

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director for Neighbourhoods and
Environment
To
Cabinet

On
13 January 2022

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(Neighbourhoods & Environment)

Agenda
Item No.

Department for Transport (DfT) Tranche 2 - Active Travel Fund

Place Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet Member: Councillor Woodley
Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To seek Member approval to submit public consultation/survey results to the Department for Transport and thereby accept funding to continue the work to encourage active transport and implement of the Tranche 2 project.

1.2 This follows the cabinet approval of the construction of temporary interventions to create an environment that is safe for walking and cycling during the Covid-19 pandemic and the period directly after (Tranche 1). Previous approval of Tranche 1 enabled the drawdown of £309k of DfT funding, Tranche 2 funding allows another £741,600 of funding.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet agrees:

2.1 To endorse the bid awarded to Southend by the DfT on 20 November 2020 for Tranche 2 funding from the Active Travel Fund for the sum of £741,600; and

2.2 Following discussion at design review stage with the Transport Capital Inward Investment Working Party that delegated authority be given to the Portfolio Holder and Executive Director (Neighbourhoods and the Environment), to agree the final detailed design options based upon the outline designs submitted to the DfT for Tranche 2 funding.

3. Background

3.1 Funding was announced by the Secretary of State for Transport in May 2020 as part of the work to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. The grant funding supports local transport authorities with producing cycling and walking facilities. The funding is in two tranches:

- Tranche 1 - installation of temporary projects for the COVID-19 pandemic for this DfT awarded Southend a grant of £309,000.
- Tranche 2 - creation of permanent projects for this the DfT awarded £741,600 of grant funding to Southend.

3.2 The Council has taken the opportunity to submit bids that align with key policies and ambitions identified in the Southend Local Transport Plan 3 Strategy Document 2011-2026. This plan includes 23 policies of which Policies 1, 2, 5, 6, 10, 12, and 21 have been directly considered.

- **Policy 1:** Reduce congestion within the Borough
- **Policy 2:** Encourage and facilitate the use of sustainable modes and public transport for travel
- **Policy 5:** Ensure provision of sustainable transport services to support the regeneration of Shoeburyness and other new development in the Borough
- **Policy 6:** Ensure appropriate improvements in sustainable transport, accessibility and facilities to London Southend Airport
- **Policy 10:** Reduce carbon dioxide emissions from transport
- **Policy 12:** Maintain air quality
- **Policy 21:** Tackle health and inequalities by increasing the number of adults and children who walk and cycle for work, education and leisure

3.3 These projects also work towards Southend-on-Sea Borough Council's revised ambitions and objectives from Southend 2050. The 6 themes of Southend 2050 are:

- Pride and Joy
- Safe and Well
- Active and Involved
- Opportunity and Prosperity
- Connected and Smart
- Future Ways of Working

4. Southend's Tranche 2 Bid

4.1 Four schemes have been awarded funding by the DfT under Tranche 2 and these are:

4.2 Scheme 1: Holistic Network Wide Cycle Audit and Master Planning of A13 Active Travel Corridor

- There are a number of missing and unsuitable links across Southend's cycle network. A holistic network wide audit will be carried out to identify all barriers to active travel.
- Outputs from the audit will be collated to form an action and investment plan detailing locations for improvements along with intervention recommendations in-line with LTN 1/20.
- The A13 has been identified as a key strategic active transport corridor which through the re-allocation of highway space, barriers to cycling and walking can be removed. Alongside the cycle audit, a review of the existing highway layout of the A13 from highway boundary to highway boundary will also be undertaken and recommendations put forwards for consultation.
- Estimated scheme cost £200,000

4.3 Scheme 2: Prittlebrook Greenway Lighting and Connectivity Improvements

The Prittlebrook Greenway is strategic active travel link well used by pedestrians and cyclists owing to its close proximity to schools, residential and retail areas, parks and the hospital.

To increase the Greenway's availability of use in hours of darkness it is proposed that standalone solar powered LED street lighting be installed along its length.

The lighting system will increase the level of personal safety for users through illuminating the route for safe passage and also have the added benefit of deterring any anti-social behaviour which can be a further barrier to usability.

- Estimated scheme cost £225,000

4.4 Scheme Scheme 3: School Streets

Building on the work in Tranche 1, Southend Council will increase the number of School Streets across the Borough, targeting schools with relatively small catchment areas and high levels of children arriving to school by car. School Streets introduced under Tranche 1 were:

- Bournes Green Infant School
- Greenways
- Leigh North Street Primary School
- West Leigh Junior and Infant School

A further 6 schools have contacted us and expressed an interest in the scheme. The schools have been identified as meeting the criteria but did not confirm their support in time to be included in the Tranche 1. These schools will be contacted and included in Tranche 2.

These schools are:

- Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School and Nursery
- Eastwood Primary School and Nursery
- Prince Avenue School
- Porters Grange
- Earls Hall Primary
- Bournemouth Park Primary

- Total estimated scheme costs £75,600

4.5 Scheme 4: Cycling Improvements to the Public Realm

To compliment the walking and cycling proposals highlighted above a number of supportive measures will be installed, these measures will be:

• Secure cycle parking & Repair Stations

Additional secure cycle parking will be installed at key, convenient locations been along the network to allow users to store their bicycles and accommodate the increase in usage. The storage will be smart in design in that they will utilise green roofs and solar power where appropriate.

The secure cycle parking will build upon the initial measures installed within the High Street as part of the EU SUNRISE co-creation project. Consideration will also be given to storage of non-standard cycles and the needs of both commuting and reactional journeys and short and long stay parking.

The five locations identified include:

Priory Park Car Park, Shoebury Common North, Belton Bridge Car Park, Chalkwell Park (near toilets) and Southend Pier. Plans showing these locations are included in the appendices.

Repair stations, equipped with basic tools and a pump, will also be installed at the secure cycle parking locations to allow bike users to inflate tyres and make repairs.

• Electric Bike Charging Stations

To accommodate the increase in electric bike ownership we plan to install Electric Bike Charging Stations again at key, convenient locations many of which will be the same locations as the secure parking facilities

above. The stations will have a secure locking function to ensure bike security when left unattended.

Combined with existing schemes being delivered by the Forward Motion Access Funded project; an initiative to encourage people to think differently about the way they travel around south Essex. The goal is to reduce reliance on cars and get people to consider alternative travel options such as cycling, catching public transport or walking. Part of this project is to give access to affordable recycled bikes, cycle maintenance schemes and adult cycle training these interventions will increase cycling and walking access to these economic hubs.

These interventions linked with existing schemes and the Borough's emerging Local Plan form a longer-term ambition to develop low traffic neighbourhoods.

- Estimated scheme costs £241,000

5 Reasons for Recommendations

To provide active travel improvements that further encourage increased walking and cycling activity in the borough.

6 Corporate Implications

Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities – LTP 3 Policies and 2050 Vision.

7 Financial Implications

The estimated costs of these schemes are within the funding allocation provided by the DfT for the Active Travel Programme with no contribution required from the Council. However any project overspends will need to be met from Council resources and therefore the robust budget monitoring processes in place will review expenditure to ensure it remains in line with estimates.

8 Legal Implications

Traffic orders may be required depending on the outcome of Scheme 1.

9 People Implications

No people implications have been identified at this time.

10 Property Implications

There are no property implications

11 Consultation

A 6-week survey was conducted on the YourSay Southend online platform, to consult with those who work, reside and visit Southend on active travel options

in the Borough.

The consultation conclude that the public are in favour of introducing a more connected and active borough. Participants expressed a strong desire for the Council to introduce the right measures towards helping Southend-On-Sea to facilitate more active travel options, with an emphasis on cycling and walking.

The main concerns that have been thematic throughout the consultation has been crime or fear of crime, dangerous driving and pollution.

The proposals will address some of these concerns, but the Council will need to work with other departments or organisations (such as the Council's central communications department or Essex Police) in order to fully address all these worries. These issues have proven to be medium-level barriers to the public choosing more active methods of travelling in and around the borough.

Going forward, the Council must ensure to maintain a good level of communication with the public on these new schemes, including timeframes and full details on the capabilities and limitations of implementations.

The Council must also ensure transparency on current and future frameworks to better increase the likelihood of buy-in from the public.

Ward Councillors at each intervention location and the Portfolio Holder for Highways shadow will be consulted before construction is programmed.

12 Proposed Program

	Holistic Network Wide Cycle Audit	Lighting Along Prittlebrook Greenway	School Streets	Cycle Parking
Feasibility Options Selected	01/02/21	01/02/21	01/02/21	01/02/21
Public Consultation	23/08/21	23/08/21	23/08/21	23/08/21
Preliminary Scheme Design	End Jan 22	End Jan 22	End Jan 22	End Jan 22
Detailed Scheme Design	End Feb 22	End Feb 22	End Feb 22	End March 22
Scheme Construction	March 22	April – July22	March 22	April – July22

13 Equalities and Diversity Implications

There are no Equality and Diversity Issues.

14 Risk Assessment

Road Safety Audits will be carried out as required.

15 Value for Money

No issues identified at this time.

16 Community Safety Implications

No community safety implications have been identified at this time.

17 Environmental Impact

There is a positive environmental impact of enabling more walking and cycling, green roofs on cycle parking structures and solar powered lighting.

18 Background Papers

There are no background papers.

19 Appendices

Department for Transport Tranche 2 Survey Results / Analysis

Kight Ltd – Brochure for KV2 off grid lighting

Proposed Cycle parking locations