided at AMIDS and the Paisley to Renfrew Active Travel Route, an improved transport network is established for the south of AMIDS/the north of Paisley that can facilitate access throughout the area for residents, businesses, students and visitors. Good progress is being made with developments at AMIDS, Clyde Waterfront and Glasgow Airport with businesses taking up occupancy and jobs beginning to emerge. It is now critical to establish the local transport connections if the opportunities for the local area and residents are to be realised. Having the transport infrastructure available will both enable this progress to continue and ensure the sustainable transport options it offers can be taken up from the outset, rather than having to encourage modal shift at a later time.
- 3.6 Significant work has been undertaken to realise this ambition. This has involved working closely with, local and national stakeholders and partners. The AMIDS South scheme will provide this new strategic link from Paisley town centre, and its transport hubs (Paisley Gilmour Street Train Station and bus interchange) north towards Glasgow Airport and linking with the main AMIDS site. To the north of AMIDS, a new Active Travel route further connecting AMIDS and Inchinnan will be provided, linking with a newly installed pedestrian and cycle bridge across the Black Cart Water.
- 3.7 Within this Corridor lies the campus of one of Scotland's largest FE colleges (West College Scotland). Relatively isolated from the Town Centre there exists the potential to make the College campus a more integral part of both the historic centre but also to benefit from the proximity of the Skills Academy at NMIS for both apprentices and also to forge new partnerships with local businesses in terms of training and upskilling opportunities. The site of the new Paisley Grammar school will also benefit from the linkages this scheme will offer, providing safe active travel routes promoting healthy lifestyle options.
- 3.8 The main components comprise a new south to north link Gateway route incorporating a new bridge crossing over the White Cart Water at Paisley Harbour with pedestrian, cycling and road infrastructure, providing increased connectivity for active and vehicular traffic between Paisley Town Centre, Glasgow Airport, AMIDS and on to Inchinnan. The route is approximately 1.7kms in length with 1.1 kms upgrade to existing infrastructure on Abercorn Street, Harbour Road and Inchinnan Road for new pedestrian and cycle provision and 600 metres of new infrastructure.
- 3.9 A new east to west link route from Renfrew Road connecting to the Gateway route in the Harbour Road area providing increased connectivity from Renfrew Road to AMIDS, improved accessibility for the planned new Paisley Grammar school being delivered on the former Chivas site, West College Scotland and the Gallowhill area. This route is approximately 500 metres in length starting from a new signalised junction on Renfrew Road incorporating full pedestrian and cyclist provision and crosses through unused industrial land before connecting to the Gateway route, immediately prior to the new White Cart River bridge.

- 3.10 Additional road improvements along Abercorn Street, from Old Sneddon Street to Harbour Road, including addition of cycle routes and landscaping; and Streetscape and traffic calming works on Love Street, to improve the environment for local residents and pedestrians, facilitated by the reduction in traffic flows along Love Street through the provision of the new “Gateway Route”.
- 3.11 The OBC sets out the justification for investment in the AMIDS South Project to form the Gateway linking AMIDS, Glasgow Airport, Renfrew Road, Paisley Town Centre and surrounding communities through active travel, vehicular, public realm and green / blue ecosystem services along Abercorn Street, Harbour Road, Inchinnan Road, and across the wider White Cart Corridor.

Levelling Up Fund

- 3.12 The Levelling Up Fund is a competitive fund established by the UK Government, with funding distributed to places across the UK on the basis of successful project selection. The Fund has set aside at least £800 million across Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland over four years from 2021-2022 to 2024-2025.
- 3.13 The Levelling Up Fund (LuF) aims to invest in local infrastructure that has a visible impact on people and their communities. The Fund is jointly managed by HM Treasury (HMT), the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the Department for Transport (DfT).
- 3.14 The LuF prospectus sets out the approach for this first round of the Fund, which will prioritise bids that can demonstrate investment or begin delivery on the ground in the coming financial year. In considering potential projects for the fund, Council officers identified this project as being capable of commencing delivery within the tight timescales required.
- 3.15 A local authority can bid under one of three themes; up to £20m per each MP constituency within the area plus one transport bid which may be up to £50m. Renfrewshire Council can therefore make three separate bids to the fund over the life of the fund.
- 3.16 The three themes included in round one are
- Transport investments which can include (but not limited to) public transport, active travel, bridge repairs, bus priority lanes, local road improvements and major structural maintenance, and accessibility improvements. Proposals are sought for high-impact small, medium and by exception larger local transport schemes to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality, cut congestion, support economic growth and improve the experience of transport users.
 - Regeneration and town centre investment, to upgrade eyesore buildings and dated infrastructure, acquire and regenerate brownfield sites, invest in secure community infrastructure and crime reduction, and bring public services and safe community spaces into town and city centres.

- Cultural investment maintaining, regenerating, or creatively repurposing museums, galleries, visitor attractions (and associated green spaces) and heritage assets as well as creating new community-owned spaces to support the arts and serve as cultural spaces

- 3.17 The AMIDS South proposal is a bid under the Transport theme. We believe AMIDS South demonstrates the funding requirement to evidence high-impact local transport schemes to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality, cut congestion, support economic growth and improve the experience of transport users. A further two bids therefore can also be submitted in future years of the fund and will consider which options might best fit the fund criteria for development in the coming months.
- 3.18 Within the funding competition, funding will be targeted towards places the most significant need, with category 1 representing places with the highest levels of identified need. These bandings will form part of our criteria for assessing bids. While preference will be given to bids from higher priority areas, the bandings do not represent eligibility criteria, nor the amount or number of bids a place can submit. Renfrewshire, however, is a Priority One area.
- 3.19 Members of Parliament, as democratically-elected representatives of the area, may choose, if they wish to, to back one bid that they see as a priority. . Mr Gavin Newlands, MP has discussed this project with us and has provided his priority written support to the AMIDS South bid, which falls within his constituency boundary.
- 3.20 In addition, we have received letters of support from a number of other sources including local businesses, Scottish Enterprise, West College Scotland and Strathclyde University, National Manufacturing Institute Scotland and Medicines Manufacturing Innovation Centre UK and transport bodies including SPT and Glasgow Airport demonstrating the positive local response and enthusiasm for the Council's proposal.
- 3.21 All bids require have the approval of the relevant authority responsible for delivering them and so this approval is being sought from the Leadership Board.
- 3.22 Bids to the Levelling Up Fund are required to be submitted by noon on 18 June.
- 3.23 A successful application to the Levelling Up fund bid will provide £38.73M funding for this project, representing 90% of the total estimated project costs. There is a requirement for the Council as part of the bid to provide an explicit commitment to provide the remaining 10% funding. If the bid is successful, it would be proposed that the Council would meet this £4.3 million funding contribution via prudential borrowing. Owing to the very long-life infrastructure assets being delivered, this would result in an annual revenue budget commitment of approximately £0.125 million, rep[resenting a relatively minor annual revenue commitment when set against the overall level of potential investment. There would be a requirement for this annual revenue commitment to be appropriately planned for and accommodated within the Council's future financial planning and budget arrangements.

- 3.24 Notwithstanding the requirement for the Council to make this up-front commitment to support the project bid, Council officers are actively progressing in parallel other potential additional avenues of funding that may be secured to assist in the project delivery, specifically relating to Sustrans funding that may be aligned to the Inchinnan cycle path. Should further sources of funding be successfully secured, these would be aligned against the 10%/£4.3 million contribution from non UK Government sources and would reduce the prudential borrowing requirement for the Council.
- 3.25 In addition, other projects for submission in future years of the Fund will be developed in the months ahead, including a potential bid which would support the aims and objectives of the Paisley Community Trust in the delivery of their project in Paisley Town Centre.
-

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – The financial implications arising from a successful bid are set out in para 3.23.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None.
3. **Community/Council Planning** –
 - *Our Renfrewshire is thriving* – The AMIDS South project will link our communities. The projects align with and aid the outcomes of the Renfrewshire Economic Strategy 2020 -2030 and the Renfrewshire Economic Recovery Plan
 - *Our Renfrewshire is well* - The new safer walking and cycling infrastructure will help encourage active travel by children and young people, as well as adults.
 - *Reshaping our place, our economy and our future* – AMIDS South will link to AMIDS and other investment in cycling infrastructure and education and will provide connectivity and access to new and existing jobs for people in our communities. During the project construction period new jobs will be created.
 - *Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all* – the AMIDS South project links our less advantaged communities with education and job opportunities and provides healthy transport options.
 - *Creating a sustainable Renfrewshire for all to enjoy* - The completed infrastructure will include segregated provision for walking and cycling, it will also enable improved public transport links. AMIDS incorporates an overarching sustainable transport plan which through the LDP will be managed as sustainable linked communities.
 - *Working together to improve outcomes* - Officers are working closely with local communities, neighbouring councils, private sector organisations, Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise and other partners to ensure

the maximisation of positive outcomes from the programme of projects noted within this report.

4. **Legal** – None.
5. **Property/Assets** – some land acquisition will be required to deliver aspects of the AMIDS South project although much is already owned by Renfrewshire Council or in the current public roads network.
6. **Information Technology** – None.
7. **Equality & Human Rights** -
 - (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** – None.
9. **Procurement** – all contract requirements will be procured in accordance with legal and governance requirements.
10. **Risk** – Project specific and Programme level risk registers will be kept under regular review and reported to the Council's internal City Deal and Infrastructure Programme Board.
11. **Privacy Impact** – None.
12. **COSLA Policy Position** – Not applicable.
13. **Climate Risk** - The project is being designed to reduce carbon usage by providing active travel infrastructure and other environmental enhancements.

List of Background Papers

Executive Summary – OBC available on request

BW
June 2021

Author: Barbara Walker, Programme Director - City Deal and Infrastructure; Tel: 0141 618 7156; Email Barbara.walker@renfrewshire.gov.uk