

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Infrastructure
DATE	29 th August 2017
REPORT TITLE	External Funding for Transport Projects 2017/18
REPORT NUMBER	CHI/17/189
INTERIM DIRECTOR	Bernadette Marjoram
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:-

This report advises Committee of a number of external funding opportunities that have become available or will soon become available to the Council for transportation projects and, where these are successful, requests Committee approval to spend the funds obtained.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that Members:

Air Quality Action Plan

- a. Note that Aberdeen City Council has been awarded funding from the Scottish Government to deliver projects outlined in the Air Quality Action Plan. Accept the funding and authorise officers to spend the funding in accordance with grant conditions and the Council's procurement procedures, and as outlined in the main body of the report;

Electric Vehicle Fund

- b. Note that Aberdeen City Council has been successful in a bid to Transport Scotland's Grant for Chargeplace Scotland Network 2017/18 fund. Accept the funding and authorise officers to spend the funding in accordance with the grant conditions and the Council's procurement procedures;

Cycling Scotland's Cycle Friendly Employer Workplace Grants Fund 2017/18

- c. Note Cycling Scotland's Cycle Friendly Employer Workplace Grants Fund potential to improve cycling provision within Marischal College and if an award is successfully granted, approve the expenditure of any funds successfully obtained;

Sustrans Cycle Parking Grant Scheme 2017

- d. Note that Aberdeen City Council has been successful in a bid to the Sustrans Cycle Parking Grant Scheme. Accept the funding and authorise officers to spend the funding in accordance with the grant conditions and the Council's procurement procedures;

Active Travel Action Plan Fund

- e. Authorise officers to deliver the active travel projects from the Sustrans Active Travel Fund, as listed in the main body of the report and prioritised in the Active Travel Action Plan, in accordance with the grant conditions and the Council's own procurement procedures;
- f. Authorise officers to seek appropriate match funding for the identified projects; and
- g. If match funding is successfully acquired, delegate authority to the Interim Head of Planning and Sustainable Development, following consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, to agree the terms of any Memorandum of Understanding with funding bodies.

3. BACKGROUND/ MAIN ISSUES

Air Quality Action Plan Grant Funding 2017/18

- 3.1 The Scottish Government has a grant scheme to support the delivery of the Air Quality and Noise Action Plans. The scheme covers measures identified within the Actions Plans and any measures delivered must be under the direct control of the local authority.
- 3.2 The Council has been successful in an application to this fund for £47,500 to spend on the following activities: promotional campaigns, events for Air Quality/ Bike Week/ European Mobility Week, ECO Stars, car club rollout, clean vehicle roll out and Travel Planning activities with schools and businesses.
- 3.3 The funding must be spent before 31st March 2018.

Grant for Chargeplace Scotland Network 2017/18

- 3.4 Transport Scotland has been providing funding to Councils in Scotland since 2011 in order to develop a network of electric vehicle charge points with the project now branded as Chargeplace Scotland. Aberdeen is regarded as a strategic hub in the Chargeplace Scotland project. For 2017/18 Aberdeen City Council has been awarded £82,000 of funding from Transport Scotland, the Scottish Government Transport Agency.
- 3.5 The funding is for the full costs associated with the charge point installation and commissioning including the purchase, five year warranty and signing and lining costs as part of the National ChargePlace Scotland network. It will deliver the following:
 - 1 x rapid charge point at Kingswells Park and Ride
 - 1 x rapid charge point at Gallowgate
 - 1 x rapid charge point at Sclattie Park (upgrade)
- 3.6 As part of the grant funding condition, it is expected that the units should be in the ground and operational by the end of January 2018. This will take the number of Council-implemented public charging points up to 38.

- 3.7 Discussions have commenced with Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) regarding the availability of power supplies in these locations and with the Council's procurement team to establish how best to undertake the procurement.

Cycling Scotland's Cycle Friendly Employer Workplace Grants Fund 2017/18

- 3.8 In May 2017 Cycling Scotland launched the Cycle Friendly Employer Workplace Grants Fund 2017/18, aimed at encouraging and supporting organisations and workplaces across Scotland to take a leading role in increasing the number of staff, contractors and visitors travelling by bike, specifically through capital investment in cycling facilities.

- 3.9 Officers have submitted a grant based on two 'Ideas Hub' suggestions raised by staff. The application consists of improvements to the existing Marischal College staff cycling provision, which is significantly oversubscribed as a result of half the area being used for the storage of broken chairs. The suggestions are to replace the single tier racks with two tier racks and install a fixed electrical bike pump and repair stand. Approximately £10,000 would be available if the award is approved. A decision from Cycling Scotland is due imminently.

Sustrans Cycle Parking Grant Scheme 2017

- 3.10 A successful application to the Cycle Parking Grant Scheme has been awarded to Kirkhill Primary School to install a standard scooter rack providing 20 spaces. A second successful application has been awarded to Bridge of Don Academy. This is to install 10 bike lockers and 10 Sheffield stands. Approximately £5,000 has been awarded towards the two schemes from Sustrans and these will be match funded using the Cycling Walking and Safer Streets budget.

Active Travel Action Plan Grant 2017/18

- 3.11 In 2015/16, a Non-Housing Capital Programme (NHCP) budget line was created for Active Travel Fund, encompassing the savings on the Diamond Bridge scheme resulting from the Sustrans (sustainable transport charity promoting walking and cycling) contribution. The £1.1million funding remains Aberdeen City Council's responsibility however it is ring-fenced for active travel projects as per the initial grant conditions.

- 3.12 In 2016/17 approximately £375,000 of this budget was spent delivering the Balgownie Road ramp connection, Dyce Drive dual use path, development of paths on the south side of the Don connecting to Diamond Bridge and purchase of land for the Bay of Nigg Harbour dual use path (all match funded by Sustrans). Two of these projects are still under construction (Balgownie ramp and Bay of Nigg).

Table 1 – 2016/17 Committed Spend

Project	Sustrans Contribution	NHCP Active Travel Fund
Balgownie Ramp	£240,000	£168,000
Dyce Drive	£306,000	£150,000
Nigg Harbour	£303,000	£30,000
Donside paths	£61,000	£25,000

- 3.13 A list of projects for delivery this financial year was presented to 24th January 2017 Communities Housing & Infrastructure Committee. It is recommended that the following projects in Table 2 below are match funded from the NHCP Active Travel Fund against the Sustrans expenditure. As this is the only Council budget dedicated towards walking and cycling projects it is also recommended that officers maximise this budget as far as possible and continue to pursue other external funding sources (developer contributions, other grant funding) where they exist in order to continue recycling the funding available.

Table 2 – 2017/18 Proposed Spend

Project	Sustrans Contribution	NHCP Active Travel Fund/ Other
Broad Street – Totem Creation and Installation	£10,000	£10,000
Seaton Park Entrance - Creation of a new entrance opposite Lord Hay's Grove to provide an active link between Seaton Park and the Beach Esplanade	£11,000	£11,000
River Don Bridge – design of new pedestrian and cycle bridge over the Don to link Davidsons Mills development with Grandhome development	£52,000	£52,000
A944 Cycle Route – further feasibility and design of, and consultation on, Westhill to Aberdeen cycle route	£25,000	£25,000
Balgownie Ramp	Unknown	~£50,000

- 3.14 Members will note that as well as in the 2016/17 budget Balgownie Ramp (for location plan see Appendix A) is also included in the table 2 for agreement to spend the 2017/18 Active Travel budget; a Scottish Water main has been found nearer the surface than Scottish Water drawings indicated. Due to the slope involved the pipe has to be relocated. The scope of the works will involve diverting the pipe from under the proposed footprint of the ramp to instead run alongside the ramp. It will be placed in a gap between the lower access point to the ramp from Gordon Brae and the adjacent retaining wall. From there it will then re-join the existing main and anchor block at the top of the bank.
- 3.15 The cost of the relocation is estimated to be in the region of £50,000 and contractually the work requires to continue. It is proposed that as this project was originally funded using the Active Travel Fund (and Sustrans contributions) that this continues, and officers will explore the potential for further match funding the water main work with Sustrans contributions (or others) if available.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Transport Scotland's Grant for Chargeplace Scotland Network 2017/18 fund is 100% grant funding so there will be no impacts on any Council budgets at this stage. There may be maintenance implications associated with such infrastructure in the future for which a suitable budget would have to be sought. At the present time the Council does not recoup the cost of electricity from individuals who use the charge points. This is subject to a separate annual report to this Committee (CHI/17/059).
- 4.2 Maintenance of any dual use paths created would be the responsibility of Aberdeen City Council and would be on a 25 year replacement programme. At current rates this would cost £5,000. The new River Don Bridge is a separate matter that will need

to be thoroughly costed prior to build. As this is at initial design stage there are no maintenance costs at this point. A budget line currently exists in the Bus Lane Enforcement Programme for maintenance of cycle parking. This is in the region of £2,000 a year. However, replacement using capital and external funding is the preferred option as obsolete infrastructure is replaced.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 If the above projects are progressed this will result in the Council entering into procurement processes. These would occur through the Scotland Excel Framework and published on Public Contracts Scotland to reduce any legal risk. If further external grant funding successful, it is likely that a Memorandum of Understanding/ Agreement will need to be signed in consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services. The Active Travel Budget has to be spent on active travel. If not, there is a risk that Sustrans will not match fund future projects.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

- 6.1 It is anticipated that the risk level for delivering the elements outlined within this report will be low:

- **Financial**
Financial implications/ risks are outlined in section 4. above. Due to resourcing issues within the Transport Strategy and Programmes team there is potential for programmes to slip and some of the funding may remain unspent. If this is the case, the funding body will be informed as soon as feasibly possible to allow them to redirect funds to other authorities.
- **Customer / citizen**
There should be no customer/ citizen risk to the Council from delivering the projects identified above. In fact the delivery of safe and coherent infrastructure for active travel should improve safety and reduce the risk of accidents, while additional ev charging points should improve choice.
- **Environmental**
There should be no environmental risk to the Council from progressing the projects above. Environmental assessments will be undertaken as part of the feasibility and preliminary design of cycle routes (such as the A944 and River Don Bridge crossing) and subject to detailed scrutiny in a separate report if a recommendation is made at a later date for delivery.
- **Legal**
Council procurement procedures will be followed for all tender/ contract awards to reduce any legal risks.
- **Reputational**
There should be no reputational risk to the Council from securing external funding for delivering the projects identified above.

7. IMPACT SECTION

- 7.1 This section demonstrates how the proposals within this report impact on the strategic themes of Aberdeen City Council and Community Planning Aberdeen, as set out in the [Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26](#) and the [Aberdeen City Council Strategic Business Plan](#). The programme of proposed projects has been assessed in terms of their fit with achieving the LTS policy objectives. Of all of the projects considered, these projects best meet those objectives. In addition they also contribute towards the delivery of the Local Development Plan, Strategic Development Plan, Regional Transport Strategy, the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP), Air Quality Action Plan, City Centre Masterplan and the Regional Economic Strategy. 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.

Economy

- 7.2 The Council aims to support improvement in the local economy to ensure a high quality of life for all people in Aberdeen, and the relevant Regional Economic Strategy embraces this in the vision for 'A 20 year vision for the well-being of the place and our people'. As the programme has been developed to support the LTS, it will also aid economic development. The current vision for the Aberdeen City LTS is:

A sustainable transport system that is fit for the 21st Century, accessible to all, supports a vibrant economy, facilitates healthy living and minimises the impact on our environment.

As such, the Strategy includes the following objectives:

Objective: To improve deployment of low carbon transport in the city and urban areas, through active travel networks.

Objective: To facilitate the uptake of ultra-low and low emission vehicles as a contribution towards improving air quality in the City.

- 7.3 The LOIP contains the same commitment regarding cycling and the SPB contains a further commitment to: Increase the share of journeys by walking, cycling and public transport by 10% by 2020.

People and Staff

- 7.4 The Council is committed to improving the key life outcomes of all people in Aberdeen and so has agreed a set of Equality Outcomes (2017-21) http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/council_government/equality_and_diversity/eqd_report_2017_21.asp. The continued introduction and maintenance of safe walking and cycling routes, measures delivering air quality improvements and other sustainable transport initiatives are recognised at all levels of government as a positive contributory factor in the health of everyone in the community and research also suggests that building in daily exercise such as walking or cycling to school, work etc. is one of the best ways to achieve the recommended levels of exercise to keep us active and healthy for longer. Programmes are developed in accordance with the aims and objectives of the LTS and further developed against the user hierarchy of transport modes which prioritises sustainable and active travel. Improving 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.

Place

- 7.5 The Council is committed to ensuring that Aberdeen is a welcoming place to invest, live and visit and operating to the highest environmental standards of which all of the projects listed aim to achieve.
- 7.6 The long-term environmental benefits resulting from an increase in sustainable 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.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee - 24th January 2017

Aberdeen Active Travel Action Plan

<http://councilcommittees.acc.gov.uk/documents/s65437/Aberdeen%20Active%20Travel%20Action%20Plan%20CHI.16.279.pdf>

External Funding for Transport Projects Programme

<http://councilcommittees.acc.gov.uk/documents/s65466/External%20Funding%20for%20Transport%20Projects%20and%202017-18%20Bus%20Lane%20Enforcement%20BLE%20Programme%20CHI.16.280.pdf>

9. APPENDICES (if applicable)

Appendix 1 – Location of Balgownie Ramp

10. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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Appendix 1: Location of Balgownie Ramp

