

CABINET

Cycling - Future actions following Cycling Demonstration Town Project.

26th July 2011

Report of Head of Regeneration and Policy

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To accept the offer of funding for Links to Schools offered by Sustrans.
2. To update members on current initiatives relating to cycling.
3. To delegate the Service Head to agree partnership working with the County Council on cycling schemes.
4. To approve the use of Public Realm revenue budget to support Sustrans Bike it Officer.
5. That the General Fund Revenue and Capital Budgets be updated accordingly.

Key Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Non-Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Referral from Cabinet Member	<input type="checkbox"/>
Date Included in Forward Plan	27/6/2011				
This report is public					

RECOMMENDATIONS OF COUNCILLOR Janice Hanson

- (1) Members are asked to accept the Memorandum of Understanding with Sustrans which allocates £136,000 funding for cycling links to schools at Westgate and Heysham, in combination with the Section 106 contribution from the Globe Arena, and authorise officers to undertake a procurement process for these works.
- (2) Members are asked to note Lancaster City Councils participation in a thematic bid for the Department for Transport's Local Sustainable Transport Fund in partnership with Sustrans and 36 Local Authorities and endorse officers pursuing this initiative if the bid reaches the second stage when a business plan will be required.
- (3) That the Head of Regeneration and Policy be given delegated authority to agree works in partnership with Lancashire County Council to deliver cycling schemes, subject to there being no additional call on City Council Resources.
- (4) Members are asked to approve the use of Public Realm revenue

budget to support the continuation of the “Bike It Officer” employed by Sustrans.

- (5) That the General Fund Revenue and Capital Budgets be updated accordingly.**

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Lancaster City Council has over the last six years successfully completed the Cycling Demonstration Town (CDT) project. Funding for this scheme amounting to £6m, split 50/50 between Cycling England and other match funding streams finished in March. Lancaster was one of the six original CDT's and the scheme has brought many benefits throughout the Lancaster District as well as promoting the City Council on a national level. The scheme has been successful in providing much improved infrastructure and promotion of cycling, resulting in substantial increases in the number of people cycling in the district. The introduction of cycling on Morecambe and Heysham promenade won a prestigious national highways award and the recently opened Way of the Roses Route from Morecambe to Bridlington is creating a great deal of interest. Morecambe Visitor Centre has seen a great number of enquiries for cycle friendly accommodation as well as good sales of the official route map.

1.2 Unfortunately funding ended in March but we have been made aware of funding opportunities to continue working on cycling improvements and promotion, particularly around education. This report gives details of these proposals to continue to progress the promotion of cycling as a healthy, economic and environmentally friendly means of transport as well as the context of the work in relation to the Environmental Management team.

1.3 Four initiatives are progressing;

Links to Schools - This has reached the stage of a firm offer of funding from Sustrans

Local Sustainable Transport Funding (LSTF) Bid – This is under consideration by the Department for Transport.

Partnership Working - Discussions are taking place with Lancashire County Council about cooperative working on cycling schemes.

Bike It Officer - An offer has been made by Sustrans to continue support for the Bike It Officer working with local schools, subject to financial support.

The Bike It project has been one of the main contributory factors to the success of the Cycling Demonstration Town project. The Bike It officers work in up to 12 selected schools throughout the school year to promote and encourage cycling to and from the school, by both staff and pupils, by delivering skills and maintenance training, carrying out events and activities and occasional financial support through grants for such things as secure cycle parking.

A CDT end of project report is attached for information as Appendix 1.

1.4 The engineering team within Environmental Management has consistently delivered a wide range of capital schemes with both internal and external funding with the greater majority being external. Its capital work has principally been to deliver the improvements to the coastal defences at Morecambe but it has been responsible for the majority of public realm infrastructure projects undertaken by the council. Since the withdrawal of the Lancashire County Highway Agency in 2006 the team has delivered over £20m of capital schemes which have earned substantial fees annually which help to offset its costs. Capital funding is obviously limited at the moment but a great deal of work is still required to maintain the protection against flooding that the coastal defences provide and is essential to the economic welfare of the district. Bids are currently being made for national funding for the Wave Reflection Wall replacement totalling £9m as well as other flood alleviation projects. These bids are being made under new rules which came out early June and there is no certainty of how these bids will be dealt with under the current economic climate. In times when funding for its primary role is delayed the team has always diversified and these cycling initiatives are another opportunity to bring in some external funding which requires a small commitment from the council.

The team is also currently engaged in delivering the Lancaster Square Routes project and a number of public realm schemes funded through section 106 planning gain. Any additional works referred to in this report will not adversely affect delivery of the ongoing projects.

2.0 Proposal Details

2.1 Funding from Sustrans for links to Schools

Lancaster City Council was given the opportunity by Sustrans to submit a bid for their 2011-12 Links to Schools and Communities Programme.

The bid was made on the understanding that match funding would be provided as indicated below: -

Total Scheme Cost	£230,000
Match funding allocated from:	
S106 Developer Contribution (Morecambe Football Club)	£69,000
Lancaster City Council Public Realm R&M budget	£10,000
Lancaster City Council Staff Time	£10,000
Heysham High land valuation	£5,000
Total matched funding	94,000
Sustrans Funding	£136,000

*the scheme estimate includes fees of £20,000

There are three elements of work includes in the bid: -

- Reconstruction and conversion of the footway on the northern side of Westgate to shared use between, Regent Rd and Langridge Way

(incorporating the already proposed S106 works associated with the Globe Arena).

- Widening of the existing footpath at the back of Heysham High to 3 metres surfaced width (4m between boundaries) to enable joint use by cyclists and pedestrians and erection of new fencing.
- Sign an inland cycle route between Heysham and Morecambe Town Centre and the Greenway (NCN 69) to Lancaster using quiet traffic calmed roads and the proposed link at the back of Heysham High School.

Work to carry out the cycling improvements under the section 106 agreement from the Globe Arena is already programmed so the additional work can easily be added to that contract requiring very little extra resource.

It is anticipated that the scheme should lead to the doubling of cycle use to Heysham High and a substantial increase to Westgate Primary School. The scheme should increase awareness of cycling at the High School and provide safer routes to its catchment areas to the north and east of the railway, whilst it links the Primary School to the western part of its catchment area.

It is hoped that the scheme would also lead to more children cycling to other primary schools in the area for example Sandylands, West End and Mossgate.

There is a noticeable increase in children cycling on the promenade in Heysham and Morecambe, often unaccompanied from a surprisingly young age which suggests there is opportunity to increase cycling to school in the area. The Westgate area, which is served by the Lancaster – Morecambe Greenway has one of the highest cycling levels in Lancashire.

2.2 Local Sustainable Transport Fund

Lancaster City Council was requested by Sustrans to join a thematic bid based around education to the Department for Transport's Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF). The government have set aside £560m for this project nationally. Lancaster City Council is not a Transport/Highway Authority and is not therefore eligible to bid on an individual basis. However the bidding process did emphasise the benefits of partnership working and Sustrans approached the City Council to join a partnership bid with Devon County Council who were looking for a substantial number of other authorities to join a consortium. This acknowledges the City Councils successful contribution to promoting cycling growth in the region.

Our bid is a mixture of revenue and capital funding. It includes support for staff costs to continue the work that has taken place throughout the CDT in supporting school cycle initiatives (Bike It) and to extend this to further and higher education establishments. On the capital side there were sums to improve cycle links to schools and other education establishments, provide cycle parking and other small scale improvements.

The total funding requested for Lancaster City Council is £288,545 revenue and £195,000 capital over the three year funding period starting July 2012.

The bid as submitted has so far been successful and we will find out in July/August if it has received first stage approval. The consortium included 36 local authorities alongside Devon and Sustrans, a copy of the bid is attached as Appendix 2.

If successful then further details will need to be worked up for a final submission and details reported as appropriate.

2.3 Partnership Working with Lancashire County Council

Throughout the Cycling Demonstration Town (CDT) project the City Council has received elements of funding from County to assist with delivery of cycling infrastructure schemes within the district. Discussions are underway with the County to determine whether one or more of the cycling initiatives County have budgeted for in their programme for Lancaster could be delivered by the City Council. Any scheme undertaken would come with an agreed fee from the County Council for implementation.

2.4 Support for the Continuation of the Bike it Officer

Throughout the Cycling Demonstration Town (CDT) project we have hosted and supported a "Bike it" officer employed by Sustrans. The officer works with 12 schools per year and has been successful in increasing rates of cycling to school through a range of practical measures. These have included bike breakfasts, cycle skills and learn to Cycle sessions, assistance with getting cycle storage, Dr Bike, maintenance classes, bike rides and organising Bikeability. Financial support is no longer available through the CDT project. Sustrans have offered to fund this post for the remainder of the current financial year 2011-2012 at a cost of £33k subject to a contribution of funding from the City Council for the period from April 2012 to July 2012 amounting to £16.7k. The purpose of this expenditure is to retain the existing expertise to implement the revenue side of a successful bid under the LSTF bid in 2.2. The Bike it officers (job share) whom this funding would support do have involvement with some schools in ensuring that they get Bikeability training. An Individual Cabinet Member Report on funding for Bikeability Training offered from the Department for Transport has been recently approved. During the six years of the CDT this was delivered by officers employed specifically for that project within Regeneration and Policy. As they are no longer available and there was a synergy with the cycle training work already carried about by Wellbeing it was agreed between the Services that they were best placed to take advantage of that funding offer. A successful bid under the LSTF will not change that position.

3.0 Details of Consultation

Consultations so far have been limited to informal discussions with colleagues within the City and County Councils, Officers from Sustrans including the current Bike It Officers and representatives of some of the schools.

4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

4.1 Funding from Sustrans for links to Schools

	Option 1: That the grant offer be accepted and approval given for a procurement process for this works in combination with the Section 106 funds from the Globe Arena.	Option 2: Not to accept the offer of the funding.	Option 3: None
Advantages	Increased amenities for cycling to schools. Builds on the skills and infrastructure developed in delivering the CDT project.	None	
Disadvantages	None	This would miss the opportunity to encourage more sustainable travel options for school pupils and staff as well as other members of the community.	
Risks	There is a small element of risk that costs could exceed the budget but robust estimates have been used for the bid and additional funding from our revenue budget would be available.	Reputational risk that the Lancaster City Council is not taking opportunities to promote sustainable transport measures	

4.2 Local Sustainable Transport Fund

	Option 1: That the council note the bid in consortium with Sustrans , Devon County Council and	Option 2: That the council do not take forward this bidding process.	Option 3: None

	36 other local authorities and authorise officers to work up the bid if successful in the first round and report further details when available.		
Advantages	Further funding to promote cycling	None	
Disadvantages	None	Missed opportunity for funding to promote sustainable transport within the district	
Risks	None	Without continued funding the infrastructure and initiatives already in place from the CDT Project could go into decline and suffer	

4.3 Partnership working with The County Council

	Option 1: That the Head of Regeneration & Policy be given delegated authority to agree partnership work with the County Council to deliver cycling schemes, subject to there being no additional call on City Council budgets	Option 2: Do not work in partnership with the County.	Option 3: None
Advantages	Builds on existing partnering experience and provides fee income for work.	None	
Disadvantages	None	Missed opportunity for funded partnership working and loss of fee income for staff time	
Risks	None	Reputational	

4.4 Support for the Continuation of the Bike it Officer

	Option 1: That the Council continue to work in partnership with Sustrans and support the Bike it Officer with £16.7k from Public Realm revenue budget.	Option 2: Do not offer this support	Option 3: None
Advantages	Builds on existing partnering and continues valuable work to encourage school pupils to cycle safely and responsibly. Supports other proposed works (Links to Schools at Westgate & Heysham)	None	
Disadvantages	Commits City Council revenue budget	Local schools will lose the resource to encourage their pupils to use bicycles safely and responsibly	
Risks	None	Reputational	

5.0 Conclusion

Sustainable methods of transport such as cycling are increasingly important for health, environmental and wider economic reasons. All of these initiatives improve the provision and encourage the use of cycling as a means of transport. In addition, as they are mainly aimed at educational establishments, they help to establish a healthy culture in young people which hopefully will last throughout their lives.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

Corporate Plan Priorities - Partnership Working (Lancashire County Council and Lancaster District Children's Trust) and Climate Change and Sustainable Community Strategy priorities - Promote and enhance sustainable forms of transport and provide positive activities for children and young people.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

Positive impacts upon Community Safety (road safety) and Sustainability (travel modes)

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Legal Services have been consulted and have no comments to make on this report

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Links to Schools – 2011/2012

It is the intention that this project will be delivered without any additional impact on City Council resources.

If approved, the Sustrans monies would be claimed quarterly in arrears. The s106 contribution from Morecambe FC has already been paid over to the City Council and is currently held in the other commuted sums reserve.

The General Fund Capital Programme will need to be updated in 2011/12, including the £10k contribution from the Public Realm R&M Revenue budget which covers maintenance on areas such as the River Lune Millennium Park, TERN and Cycle Tracks across the district.

A carry forward request is included as part of the Out-turn Report elsewhere on the agenda.

These areas have deteriorated at a much slower rate than anticipated and have, to date, required only a minimal amount of repair. A carry forwards request is to be submitted for the resulting under spend in 2010/11 to be brought forwards. This would further enable £10k to be taken from the revenue budget in 2011/12 to contribute to the Links to Schools project without hindering the maintenance works that need to be carried out this financial year, or creating an overspend within the Public Realm budgets.

It is felt that this project can be carried out using existing staff resources. However, if workloads do increase during the year, there is currently a vacant post budgeted for within the Engineers Team which could be filled, if required.

In terms of ongoing maintenance it is the intention that these cycle tracks (along with all the cycle tracks across the Lancaster and Morecambe area) will eventually be adopted by County who will then assume responsibility for their maintenance. To date the infrastructure created by the main Cycling Demonstration Town (CDT) project has lasted well and required very little repair, therefore it is anticipated that until adoption is agreed, ongoing maintenance can be met from within existing budgets.

Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) – 2012/13 to 2014/15

At this stage there are no implications for the City Council in submitting this bid in partnership with Devon County Council.

If the business plan is successful and the full £483.5k is accepted (£195k Capital, £288.5k Revenue) it is the intention that the revenue element of the project will be delivered by Sustrans through their Bike It Officers. It is thought that the capital element of the project can be delivered by the City Council with existing staff resources and, as mentioned previously, there is a vacant post within the engineers team that can be filled if workloads become unmanageable.

As a condition of the grant offer, the City Council is required to find match funding in the form of a local contribution towards the overall costs of the measures put forwards in the bid. An exact amount or % isn't specified but the higher the contribution, the higher the chance of a successful bid. To date the City Council has identified £360k in eligible match funding over

the three years the project is to run. The majority of which is 'in kind' contributions such as staff time, accommodation and existing R&M maintenance budgets. An assumption has been made about planning gain (s.106) income based on previous years' income which may not materialise. In this instance officers may need to find alternative sources of match funding or the chances of a successful bid could be reduced.

Partnership Working with County Council – 2011/12

A meeting is due to take place in the next few weeks between officers at the City Council and County Council. Until this takes place the precise details of how this arrangement will operate are unknown in terms of the type and location works to be carried out, funding and ongoing maintenance.

Under the main CDT project County Council paid an amount over to the City Council each year to carry out specific works and cover staff time. It is anticipated that the proposed partnership working will be on a similar basis and that there will be no additional impact on City Council resources. If, during the discussions with County, the City Council is asked to make a contribution to any works, officers will need to report back on the full implications and request approval to proceed.

Bike it Officer 2012/13

The Bike It Officer is employed by Sustrans who have sufficient funding to cover this post for the 2011/12 financial year. It is the intention that in 2012/13 the LSTF will finance the post but this scheme only commences from July 2012. Sustrans have therefore asked for a contribution of £16.7k from the City Council to fund this post between April 12 to July 12.

As mentioned above, there has already been a request for £10k to be taken from the Public Realm R&M budget in 2011/12 to support the links to schools project with Sustrans and it is the intention that the £16.7k funding for the Bike it Officer post, if approved, will also be taken from here in 2012/13. Based on previous years this shouldn't compromise planned maintenance works for that financial year but it is felt that if the carry forwards request from 2010/11 were approved, these additional funds would allow for any unexpected or emergency works that may suddenly arise.

The role of the Bike It Officer has supported the capital works throughout the CDT project by providing training and encouraging increased use of the cycleway in the district. With the proposed works to the Westgate and Heysham High areas in 2011/12 the role would add value to the project and, if the LSTF bid proves to be successful, would continue to support the works carried out over the three year project.

If the LSTF bid proves to be unsuccessful, officers may need to reconsider whether allocating the £16.7k towards this post is still appropriate.

A carry forward request is included as part of the Out-turn Report elsewhere on the agenda.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Human Resources:

None

Information Services:

None

Property:

None

Open Spaces:

None

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The proposals will involve staff time and could potentially require a currently vacant post to be filled. It therefore follows that these proposals could reduce the scope for making budgetary savings in this area, at least for the duration of the project – meaning that budget savings will be need from other areas. Cabinet is therefore advised to take these points into consideration when reaching a decision. With these points in mind, it is advisable to have clear decision-making arrangements in place to address any need for filling the currently vacant post.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 CDT End of Project Report.

Appendix 2 LSTF Thematic Bid.

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