

17 February 2012

## Better Bus Area (BBA) Fund - Q&A 15 February

**I have a quite a few letters of support for my bid. Do they have to be included in the 20 page limit?**

Letters of support are in addition to the 20 pages limit. However, you should ensure that your bid makes reference to the letters and any content of the letters that is relevant to the success of your bid. This is because assessors will be making an assessment of your bid based on what is contained within the 20 page limit only. The letter of support itself merely acts to verify that the support you claim to have for your bid is genuine.

**Can I include annexes in my bid?**

If you are intending to include annexes in addition to the 20 page limit then should be aware that assessors will not be reading these annexes or judging your bid using these annexes. You should therefore ensure that any information that you want assessors to judge is included within the 20 page limit in the main body of the bid.

**Section D of the form asks for information about the absolute changes in congestion, car traffic levels, and bus trips. It is easier to provide percentage changes. Will that do?**

It is absolutely essential that you demonstrate that the project is good value for money. Absolute changes in congestion, car traffic levels and bus trips are very good ways of doing this, and information should be provided wherever it is available. Percentage changes are much weaker indicators because they give no indication of the scale over which the change is taking place.

**Will you be coming back to us if any information is missing or needs clarification?**

No, the information you provide in your bid is all we will be looking at.

**How strictly will the spend by years figures be enforced?**

The BBA fund is specifically designed to realise benefits in the short term. Strong bids should demonstrate early implementation of scheme elements in 2012/13. However, the BBA application form allows bidders to provide details of costs and outputs expected in 2013/14 in recognition of the difficulty that some authorities may have in delivering all of their proposals in 2012/13.

Any discussion in bids concerning 2014/15 onwards should be primarily in the context of the long term sustainability of the package and how the benefits realised in 2012/13 and 2013/14 will be sustained without the need for ongoing financial support from central government.

You should identify any risks to delivery and how those risks might be managed in Section F2 of the application form.

**The guidance (section F, 3.18) refers to financial commitment or match funding and the form refers to local contributions, are the definitions of these terms different?**

The terms match funding and local contribution mean the same thing. That is a financial commitment from a local authority or bus operators. Note that other DfT funding such as LSTF funding cannot be counted as match-funding for the purposes of a BBA bid.

**Some elements of our bid may be additions to existing proposals with confirmed funding in place. Should the bid refer to the whole of the scheme or just the enhancements?**

We will judge the BBA elements of your bid, but referring to the wider scheme provides useful context – particularly if you can use it to support deliverability or the scale of benefits achievable. You should note that BBA elements must be deliverable in their own right.

**Is virement between elements to deal with small changes during implementation acceptable?**

Yes, but you should identify any risks to delivery and how those risks might be managed in Section F2 of the application form.

**Is it better to include any risk allowance within the proposed element costs or as a separate figure?**

This is for you to decide. You should note that we will not be accepting bids that exceed £5 million.

**Item F1 (Package costs) includes lines in the table for Capital, Revenue and Local Contribution. Do you want the total scheme costs to be entered into the capital and revenue lines (including local contribution) or just the costs bid for?**

The table in F1 requires details of:

- Capital grant bid for
- Revenue grant bid for, and
- Total Local Contribution, which could be a mixture of revenue and capital added together.

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