

Report of the Interim Deputy Chief Executive

BENNERLEY VIADUCT1. Purpose of report

To update the Committee with progress on the restoration and opening to the public of Bennerley Viaduct and to approve a financial allocation of £20,000 from the Council.

2. Background

Bennerley Viaduct is a grade II* listed structure dating from 1877. It has a 430 metre span across the Erewash Valley and the viaduct deck is some 18 metres (60 feet) above the River Erewash. Sustrans, along with Railway Paths Ltd, the owners of the viaduct, had been working for a number of years to develop a multi-million pound restoration and access scheme for the viaduct, and were working towards a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid to fund most of the costs.

Members may recall allocating £20,000 of section 106 ITPS funding to that project at Cabinet on 15 March 2016, but then withdrawing that funding at this Committee on 26 April 2018 following the rejection of the HLF bid and the decision by Sustrans not to proceed further with that bid. A proportion of the section 106 ITPS money that was released by that decision has now been spent on other projects as approved by this Committee.

3. Latest proposal

Following the unsuccessful HLF bid in 2017 the board of Railway Paths Ltd has recently decided to proceed with a scaled down scheme. Further details are given in the appendix and Railway Paths Ltd is now re-seeking a £20,000 contribution.

4. Financial implications

The remaining unrestricted ITPS funding presently available for allocation in the north of the Borough and which could potentially be spent on Bennerley Viaduct is £14,450, following national changes to planning rules in 2015 most future ITPS contributions are now ring fenced for specific projects and are not available for allocation at the Council's discretion.

This Committee could allocate the available ITPS funding of £14,450 leaving the £5,550 shortfall to be funded from capital contingencies, as outlined in a separate report on this agenda.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that a budget of £20,000 be allocated in the 2018/19 capital programme to support a Heritage Lottery Fund bid for restoration works at Bennerley Viaduct to be funded by £14,450 from ITPS monies and £5,550 from capital contingencies.

Background papers

Nil

APPENDIX

Update from Railway Paths Ltd received 31 July 2018

We received the green light from the board last week to progress with developing the Bennerley project – up to the stage where we could award contracts to get the works carried out. This will include securing the necessary funding, obtaining planning permission/listed building consent, obtaining the necessary land rights, etc. There will be another checkpoint at the end of March 2019 when we will review whether or not sufficient funding has been secured and if there is sufficient funding we will seek board approval to progress to the construction phase which will take place during 2019/20.

The project to be progressed will include repair works and access works to enable Bennerley Viaduct to have key defects addressed and be opened for public walking access at minimal cost. The different elements of the access works are as follows:

- A new deck surface across the viaduct
- A ramp and surfaced path at the western end of the viaduct
- Fencing across the viaduct spans that cross the live railway to meet Network Rail requirements
- Steps at the eastern end of the viaduct
- Ground level footpath access points and signage

As mentioned, we're proposing construction of a western ramp rather than an eastern ramp through these works. The reason for this is that the western ramp is cheaper and less ecologically sensitive than the eastern ramp. Construction of the eastern ramp and path is estimated to cost 30% more. On top of this construction of the eastern ramp will require extensive ecological mitigation works in relation to great crested newts. This is estimated to cost in the region of £50,000 involving exclusion fencing, pitfall trapping and translocation operations for at least continuous 90 days. We would look to construct the eastern ramp at a later date – once additional funding is secured.