

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Infrastructure
DATE	27 th October 2015
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	External Funding for Transport Projects
REPORT NUMBER	CHI/15/279
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of external funding opportunities currently available to the Council for transport projects and to seek approval for the expenditure of any funds so obtained.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that Members:

- a) Approve the expenditure of any funds successfully obtained from Sustrans Scotland's School Cycle and Scooter Parking Grant Fund 2015/16 for the purposes described in this report; and
- b) Approve the expenditure of approximately £50,000 available to Aberdeen City Council arising from the regional Cycling Development Officer post, including £20,000 for the implementation of permanent automatic cycle counters in various locations in Aberdeen.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Projects successfully funded through Sustrans Scotland's School Cycle and Scooter Parking Grant Fund 2015/16 require 50% match funding. This will be supplied via the Council's Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets (CWSS) allocation from the Scottish Government. There will be no impact on other Council budgets. Responsibility for the upkeep of the infrastructure will fall to individual schools.

The cost of the implementation of cycle counters with the Cycling Development Officer fund will be fully met by that fund. It is anticipated that a 3-5 year maintenance and warranty agreement will be obtained

from the supplier for any units installed. At the end of this period, maintenance costs for the upkeep and repair of these units will fall to Aberdeen City Council. There will therefore be ongoing revenue costs associated with each unit installed, in the region of £350 per unit per year, for which no budget has yet been identified.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 Sustrans Scotland's School Cycle and Scooter Parking Grant Fund 2015/16

5.1.1 In July 2015, Sustrans Scotland announced that 50% match funding was available to local authorities for the installation of cycle and scooter parking facilities in schools and there are a number of schools in Aberdeen looking to take advantage of this opportunity. With the approval of the Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure, applications for the following were therefore submitted:

- £2,500 for the installation of a cycle shelter and combined cycle and scooter shelter at Westpark School, to accommodate up to 14 bicycles and 10 scooters;
- £1,400 for the installation of a cycle shelter at Holy Family RC School to cover the existing cycle racks;
- £400 for the installation of a double-sided scooter rack at Bramble Brae School, able to accommodate up to 20 scooters;
- £1,800 for the installation of a 20-cycle shelter at Woodside School;
- £1,500 for the installation of a 10-cycle shelter and 2 scooter racks with a combined capacity of 20 scooters at Fernielea School;
- £700 for the installation of 6 cycle stands and 2 scooter racks (able to accommodate 12 bicycles and 20 scooters) at Dyce Primary School; and
- £1,900 for the installation of a 10-cycle shelter at Cults Primary School.

Total - £10,100

The remainder of the funding will be provided from the Council's Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets (CWSS) allocation from the Scottish Government.

5.1.2 Applications were submitted at the end of September with successful applicants due to be announced in October. It is anticipated that successful projects can be implemented by the end of the financial year.

5.1.3 It is therefore recommended that Members approve the expenditure of any funds successfully obtained from Sustrans Scotland's School Cycle and Scooter Parking Grant Fund 2015/16 for the purposes described above.

5.2 Nestrans Cycling Development Officer Fund

5.2.1 In September 2014, a regional Cycling Development Officer was appointed to support Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils in developing the role of cycling in the North East of Scotland. The post is match-funded by Nestrans, the regional transport partnership, and the sustainable transport charity Sustrans, with the appointed officer working closely with Council officers from the Nestrans office.

5.2.2 As part of the agreement between Nestrans and Sustrans, the Cycling Development Officer post comes with an annual budget of £100,000 to be split between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils. This money is available to add value to any current cycling projects the respective Councils are engaged in. The Cycling Development Officer therefore has approximately £50,000 available for Aberdeen City Council to spend on relevant projects.

5.2.3 Council officers propose utilising a portion of this fund to install a suite of automatic cycle counters throughout the City, which will allow cycling levels on key corridors to be monitored. Possession of this information will then enable officers to identify the impact of various interventions on levels of cycling, thus allowing future spend to be targeted more efficiently and effectively. The Cycling Development Officer has stated that £20,000 can be made available from the budget for the implementation of cycle counters.

5.2.4 Preliminary investigations suggest the cost per site of implementing an automatic cycle counter is £4,000. This includes the cost of the unit, its installation, a maintenance and warranty agreement, as well as the capability to access the count information when required, including in real time. It is likely therefore that the Cycling Development Officer budget will cover the cost of 5 units, although this may increase with economies of scale.

5.2.5 The Council has a prioritised list of locations where cycle counters would be beneficial and/or desirable and it is recommended that the Cycling Development Officer budget is used to cover the cost of a number of these. Below is the prioritised list – it is intended that these are implemented this financial year on a priority basis as funds allow:

- Deeside Way (Duthie Park);
- Ellon Road;
- Third Don Crossing;
- Auchmill Road;
- Dyce Drive;
- Shell Cycle Path;

- The Parkway
- Riverside Path;
- Formartine and Buchan Way;
- Deeside Way (Peterculter);
- Beach Esplanade;
- Wellington Road; and
- Skene Road.

As well as the Cycling Development Officer budget, other external budgets already allocated (such as the Nestrans Capital Programme, Sustrans Community Links Fund, Bus Lane Enforcement Fund and Smarter Choices, Smarter Places fund) may be available to cover the cost of some of these units.

5.2.6 The remaining £30,000 of the fund will be used on projects still to be identified and agreed by Council officers and the Cycling Development Officer.

5.2.7 It is therefore recommended that Members approve the expenditure of approximately £50,000 arising from the regional Cycling Development Officer post, including £20,000 for the implementation of permanent automatic cycle counters in various locations in Aberdeen.

5.3 Mossie Developer Contributions

5.3.1 At the meeting of this Committee in August, officers requested that Members *Authorise £20,000 of developer contributions for Mossie to be used to add value to an existing Smarter Choices Smarter Places project looking to improve pedestrian waymarking on Kincorth and Tullos Hills (CHI/15/228 – External Funding for Transportation Projects)*. The Committee instructed officers *to provide more information on the authorisation of £20,000 of developer contributions for Mossie for improvement of pedestrian waymarking on Kincorth and Tullos Hills (recommendation 2(a) in the report) and report back to Committee*.

5.3.2 Officers 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 have enabled 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 pilot project, if successful, could have been rolled out to further locations throughout the city to encourage and promote an increase in walking in communities.

5.3.3 The August Committee decision has however caused a delay to the project with the consequence that it is no longer feasible to deliver the project within the SCSP timescales (end of March 2016). In order to deliver some aspect of the project, as initially submitted to the SCSP

programme, discussions have taken place with the Marketing and Web teams and it has been determined that a smaller pilot project can be pursued using the Council's mapping services for members of the public to contribute to. This will not have the same scope as the previous project but will achieve some of the aims of the initial pilot project within the timescales. The Mosside Contributions are therefore no longer required for this project.

6. IMPACT

Improving Customer Experience –

Improving cycle and scooter parking at schools will allow more school children to travel to school actively and sustainably. As well as bringing health benefits to these children, any switch from car-based travel to sustainable travel resulting from these improvements will:

- Improve road safety as a result of fewer cars around the school gates;
- Improve local communities in terms of reducing traffic and congestion;
- Improve the environment around schools in terms of fewer harmful emissions and improved air quality resulting from less traffic.

Monitoring of cycle levels will allow officers to identify which improvements and initiatives have the greatest impact on cycling rates. This will allow future spend to be targeted more effectively in the hope of increasing cycling levels further. An increase in the number of cycle journeys in the City will benefit all citizens in terms of improving health, improving safety, reducing traffic and congestion and improving air quality.

Improving Staff Experience –

Staff working at the affected schools will also be able to use the new facilities and will experience the same benefits as identified for pupils above. In addition all staff, as residents of and/or visitors to the City, will experience any benefits accruing from an increase in cycling as described above.

Improving our use of Resources –

Taking advantage of external funds where possible allows the Council to maximise its own spend, with net benefits for the taxpayer, and resulting in an improved level of service. Monitoring of cycle levels will allow officers to identify which improvements and initiatives have the greatest impact on cycling levels, thus allowing future spend to be targeted more effectively in the hope of increasing cycling levels further.

Corporate –

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).

Public –

This report may be of interest to members of the public, particularly cyclists, as it concerns opportunities to increase cycle levels in the City and to better monitor these levels.

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 EHRIsAs.

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

Any new infrastructure described in this report has no identified maintenance budget and could therefore 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).

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Will Hekelaar
(01224) 523324
WHekelaar@aberdeencity.gov.uk