

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Infrastructure
DATE	27 th August 2015
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	External Funding for Transportation Projects
REPORT NUMBER	CHI/15/228
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of a series of external funding opportunities available to the Council for transport projects and to seek approval for the expenditure of any funds successfully obtained for the purposes described in this report.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that Members:

- a) Authorise £20,000 of developer contributions for Mosside to be used to add value to an existing Smarter Choices Smarter Places project looking to improve pedestrian waymarking on Kincorth and Tullos Hills;
- b) Instruct officers to report back to Committee in due course with active and sustainable travel proposals for the remaining Mosside developer contribution, taking into account the range and location of development activity, existing and emerging opportunities within the area and gaps in the current active and sustainable travel infrastructure;
- c) Approve the expenditure of an additional £70,000 awarded to the Council from Sustrans Scotland's Community Links Fund 2015/16 to add value to the development of an A90 north cycle route along Ellon Road and the Parkway;
- d) To note the condition attached to the Sustrans Funding Agreement for 2015/16 - that any savings from the Council's Non-Housing Capital Programme should be reinvested into other active travel projects around the City – and refer this to the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee for information;
- e) Approve the initial projects listed in this report as a starting point for discussion with Sustrans over the use of the savings on the Third Don Crossing scheme and report back to Committee with a full programme of works alongside the Active Travel Action Plan;

- f) Approve the expenditure of any funds successfully obtained from Cycling Scotland's Bikeability Support Plus Fund 2015/16 for the purposes described within this report; and
- g) Approve the expenditure of any funds successfully obtained from the Scottish Government's Rollout of Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Project Across Scotland project for the purposes described within this report.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no additional financial implications for Council budgets associated with these external funding streams other than those that have already been agreed and perhaps future maintenance budgets.

The £20,000 recommended for expenditure from the Mossie developer contributions (an external source of funds) will be match-funded with funds already successfully obtained by Aberdeen City Council from the Scottish Government's Smarter Choices Smarter Places Fund to deliver an enhanced project. There will therefore be no impact on Aberdeen City Council's own budgets.

The additional £70,000 awarded to the Council by Sustrans Scotland is external funding but requires 50% match-funding. The Council has received confirmation that Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route Non Motorised Users Off-Set Mitigation money, which has already been awarded to the Council and which Members approved expenditure of at the last meeting of this Committee, can be used as match-funding. There will therefore be no impact on Aberdeen City Council's own budgets resulting from the works.

The Sustrans Funding Agreement for the £1,036,668 awarded in 2015/16 has a condition that requests that Aberdeen City Council reinvest the money allocated to the Third Don Crossing project prior to the confirmation of the Community Links funding (£480,000) back into active travel within Aberdeen. This means that there will be no realised savings for delivering active travel infrastructure from the Third Don Crossing project. However the Council will benefit from £480,000 worth of additional expenditure into active travel delivery for expenditure between 2015 and 2018 which will be eligible for future match-funding from Sustrans and other organisations.

The risk to the Council of rejecting the terms of the funding agreement (and therefore rejecting the £480,000 grant offer for 2015/16) would be to jeopardise any further funding application to the Community Links Fund, a programme currently worth over £21m, and to which the Council has benefitted from over £1,000,000 this financial year (2015/16) alone.

There is no identified maintenance budget associated with these path works therefore there is a risk that such infrastructure impacts on maintenance budgets in the future. This will be mitigated, however, by

high-quality design and the use of durable materials to minimise the likelihood of damage and erosion.

Cycling Scotland's Bikeability Support Plus Fund is 100% grant funding, although applications are looked on more favourably when the local authority is able to contribute a proportion of match-funding. Aberdeen City Council will do so via the allocation already made to Bikeability support in the 2015/16 Bus Lane Enforcement (BLE) programme.

Electric vehicle infrastructure grants are 100% funding for the capital outlay, although will incur ongoing revenue costs to the Council in the maintenance and upkeep of units. An allocation has been made for such purposes in the 2015/16 BLE programme, approved by this Committee at its meeting in May, although there will continue to be financial implications in future years.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 **Mossie Developer Contributions**

5.1.1 Aberdeen City Council is in receipt of £176,720 towards sustainable transport measures on the A90/A956 corridors to offset the adverse impacts of development traffic associated with housing development at Mossie in Cove. Any proposals for expenditure of this sum must be directly relevant to the development and will include consideration of walking, cycling and public transport improvements, linking the development to key destinations such as employment areas, schools and recreational facilities. With a significant amount of development ongoing in the area there is a necessity to take into account the range and location of other development activity and improvements to ensure no duplication, any existing and emerging opportunities within the area, and gaps in the current active and sustainable travel infrastructure before developing a detailed programme.

5.1.2 One project would however benefit immediately from funding: officers have already secured £10,000 from the Scottish Government's Smarter Choices Smarter Places (SCSP) fund for waymarking and interpretation board improvements linking to, and around, Kincorth Hill and Tullos Hill. Further funding of £20,000 would enable a more substantive project to be developed with added value by means of Quick Response (QR) codes on signs and the development of a smart phone/tablet app, providing additional information to pedestrians. This will be a pilot project which, if successful, could be rolled out to further locations throughout the city to encourage and promote an increase in walking in communities.

5.1.3 It is therefore recommended that members:

- a) Authorise £20,000 of the Mosside developer contribution to be used to add value to the existing SCSP funding; and
- b) Instruct officers to report to Committee in due course with active and sustainable travel proposals for the remaining developer contribution, taking into account the range and location of other development activity and improvements, existing and emerging opportunities within the area and gaps in the current active and sustainable travel infrastructure.

5.2 Sustrans Scotland Community Links Fund – Contribution to A90 Trunk Road Cycle Route (Ellon Road and the Parkway)

5.2.1 As reported to this Committee in May, Aberdeen City Council was awarded £177,500 from Sustrans Scotland's Community Links Fund 2015/16 for implementation of a second phase of Ellon Road cycle links and £155,000 for implementation of the first phase of a pedestrian and cycle route along the Parkway (A90). In both cases, 50% match-funding was awarded, with the remainder of the costs provided by the Nestrans Capital Programme 2015/16.

5.2.2 Following discussions with Transport Scotland, the trunk road authority responsible for the A90, it has transpired that a section of the Parkway Phase 1 (Balgownie Road to Fairview Street) is currently undeliverable due to the significant earthworks and resolution of land ownership issues that would be required to install a path of an appropriate standard.

5.2.3 Officers have therefore proposed that, due to the progress made with the design of Phase 2 of the Parkway route (Ellon Road to Scotstown Road), the extents of the project are shifted and focussed on the implementation of Phase 2. This would incur no change in cost. In doing this, the opportunity also arises to combine implementation of the Parkway and Ellon Road projects into a single scheme and to progress the scheme as the A90 Trunk Road Cycle Route. This in turn allows the Council to use Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route Non-Motorised Users Offset Mitigation Funds (already awarded to the Council and earmarked for pedestrian and cycle improvements to Ellon Road south of Murcar) as match-funding to attract an additional £70,000 in funding from Sustrans Scotland.

5.2.4 This will allow the implementation this financial year of a shared use pedestrian and cycle path along the southern side of the Parkway between Ellon Road and Balgownie Road, resulting in an additional 700m of cycle route and enabling connections to be made to surrounding communities and industrial estates.

5.2.5 It is therefore recommended that Members approve the expenditure of an additional £70,000 awarded by Sustrans Scotland for pedestrian and cycle improvements to the A90.

5.3 Sustrans Scotland Community Links Fund – Contribution to Third Don Crossing Cycle Facilities

- 5.3.1 At the May meeting of this Committee it was reported that the Council had been successful in attracting £480,000 from Sustrans Scotland's Community Links Fund 2015/16 for match-funding the implementation of cycle facilities as part of the Third Don Crossing construction.
- 5.3.2 Sustrans has now submitted a draft Funding Agreement to Aberdeen City Council which states: *Discussions with the review panel and Transport Scotland around the Third Don Crossing have resulted in the requirement for the applicant to enhance the scheme further through the utilisation of the money allocated to the project prior to the confirmation of the Community Links funding. The inclusion of additional connections and links (to the north and south of the river) should be looked at as part of this scheme and any other active travel projects across the city that could benefit from further funding.*
- 5.3.3 Initial discussions with Sustrans have indicated that they would wish to see a programme developed within 2015/16 linked to the development of the Active Travel Action Plan which is currently being developed by Council officers. Any projects within this programme should be delivered between 2015 and 2018 and to the same standard as other infrastructure being developed by the Council and Sustrans in Aberdeen. The projects will also be eligible for further 50% match funding in future years.
- 5.3.4 Officers have considered the request and in the spirit of compliance, until directed otherwise, have initially considered additional projects around the Third Don Crossing that could potentially benefit from further funding this financial year while contractors are in the near vicinity for delivery of related projects. These include:
- Improvement of core paths on the south side of the river linking to the Third Don Crossing. The cost of these works is estimated to be in the region of £170,000. Negotiations with Sustrans will require to be undertaken as some of the paths are not to standard.
 - Improvement of core paths on the north side of the river. The cost of these works is estimated to be in the region of £250,000.
 - Links to the 2015/16 A90 Trunk Road Cycle Route. The cost of these works is estimated to be in the region of £25,000.
 - Design work for missing links estimated to cost in the region of £25,000.

All of the above projects will be delivered subject to availability of staff resources and will only be progressed if existing programmes are completed.

- 5.3.5 It is recommended that Members:
- a. Note the condition attached to the Sustrans Funding Agreement for 2015/16 - that any savings from the Council's Non-Housing Capital Programme should be reinvested into other active travel projects around the City - and refer this to the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee for information; and

- b. Approve the initial projects listed in this report as a starting point for discussion with Sustrans over the use of the savings on the Third Don Crossing scheme and report back to Committee with a full programme of works alongside the Active Travel Action Plan.

5.4 Bikeability Support Plus Fund 2015/16

- 5.4.1 An application for £20,000 has been submitted to Cycling Scotland's Bikeability Support Plus Fund 2015/16 by Adventure Aberdeen to enable continued support for Bikeability delivery to primary school pupils in the City.
- 5.4.2 Complementing the allocation made to Bikeability from this year's BLE fund, Cycling Scotland funds will be used for volunteer recruitment and engagement, training and mentoring of volunteers, maintenance of the bicycle fleet and additional training resources.
- 5.4.3 It is therefore recommended that Members approve expenditure of any funds successfully obtained from Cycling Scotland's Bikeability Support Plus Fund 2015/16.

5.5 Rollout of Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Project Across Scotland

- 5.5.1 The Scottish Government has indicated that approximately £51,000 may be available to Aberdeen City Council for electric vehicle charging infrastructure as part of the "Rollout of Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Project Across Scotland". The exact value of the award has yet to be confirmed but this is expected imminently. It is anticipated that the funds will be used to install a rapid triple charger and a 22kw double fast charger at a location still to be confirmed. Implementation of these facilities will be fully covered by the grant, with no additional expenditure required from the Council.
- 5.5.2 It is therefore recommended that Members approve the expenditure of any funds successfully obtained from the Scottish Government's Rollout of Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Project Across Scotland project for the purposes described above.

6. IMPACT

The contents of this report link to the Community Plan vision of creating a *sustainable City with an integrated transport system that is accessible to all.*

All of the projects referred to in this report will contribute to delivery of the Smarter Mobility aims of Aberdeen – *The Smarter City: We will develop, maintain and promote road, rail, ferry and air links from the city to the UK and the rest of the world. We will encourage cycling and walking, and We will provide and promote a sustainable transport system, including cycling, which reduces our carbon emissions.*

The projects identified in this report will assist in the delivery of actions identified in the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) 2013, in particular the Thematic Priority of Safer Communities (Safer Roads) and the Multi-lateral Priority – Integrated Transport (Aberdeen is easy to access and move around in).

This report may be of interest to members of the public as it concerns various transport schemes taking place throughout the City which have the potential to affect all members of the travelling public.

An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) has not been undertaken as the projects listed in this report flow from the Regional Transport Strategy and the existing and emerging Local Transport Strategies, all of which have been, or will be, subject to their own EHRIAs.

A Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) has not been undertaken as implementation of the projects outlined in this report should not impact on the privacy of any individual.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Proposed footway and cycleway improvements and extensions of the Council's electric vehicle charging network have no identified maintenance budget of their own (other than an allocation from the 2015/16 Bus Lane Enforcement fund for electric vehicle infrastructure maintenance) and could impact on the Council's maintenance budgets in the future. This represents a potential Hazard and Financial Risk to the Council. This will be minimised by the use of high-quality design and installation materials which should ensure longevity of infrastructure. The risks of inaction (not improving active and sustainable transport infrastructure) are also significant in terms of a poor quality environment, poor reputation for the City of Aberdeen and a decline in active travel which would have significant implications for the health and wellbeing of the citizens of Aberdeen (Opportunity, Environmental and Customer/Citizen Risks).

The Sustrans Funding Agreement has a condition that Aberdeen City Council commit to reinvest the money allocated to delivery of the cycle infrastructure of the Third Don Crossing project, prior to the confirmation of the Community Links funding back into active travel within Aberdeen. This amounts to approximately £480,000 from the Non-Housing Capital Programme allocation for the Third Don Crossing. Sustrans have indicated that if Aberdeen City Council do not agree to this condition that this will seriously jeopardise any future match funding. For last year (2014/15) match funding from Sustrans was £492,500. For 2015/16 it is £1,036,668.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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