

# Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director for Neighbourhoods and Environment

to

Cabinet

on

25 February

Agenda  
Item No.

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and Strategic Transport Policy

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## Southend Central Area Transport Scheme (S-CATS) Phase 3 & 4 London Road and Victoria Circus

Place Scrutiny Committee(s)  
Executive Councillor: Councillor Woodley  
Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

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### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide Cabinet with an update on the progress of the 'Southend Central Area Transport Scheme (S-CATS)'.
- 1.2 To advise Cabinet that two design options have been developed for S-CATS Phase 3 - London Road (between College Way and the High Street) and an outlined plan for Phase 4 Victoria Circus, refer to **Appendix 1** for scheme extents based on "concept design and vision statements" which were included in the S-CATS Cabinet paper submitted on 15 March 2016 (**Appendix 2**). These design options have been produced through extensive consultation throughout 2018-2019 via the SUNRISE Co-Creation project.
- 1.3 To advise Cabinet that a series of workshops have been held in public spaces including the Forum, the Civic Centre and the High Street. These events have included internal and external stakeholders as well as members of the public. Further consultations have been undertaken throughout August 2019, via an online survey (**Appendix 5**) which highlighted the priorities as seen by the local residents, businesses and visitors to the town. The results of this combined approach led to multiple options being produced and shortlisted through the SUNRISE Core Group which also included local businesses and the public. These options have been taken to events targeting the key users of the High Street to ascertain the preferred options.
- 1.4 To advise Cabinet that Design Option 1 scored higher on the scheme options matrix (refer to **Appendix 4**) and therefore is the preferred option.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet endorses both proposed design options for Phase 3 London Road and Victoria Circus and confirms that either of the two options may be taken forward to construction.
- 2.2 That delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive and Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and the Environment), in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to agree the final detailed design option based upon the Option 1 preliminary design.
- 2.3 This confirmation will allow the selected option be taken forward to implementation with a programmed commencement in Spring 2020 as proposed with key stakeholders prior to this report. Together with the advertisement of any necessary Traffic Regulation Orders.

## 3. Background

- 3.1 S-CATS is a Local Growth Fund Scheme that has an allocation of £7m. The purpose of the scheme is to take forward aspects of transport and public realm infrastructure that are seen as necessary to support both housing and employment growth in the Town Centre.

The scheme is being developed in four phase:

<b>S-CATS</b>	<b>Phase 1:</b> Victoria Avenue Improvements	<b>Phase 2:</b> London Road Area (between Queensway-London Road roundabout and College Way)	<b>Phase 3:</b> Stub-end of London Road Area (between College Way and Victoria Circus)	<b>Phase 4:</b> Victoria Circus
Financial Year	2016-2017	2017-2018	2020-2021	2020-2021
Local Growth Fund	£1m	£2m	£0.5m	£3.5m

### Phase 1

This included a series of junction improvements along Victoria Avenue that better manages traffic into and out of the town centre. Access and public realm improvements along London Road, College Way, Queens Road and Elmer Avenue are the next steps to encourage more residents and tourists to visit and spend time in the Town Centre and for local businesses to flourish.

## Phase 2

Focused on London Road (between Queensway and College Way), which is the key western approach for pedestrians and cyclists into the town centre. Phase 2 also included streetscape works on the College Way / Queens Road / Elmer Avenue route between London Road and The Forum / South Essex College.

## Phase 3 & 4

These phases will also focus on improved street scape works along London Road between College Way and the High Street and Victoria Circus and creating a formal gateway into the High Street as well as establishing a more functional space for local businesses and residents.

The scheme supports and compliments the improvements already made to A127/A13 Victoria Gateway and links to the junction improvement works along Victoria Avenue. Furthermore, the scheme continues the public realm, walking & cycling enhancements being undertaken along Victoria Avenue as a part of S-CATS phase 1 and London Road from phase 2.

- 3.2 The S-CATS Business Case was submitted to the South East LEP (SELEP) in January 2019 (Appendix 6) to unlock £4m from the Local Growth Fund to deliver S-CATS Phase 3 & 4.

S-CATS represents a major opportunity to support the continued growth and regeneration of the Southend Central Area. It is the delivery mechanism for the policies set out in the Southend Central Area Action Plan (SCAAP) Revised Proposed Submission Document that are aimed at strengthening and transforming the Town Centre sub-regional role as a successful commercial and retail destination, cultural hub, educational centre of excellence, leisure and tourism attraction – an excellent place to live, work and visit.

- 3.3. Two design options have been developed for London Road and Victoria Circus based on the SUNRISE Co-Creation process as well as the cabinet paper submitted on 15 March 2016 'Concept designs and Vision Statements' for the S-CATS scheme (**Appendix 2**).

In both options the key features of the proposed layouts include:

- Realignment of the carriageway to restrict vehicular movements through the stub-end of London Road to encourage pedestrian movement throughout the space.
- Redistribution of the taxi bays on London Road.
- New access restrictions onto the High Street from London Road to be controlled by CCTV and a rising bollard system.
- Realignment of the carriageway to include provisions for cycling.
- A new blanket access restriction onto the High Street.
- Reduction in speed limit from 30mph to 20mph.
- Sustainable Urban Drainage System along the footway.
- Improved street lighting.
- Block paving of footway, cycleway and parking bays.
- Improvements to landscaping including introduction of trees and planters.

These changes will require the reallocation of road space to provide a larger area for pedestrians and an improved street environment, while also maintaining essential access for delivery vehicles, taxis and cars.

- 3.4 Improved safety, access and mobility in the town centre area will encourage more walking and cycling, resulting in positive benefits for health and well-being, whilst also enabling a “shop local” culture, reinforcing the offer of the High Street.
- 3.5 Public realm and transport investment plays a key role in raising aspirations, the quality and growth potential of an area and is therefore at the core of this work. The scheme will invest £7m in improvements, which will support both Borough Council and private sector investments and development.

#### **4. Other Options**

- 4.1 SCAAP will guide development and regeneration within the Town Centre area and central seafront until 2021. The SCAAP Revised Proposed Submission Document sets out all known major potential development sites and the vision for them within the central area which includes the key sites identified for the Southend Central Area Transport Scheme.
- 4.2 This intervention will demonstrate a strong commitment to provide the infrastructure needed to support growth in the Town Centre. Whilst the development will be phased over the SCAAP period, it must be recognised that in order to encourage the investment and to revitalise the Town Centre, a clear funded route for infrastructure development must be put forward to support the SCAAP developments and further economic growth.
- 4.3 The third option would be to take no action. This makes no changes to the public space in which case this investment opportunity would be lost. Failing to deliver the preferred options from the S-CATS consultation would reduce the contribution to supporting local health and wellbeing and restrict accessibility and local mobility, and potentially undermine business confidence and investment within this area.
- 4.4 This scheme is a critical element of a wider improvement to support planned growth in Southend Central Area. Therefore, if the scheme is not progressed there will be a greater impact from un-planned growth, including reduced highway capacity, increasing congestion and a lack of access to sustainable transport choices.

#### **5. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 5.1 High quality public realm enhancements will create spaces within the Town Centre to attract more people to the area, encourage activities in the public spaces and revitalise the commercial areas.
- 5.2 Improved access to the High Street will encourage more walking and cycling to the town from surrounding areas.

- 5.3 Better streets and public spaces will bring greater civic pride to encourage investment and visitor numbers supporting the local economy.
- 5.4 To support the spatial planning activity identified in the SCAAP and other plans either prepared or being prepared by the Council's planning team.
- 5.5 To support and align with both of the previous S-CATS phases 1 & 2 to provide a welcoming Gateway to the Town Centre.

## 6. Corporate Implications

### 6.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities

- 6.1.1 The SCATS project is fully aligned to deliver the vision and corporate priorities of the Council, particularly in respect of supporting the SCAAP, 2050 and other plans either prepared by or under preparation by the Council's Planning Team.

### 6.2 Financial Implications

- 6.2.1 The SCATS has obtained funding of £7m from the South Essex Local Enterprise Partnership. The allocation is profiled across four years as set out below and is wholly grant funded. The allocation for 2017/18 was delivered through Phase 2- London Road improvement and support design work to enable the other scheme elements undertaken in 2017/18.

Financial Year	2016-2017	2017-2018	2020-2021	2020-2021
Local Growth Fund	£1m	£2m	£0.5m	£3.5m

### 6.3 Legal Implications

- 6.3.1 Any necessary Traffic Regulation Orders will be identified and follow the legal processes

### 6.4 People Implications

- 6.4.1 The scheme affects the lives of all those who live, work and visit the Town. The intention to improve accessibility, safety and improve the public realm are positive outcomes.

### 6.5 Property Implications

- 6.5.1 The schemes proposed will affect land for which the Council is the highways authority and will involve collaborative working with private landowners and local business, such as Sainsbury's.

### 6.6 Consultation

- 6.6.1 The consultation process for this work was based on the SUNRISE Co-Creation process which sought to engage and inform residents, businesses and key

stakeholders as to the design of the space and throughout the life of the project. A public survey was undertaken and the results from that survey can be found in Appendix 5

## 6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.7.1 Best practice will be adopted in the design proposals with the aim to improve accessibility for pedestrians, cyclist and the disabled which will be a major factor in the development of the scheme.

6.7.2 Different user groups have different needs and part of the development of the final design plans through stakeholder engagement has been full equality analysis.

## 6.8 Risk Assessment

6.8 Risks are reviewed throughout the life of the project and mitigation measures undertaken to reduce risks.

## 6.9 Value for Money

6.9.1 S-CATS Phases 3 & 4 – an additional £4m of funding has been obtained through the Southend East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP), refer to **Appendix 6** for more details.

## 6.10 Community Safety Implications

6.10.1 Understanding the community safety impacts and improving the quality of streets and public spaces provided in the Town Centre area is an essential part of this scheme.

## 6.11 Environmental Impact

6.11.1 This will be considered in the effective re-use of materials, sustainability of the supply chain, managing flood risk, low energy lighting systems and ensuring that corporate policies have been considered.

## 7. Background Papers

7.1 Southend Central Area Action Plan (SCAAP) Revised Proposed Submission Document:

[http://www.southend.gov.uk/info/200420/development\\_plan\\_documents/391/southend\\_central\\_area\\_action\\_plan\\_scaap](http://www.southend.gov.uk/info/200420/development_plan_documents/391/southend_central_area_action_plan_scaap)

## 8. Appendices

**Appendix 1:** Southend Central Area Transport Scheme (S-CATS) Phase 3 & 4 scheme extents.

**Appendix 2:** Southend Central Area Transport Scheme (S-CATS) Cabinet paper submitted on 15 march 2016.

**Appendix 3:** Southend Central Area Transport Scheme (S-CATS) Design Options.

**Appendix 4:** Southend Central Area Transport Scheme (S-CATS) Phase 3 & 4 scheme options matrix

**Appendix 5:** Southend Central Area Transport Scheme (S-CATS) SUNRISE Public Vote report

**Appendix 6:** Capital Project Business Case S-CATS – Phase 3 – Victoria and the Sub End of London Road