

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Infrastructure
DATE	15 th March 2016
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	External Funding for Transport Projects
REPORT NUMBER	CHI/16/010
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of external funds that have been awarded to, or which may become available to, the Council for transportation projects and to seek approval for officers to spend any funds successfully obtained for the purposes described in this report.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that Members:

- (a) Approve the expenditure proposed under the Nestrans Capital and Revenue Programmes 2016/17;
- (b) Approve the expenditure of approximately £50,000 available to Aberdeen City Council from the regional Cycling Development Officer fund;
- (c) Approve the expenditure of any funds successfully obtained from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) as part of The Smart City project;
- (d) Note the additional funds being provided from Sustrans Scotland's 2015/16 Community Links programme and approve the expenditure of these funds as well as any funds successfully obtained from the 2016/17 Community Links programme;
- (e) Should the application be successful, approve the Council's participation in CIVITAS PORTIS, the expenditure of any funds awarded to the Council from the EU as part of this programme and any associated travel; and
- (f) Note that Smarter Choices Smarter Places funding is likely to be available to the Council in 2016/17, the difficulty in finding match funding and that officers will be putting forward a programme of proposed works to a future meeting of this Committee.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Nestrans capital and revenue allocations are 100% grant funding, although in some instances Council officers have looked to maximise resources by drawing in external match-funding for specific projects, as outlined in the main body of the report. There will be no impact on any Council budgets.

The Cycling Development Officer fund and CIVITAS PORTIS are 100% grant funding therefore projects being delivered under these programmes are fully funded and will not impact upon Council budgets.

The 2015/16 Community Links projects described in this report require 25% match-funding from the Council. This has already been secured via the Active Travel Fund and contributions from Environmental Services for the Seaton Park works so will not impact upon any other Council budgets. Previously, the match required from the Council was set at 50%. Having this reduced to 25% increases the financial contribution from an external partner and thereby frees up money within the Council's Active Travel Fund which can be used for additional projects in a future year.

Successful Community Links projects in 2016/17 require 50% match-funding. The Council has proposed using its Nestrans allocation and Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route Non-Motorised User (AWPR NMU) Offset Mitigation funds for the remaining 50% required for each project, which Sustrans has accepted as suitable match in the past. There will therefore be no impact on Council budgets at this stage.

The full cost of the ERDF Smart City project is anticipated to be £352,610 of which 60% (£211,566) must be sourced by Aberdeen City Council. This will be met from existing Council and partner budgets, as outlined in the table below.

Council funding (60%)		European funding (40%)	
Source	Amount	Project type	Amount
Three new electric vehicles, to be leased for 36 months using Scottish Government funding	£45,000	Upgrades to Co-wheels operating system for project	£130,000
Exclusive use arrangement for 4 vehicles for Council staff for 3 years, funded through the Council Travel Plan revenue budget annually	£40,176	Contingency and marketing	£11,044
Exclusive use arrangement for 1 vehicle for Council staff for 2.5 years, funded through the Council Travel Plan revenue	£8,370		

budget annually			
Shared exclusive use arrangement (Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm) for 5 vehicles for 3 years, funded through the Council Travel Plan revenue budget annually	£43,020		
Council usage costs over 3 years, funded through the user services' travel budgets	£63,000		
Cost of new electric charge point to support 2 exclusive use cars – funding is already available for this from previous grant awards to the City Council	£12,000		
Total	£211,566	Total	£141,044
Project total	£352,610		

There will be no impact on other Council budgets.

The Smarter Choices, Smarter Places programme requires match-funding to the value of 50%. A provisional amount of £210,391 is available to the Council, meaning that the equivalent value would be required in match-funding to allow the Council to take full advantage of the funds available. Officers are not, however, confident that this level of match-funding can be obtained easily in 2016/17, primarily as a result of the low net surplus in the Bus Lane Enforcement (BLE) programme anticipated (which provided much of the match-funding of the SCSP programme in 2015/16) and the impacts that this will have on other sources of funds, such as the Nestrans programme, Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) grant and the Council's Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets (CWSS) allocation from the Scottish Government. All of these acted as match-funding sources in 2015/16 but are likely to be 'at capacity' in 2016/17 as a result of the reduced BLE income, thus reducing the likelihood of them acting as a source of match-funding for SCSP projects.

Staff time can make up to 25% of the overall SCSP programme (to the value of £105,000), however this will be very challenging to achieve and so officers are currently investigating the potential to use European funds such as CIVITAS PORTIS as the match-fund if this is successful. There may be small pockets of the Nestrans, AQAP and CWSS programmes that are eligible as the match-fund and can maximise the leveraging in of SCSP funds.

Officers will only apply for a value of money that can comfortably be match-funded with existing funds eligible as a match for 2016/17. If

only £50,000 in match-funding is identified, for example, then only £50,000 will be applied for from SCSP. There will therefore be no impact on any other Council budgets, other than those already identified.

The various infrastructure improvements being delivered under these programmes have no identified maintenance budget and may therefore impact upon Council maintenance budgets in the future. Further information is provided in section 7 of this report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no other implications arising from this report.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 Nestrans Capital and Revenue Programmes 2016/17

5.1.1 The Nestrans Capital and Revenue Programmes for 2016/17 were approved by the Nestrans Board at their meeting on 29^h February 2016. A summary of the projects being taken forward in Aberdeen City is provided below.

Active Travel

River Don Path Designs (£20,000)

Following on from the River Don Paths Feasibility Study undertaken in 2015/16, the Council is aiming to establish a long distance pedestrian and cycle path along the River Don from the beach to the Formartine and Buchan Way at Dyce. Detailed design of, and the preparation of contract documentation for, three missing sections (Farburn Bridge, a link to the Stonewood path and the Arjo Wiggins section) will therefore be undertaken, which will build on previous work and address the gaps in the current path provision. An application has been submitted to Sustrans Scotland for match-funding of this project (see section 5.4.2).

River Don South Path by Grandholm (£25,000)

Construction of Phase 2 of a pedestrian and cycle path on the south side of the River Don to provide a link between the Third Don Crossing and the Grandholm pedestrian bridge. An application has been submitted to Sustrans Scotland for match-funding of this project.

Seaton Park Entrances (£25,000)

Construction of a new entrance point at the eastern side of Seaton Park and widening of the path by St. Machar's Cathedral to improve access to the park. An application has been submitted to Sustrans Scotland for match-funding of this project.

Riverside Cycleway, Bridge of Dee to RGU (£30,000)

Completion of detailed design of a shared use cycle route along the

northern bank of the River Dee between the Bridge of Dee and the Robert Gordon University, to take account of the recent flooding and flood prevention schemes in the area. An application has been submitted to Sustrans Scotland for match-funding of this project.

A90 Trunk Road Cycle Route – Parkway Extension (£165,000)

Extension of the Parkway pedestrian and cycle route from Balgownie Road to Fairview Street, linking with the facilities being delivered as part of the Third Don Crossing. This will involve upgrading the existing footway to a shared use surface and installing a toucan crossing at the eastern end of the Parkway. An application has been submitted to Sustrans Scotland for match-funding of this project.

Anderson Drive Pedestrian and Cycle Route Phase 1 (£32,500)

Following on from design work undertaken in 2015/16, a short section of shared pedestrian and cycle route will be implemented on the western side of Anderson Drive between the Deeside Way and the Bridge of Dee and two pedestrian crossings at the Bridge of Dee roundabout upgraded to toucan crossings. An application has been submitted to Sustrans Scotland for match-funding of this project.

Craigshaw Drive Cycle Route (£45,000)

Implementation of a shared use pedestrian and cycle route to connect the Shell cycle path with Wellington Road by upgrading the eastern/northern footway of Craigshaw Drive to a shared use footway. An application has been submitted to Sustrans Scotland for match-funding of this project.

Wellheads Cycle Links Design (£18,500)

Detailed design of, and contract document preparation for, an extension of the existing Wellheads Drive shared use path northwards to Farburn Terrace. This will bypass the roundabout, thus reducing conflict and improving safety and directness for cyclists. A cut-through at the Market Street closure will also be designed to create a safe and coherent cycle connection with the Wellheads route and an additional upgrade of the pedestrian access to Dyce Rail Station from Farburn Terrace. This path will be for pedestrian use only, with an alternative cycle route available in parallel.

Public Transport

A96 Park and Choose ANPR System (£100,000)

Purchase and installation of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) units at the A96 Park and Choose site for enforcement of parking restriction and establishment of the back office system.

Aberdeen City and Shire Joint Bus Stop Information Initiatives (£30,000)

Replacement and/or provision of bus timetable display cases at bus stops throughout the region to ensure minimum standards and content can be provided, to ensure compliance with the Equality Act and to

allow for future standardised region-wide improvements to timetable information.

Bus Lane Enforcement Camera Equipment (£66,000)

Purchase and installation of an enforcement camera for the bus gate on Bedford Road between Meston Walk and Hermitage Avenue, part of the Third Don Crossing scheme, and an enforcement camera for the bus lane within the A96 Park & Choose site.

Interactive Information Totem (£20,000)

Purchase and installation of totem to display real time bus information within the A96 Park & Choose site.

Dyce Avenue/ Dyce Drive Improvements (£16,000)

As identified in the Dyce Sustainable Transport Study, this will develop the design of an area of hard standing and pavement to link to the bus stop from the crossing and introduce a pedestrian phase at the Dyce Avenue/Dyce Drive signalised junction.

Strategic Road Safety Improvements

Locking in the Benefits Junction Alterations (£25,000)

Preliminary design of options identified in 2015/16 to encourage active travel by improving pedestrian and cycle facilities at strategic junctions. An application has been submitted to Sustrans Scotland for match-funding of this project.

Strategic Road Capacity Improvements

Strategic Network Monitoring Phase 2 (£100,000)

Following implementation of the first phase of the deployment of Internet Protocol CCTV along the A944, Lang Stracht and Westburn Road, to enhance network monitoring and improve the ability to manage the strategic road network (due for completion in June 2016), the second phase will see deployment along the A956 King Street and Wellington Road and the A93 North Deeside Road.

AWPR Signage (£100,000)

Development of a post-AWPR signage strategy and the preliminary design of strategic signage.

Other

Aberdeen to Peterhead/Fraserburgh Strategic Transport Study (£200,000)

Following completion of the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) Part 1 assessment in 2015/16, looking at options for improving conditions for all modes of transport along this corridor, the STAG Part 2 assessment will commence in 2016/17.

Cross City Connections (£100,000)

Completion of the STAG Part 1 and commencement of the Part 2 assessments, examining options for maximising connectivity between new development sites by fast, reliable and efficient public transport services.

Hydrogen Fuel Cell Vans (£53,000)

Testing of prototype range extended vehicles including vans and large trucks to prove their viability and their role in delivering EU and national energy and climate change targets. Ten prototype vans will be purchased, increasing the demand for the initial refuelling infrastructure within Aberdeen City and these will be trialled by the Council, Co-Wheels, NHS Grampian and selected private sector companies, widening the participation and hydrogen awareness opportunities to both the private and public sector.

Project Feasibility and Monitoring

Feasibility and Design Aspects of Locking in the Benefits (£80,000)

Assessment of schemes to lock in the benefits of the AWPR including a STAG Part 1 assessment of Wellington Road improvements.

Assessment for City Centre Masterplan Schemes (£105,000)

Assessment of transport schemes arising from the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan.

5.1.2 In addition, the following schemes, awarded Nestrans funding in 2015/16 but still incomplete, will continue into 2016/17, with approval for funding to be carried forward into the new financial year:

- Dyce Drive cycle route (£12,380);
- A90 Trunk Road Cycle Route (£30,000);
- Airport Bus Turning Circle (£19,000);
- Dyce Drive resurfacing (£75,000);
- A944 Statutory Quality Partnership Modelling (£50,000);
- Bus Safety Campaign (£3,000);
- Implementation of measures from accident study (£25,000);
- Traffic signals at Aberdeen Crematorium (£155,000);
- Beach Esplanade surface and lighting improvements (£97,000);
- New Common Database Platform (£50,000); and
- A944 Strategic Network Monitoring (£55,000).

5.1.3 It is therefore recommended that Members approve the expenditure of funds awarded to Aberdeen City Council from the Nestrans Capital and Revenue Programmes 2016/17 for the purposes described above. Members will be kept up to date with these projects via the regular Strategic and Local Transportation Projects Update Bulletin.

5.2 Regional Cycling Development Officer Fund

5.2.1 As was reported to this Committee in October 2015 (CHI/15/279 External Funding for Transport Projects, section 5.2), the regional Cycling Development Officer post, match-funded by Nestrans and

Sustrans, comes with an annual budget of £100,000 to be split between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils to add value to current cycling projects. Approximately £50,000 is therefore available to Aberdeen City Council from this fund to be spent on relevant projects in 2016/17.

5.2.2 In previous years, this money has been utilised for resurfacing cycle routes, upgrading crossings for cyclists and installing a suite of pedestrian and cycle counters at various locations throughout the City. Although projects have yet to be identified for 2016/17, these are likely to be in a similar vein.

5.2.3 It is therefore recommended that Members approve the expenditure of approximately £50,000 from the Nestrans Cycling Development Officer Fund during 2016/17. This Committee will be kept up to date with progress on expenditure of this fund via the regular Strategic and Local Transportation Projects Update Bulletin.

5.3 Scotland's 8th City – The Smart City

5.3.1 At its meeting on the 3rd of December 2015, the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee agreed in principle to the Council's involvement in The Smart City project, a Strategic Intervention within the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF 2014/20) programme. All seven Scottish Cities are partners, alongside the Scottish Government and Scottish Cities Alliance with Glasgow City as the lead partner. The aim of the project is to develop schemes which could be rolled out across other cities. Participating cities are placed in clusters with cities undertaking similar projects in order to facilitate collaborative working. The ERDF will fund 40% of the project cost with the seven cities and partners to provide the remaining 60%.

5.3.2 One of the projects that Aberdeen City Council officers wish to progress is 'Expanded and Smarter Use of Co-wheels Car Club, Aberdeen'. Originally two projects were discussed:

- Smarter booking. Currently Co-wheels vehicles are booked online and have to be taken from and returned to the same parking bay. Both Council officers and Co-wheels believe it would be beneficial to create a system where vehicles are able to relay their live location back to the booking system, thus allowing them to be booked anywhere and users to be able to find their real-time location when they are available. At present, Council staff or others often book a vehicle to attend a meeting as they need transport there and back, only for the vehicle to sit idle in a car park for a period of time whilst they attend their meeting. The proposals would not only allow the car to potentially be booked by another user during this time but it could lead to more members joining Co-wheels as it improves access to cars. Currently the Council books nine vehicles (soon to be ten) from Co-wheels for the exclusive use of staff and there is more demand than supply, meaning staff need to use non-exclusive use vehicles incurring more cost to the Council.

This improvement could therefore result in smarter use of these vehicles.

- A shared, public sector pool of vehicles. Currently Aberdeen City Council encourages staff to use Co-wheels vehicles for business travel instead of their own vehicles. Not only does this enable staff to travel to work sustainably while still having access to a vehicle for work purposes, it reduces mileage claims and ensures staff to use modern, properly maintained vehicles. And given that the average carbon dioxide emission from a Co-wheels car is 79 g/km CO₂, around half of the figure of the average private car in the UK, there are environmental benefits from switching to the car club fleet too. The Council is therefore keen to encourage other public sector bodies to adopt a similar approach and would like to work with them and Co-wheels to form a shared public sector pool of vehicles, managed by Co-wheels, for public sector firms to use. These would be stationed in hubs throughout the city, at public sector premises and Council-owned car parks.

5.3.3 It is anticipated that the total cost of the project will be £352,610 of which the Council will be required to identify £211,566 of funding. Co-wheels estimate that the necessary upgrades to their operating system that the Council are asking for, to allow the former project to take place, are around £130,000. As a result, the Council would need to provide a match fund to unlock the necessary European funding to pay for this. The table in the Financial Implications section of this report outlines sources of funding already committed to the project or estimated to be spent over the next few years, which could be used as a match. The electric vehicle funding has already been agreed with the Scottish Government, the charge point funding already exists (underspend from previous grant awards) and the other figures are based on costs to the Council of having the Co-wheels service over the last 12 months, multiplied by the number of months the project will last for. One vehicle is only quoted at 2.5 years as it will join the project later.

5.3.4 For the second project, officers would be seeking European funding for the employment of a Development Worker and to subsidise the cost of the shared pool fleet to encourage new public sector firms to join. At present, no suitable match fund has been identified for this so it is unlikely that this aspect of the project will go ahead. However, it is hoped that discussions with other public sector bodies such as Bon Accord Care, NHS Grampian, the Universities and Aberdeenshire Council may lead to some interest in this project and potentially help to unlock some more funds. The system developed through the first project will also help to make the service more attractive to other public sector companies. The Committee will be updated should this be the case.

5.3.5 For this project, Aberdeen would be working in a 'Smart Services – Mobility' cluster with Dundee and Inverness. Although each city would be working on their own project, close working will allow the cities to better understand the other projects and potentially facilitate future

partnership working. Each cluster has a leader with Dundee leading the Mobility cluster. A report has been produced by each cluster, outlining the scope of each project and the required funding. If bids are successful, it is envisaged that projects will commence by mid-2016 and must be complete by December 2018.

- 5.3.6 It is therefore recommended that Members approve the expenditure of any funds successfully obtained from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for the purposes described above.

5.4 Sustrans Scotland Community Links Fund

5.4.1 Sustrans Scotland's Community Links Programme provides grant funding for the creation and enhancement of pedestrian and cycle infrastructure that will enable more people to walk and cycle for everyday journeys. The programme is funded through the Transport Scotland team within the Scottish Government. Projects can encompass pre-construction, construction and post-construction and funding is awarded following a competitive bidding process to Sustrans Scotland by local authorities. Applications to the 2016/17 fund were submitted by the Council in February 2016. Sustrans awards 50% of the cost required for each successful project, with the applicant required to provide and/or source the remaining 50%. The Council proposes using the Nestrans Capital Programme and the AWPR NMU Offset Mitigation fund as the required match.

- 5.4.2 Proposals submitted by the Council for consideration by Sustrans are listed in the table below:

Project	Amount requested	Match Fund
River Dee path (Bridge of Dee to RGU): additional design work to take account of recent flooding, and environmental assessments.	£30,000	Nestrans
A90 Parkway: following the implementation of a pedestrian and cycle route between Ellon Road and Balgownie Road (due to be completed early summer 2016), the route will be extended to Fairview Street to link to the Third Don Crossing. A toucan crossing of the Parkway will also be installed near the Ellon Road junction.	£165,000	Nestrans
A90 cycle route: following the implementation of a pedestrian and cycle route between The Parkway and Murcar roundabout (due to be completed early summer 2016), an extension of the route will be designed (for implementation in 2017/18) to Blackdog, tying in with facilities being delivered as part of the AWPR.	£30,000	AWPR NMU
A90 Anderson Drive Phase 1: Implementation of a shared pedestrian and cycle route between the Deeside Way and	£32,500	Nestrans

the Riverside Drive cycle path including two toucan crossings at the Bridge of Dee roundabout.		
A96 Cycle Route; Detailed design of a cycle route between Dyce and Blackburn.	£30,000	AWPR NMU
Craigshaw Drive: Design and implementation of shared pedestrian and cycle route.	£45,000	Nestrans
Junction Improvements: Design of improvements to the following roundabouts to assist pedestrian and cycle movements – A90 Anderson Drive/Kings Gate, A90 Anderson Drive/Broomhill Road and Riverside Drive/Great Southern Road/King George VI Bridge.	£25,000	Nestrans
Seaton Park Path East: the raising of a currently submerged section of path in Seaton Park to ensure that it is usable throughout the year.	£27,500	ACC Environmental Services
Seaton Park Entrances: construction of a new entrance at the eastern side of the park and widening of the path near St. Machar Cathedral.	£25,000	Nestrans
Grandholm South pedestrian path: Phase 2 of the construction of a path on the south side of the River Don, linking the Third Don Crossing and the Grandholm pedestrian bridge.	£25,000	Nestrans
River Don paths: Detailed design of and the preparation of contract documentation for three missing sections of the River Don pedestrian and cycle route from the beach to Dyce – Farburn Bridge, link to Stoneywood path and the Arjo Wiggins section.	£20,000	Nestrans
TOTAL REQUESTED	£455,000	

Successful projects will be announced in April and are expected to be completed during the 2016/17 financial year.

5.4.3 As highlighted to this Committee in August 2015 (CHI/15/228 External Funding for Transport Projects, section 5.3), additional money was offered to the Council from Sustrans Scotland for expenditure this financial year (2015/16) for walking and cycling infrastructure to complement the works ongoing around the Third Don Crossing. Committee approved the principle of improvements to pathworks on the north and south side of the Third Don bridge and match funding this using the £480,000 made available from the Non-Housing Capital Programme as a result of Sustrans Scotland's contribution to the Third Don Crossing cycle facilities. A list of identified projects was provided to this Committee in January (Strategic and Local Transport Projects Update Bulletin – section 1.2).

5.4.4 Sustrans has since agreed to fund 75% of the projects from the 2015/16 Community Links fund (rather than the customary 50%), meaning the Council only has to provide 25% of the costs of the works, therefore freeing up more of the Council's money to be used as a

match-fund in future years. A breakdown of the costs of this year's works is provided in the table below.

Project	Sustrans Allocation	Council Allocation
Third Don Crossing additional connections cycling	£299,330.46	£99,776.82
Seaton Park strategic cycling improvements	£84,750	£17,250

Sustrans is still committed to fully funding the Seaton Park steep path linking to the boardwalk.

- 5.4.5 It is therefore recommended that Members note the additional funds being provided from Sustrans Scotland's 2015/16 Community Links programme for the projects listed in the table above and approve the expenditure of these funds as well as any funds successfully obtained from 2016/17 Community Links programme for the purposes described in this report.

5.5 CIVITAS PORTIS

- 5.5.1 Under the European Funding programme Horizon 2020, the European Union's €80 billion research and innovation programme from 2014-2020, an invitation was issued in late 2014 for applications for the delivery of projects under the CIVITAS PORTIS 'Mobility for Growth' banner, with urban mobility as a key component. Aberdeen City Council was invited to participate as a consortium in this call as a front-runner city.
- 5.5.2 The project is 100% funded by the EU. The total budget for the project is €17 million, of which Aberdeen and its local partners will receive in the region of €3 million should the application be approved. Other key local partners include the University of Aberdeen, Robert Gordon University, Aberdeenshire Council, Nestrans and Aberdeen Harbour Board.
- 5.5.3 CIVITAS PORTIS designs, demonstrates and evaluates integrated sets of sustainable mobility measures that address the problems of port cities across Europe. These solutions are demonstrated in 5 major port cities across Europe located on the North Sea (Aberdeen and Antwerp), the Mediterranean Sea (Trieste), the Black Sea (Constanta), and Baltic Sea (Klaipeda). The project also involves a major international follower port city on the East China Sea (Ningbo). The results of CIVITAS PORTIS, and the ambition of the consortium, is to show other port cities in Europe and beyond how to develop and implement a vision of sustainable mobility that can increase functional and social cohesion between city centres and ports, whilst driving

economic growth and improving the attractiveness of urban environments.

5.5.4 The specific objectives of the project are to:

- A. Improve governance for an enhanced cooperation between cities and ports or the planning and implementation of innovative mobility solutions and integrated land-use structures;
- B. Create more sustainable and healthier city-port environments;
- C. Shape more integrated transport infrastructure and mobility systems, which in turn attract residents and diversified economic activities; and
- D. Improve the efficiency of urban freight transport, which is particularly relevant in port cities, reducing the environmental and congestion footprint of freight movements within the city and between city and port.

5.5.5 Should the project be approved, it will require officers to travel to attend project meetings to ensure the project objectives are being met and to disseminate best knowledge and practice so the results can be replicated across the follower cities and Europe. The cost of travel to these meetings will be met through the EU funding. It is therefore recommended that, should the application be successful, Members approve the Council's participation in CIVITAS PORTIS, the expenditure of any funds awarded to the Council and any associated travel.

5.6 Smarter Choices Smarter Places

5.6.1 At the end of January 2016, Transport Scotland released details of their anticipated distribution of funds from the Scottish Government's Smarter Places Smarter Places (SCSP) programme in 2016/17. The policy intent of the funding is to achieve modal shift to active and sustainable travel, reducing driver only journeys. This is revenue funding which can be used for behaviour change or 'soft measures' to complement existing or new infrastructure e.g. promotion of a cycle route, a new bus route or a car club.

5.6.2 Although this is still subject to final parliamentary agreement, Aberdeen City Council has been provisionally awarded £210,391, for which the Council has to find £210,391 to match fund (50%) if it wants to take full advantage of the programme. This is likely to prove difficult, as is described in the Financial Implications section of this report.

5.6.3 Once the value of the award available to the Council is finalised and the parameters of the fund have been identified, officers will develop a programme of work based on the resources that are available and those elements of the Nestrans, CWSS and AQAP programmes that will be eligible as a match-fund. There may also be potential to use

CIVITAS PORTIS (see section 5.5) as match-fund, as well as contributions from other organisations as was the case in 2015/16.

- 5.6.4 It is therefore recommended that Members note that Smarter Choices Smarter Places funding is likely to be available in 2016/17, the difficulty in finding match funding and that officers will be putting forward a programme of proposed works to a future meeting of this Committee.

6. IMPACT

Improving Customer Experience –

The projects described in this report will benefit all members of the travelling public by making it easier, faster and safer to move around the City and the wider region by all modes of transport, particularly sustainable modes.

Sustainable transport interventions that encourage a shift away from single-occupancy car travel will have environmental benefits by improving air quality and reducing noise (both of which also impact upon health), and contributing to a decline in carbon dioxide and other harmful emissions.

Measures to enable more walking and cycling will enable people to be more physically active and maintain a healthy weight, thus improving health and wellbeing (including mental health). Regular exercise is known to prevent incidences of many health conditions such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and various types of cancer.

Improving Staff Experience –

Staff living and/or working in the City will experience the same benefits from the proposed programmes of work as those described for the customer above. Aberdeen City Council staff will benefit in particular from the more efficient operation of the Co-wheels fleet and the increased availability of car club vehicles envisaged to arise from the ERDF Smart Cities project.

Improving our use of Resources –

Taking advantage of external funds allows the Council to maximise spend and to deliver an increased level of service, resulting in net benefits for the taxpayer.

The long-term health benefits accruing from more physically active lifestyles should reduce public sector expenditure on health and social care in the future.

Similarly, the long-term environmental benefits resulting from an increase in sustainable travel at the expense of single occupancy vehicle travel could have financial benefits for the organisation through the reduced likelihood of fines being imposed as a result of air quality breaches and a reduced need for expenditure on responses to events

attributable to climate change and on infrastructure measures to cope with such events in the future.

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).

A number of the projects being taken forward under the Nestrans and Community Links programmes afford opportunities for joint working with Aberdeenshire Council on public transport information improvements and the implementation of strategic walking and cycling routes.

Public –

This report may be of interest to members of the public as it details proposed new transport infrastructure measures, designed to make travelling throughout the City and the wider region easier, quicker and safer for all members of the travelling public, particularly those travelling by sustainable transport modes.

An Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) has not been undertaken as the projects described in this report flow directly from the Council's Local Transport Strategy 2016 and the Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy, both of which have been subject to their own EHRAs.

A Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) has not been undertaken as none of the proposed projects should impact on the privacy of any individual.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

The new infrastructure proposed for implementation has no identified maintenance budget and will therefore impact on the Council's maintenance budgets in the future, representing a financial risk to the Council. Officers take every opportunity to minimise this through procuring maintenance and warranty agreements alongside certain goods and services where this is possible and through the use of high-

quality design and construction materials to ensure the longevity of any new infrastructure implemented. Whenever ad hoc repairs or upgrades are required, external funding will be sought in the first instance to minimise reliance on Council budgets

Conversely, the risks of inaction (not improving conditions for the travelling public) are also significant and are likely to result in a poor quality environment, increasing emissions contributing towards climate change, 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.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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