

Written response to:

Members of the Business and Transformation Scrutiny Panel

Resolution:

That the Corporate Director of Economic Development provide a written update to the Panel on the Southern Relief Road bid.

Written response from:

Jane Meek – Corporate Director of Economic Development

Response:

- Procurement of the technical support needed to assist the Council across Stage 2 Masterplanning for St Cuthbert's Garden Village commenced in November 2018.
- The nature of the work and anticipated level of interest is such that the procurement process has followed a two-stage sifting approach.
- The selection of a preferred bidder and award of contract is not anticipated until the end of February 2019.
- A report to Executive seeking approval to proceed with the work and other key strands of the St Cuthbert's project is to be considered at their 11th February meeting.
- It is important the current timescale for procurement proceeds to maintain the momentum needed should a positive HIF announcement be forthcoming.
- In the event HIF is not successful, there will still be a need and hence there is still clear value in progressing with Stage 2 Masterplanning. This reflects:
 - It will be this stage of masterplanning which seeks to understand how much development can be progressed, and where within the area, prior to the new link road being in place;
 - Any future bid for alternative non HIF funds will inevitably be stronger if the masterplan for the area is further developed; and
 - Having a clear and coherent masterplan in place and delivery strategy will help guard against future piecemeal developments prejudicing the overall vision.
- Ultimately it must be recognised that growth to the south of the City is the only realistic direction in which the City can grow owing to the north, east and west being heavily constrained.

- Whilst the scale, ambition and phasing of St Cuthbert's would need to be revisited if HIF is not successful, the need and desire to progress the project including the link road remains and hence alternative solutions and funding would be pursued

Date:

8th January 2019