

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	City Growth and Resources
DATE	03 November 2021
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Bus Partnership Fund Update
REPORT NUMBER	COM/21/254
DIRECTOR	Gale Beattie
CHIEF OFFICER	David Dunne
REPORT AUTHOR	Nicola Laird
TERMS OF REFERENCE	3.2

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Committee on the progress of the delivery of the Bus Partnership Fund grant projects.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Notes the progress of the delivery of this grant;
- 2.2 Instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning and Chief Officer – Capital to continue to work with partners to deliver the projects in accordance with the grant conditions; and
- 2.3 Instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to prepare quarterly reports on the progress of the delivery of this grant.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Reference is made to the meeting of the City Growth and Resources Committee of 25 August 2021 wherein the Committee considered the report 'Bus Partnership Fund Bid – COM/21/178' and resolved:
- (i) to Agree 2.1 to 2.4 as contained within the report; and
 - (ii) to instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning to submit a report to the November 2021 meeting of the Committee on the progress of the delivery of this grant.
- 3.2 The below table provides an update on the status of all Bus Partnership Fund projects as of September 2021.

Project	Current Stage	Progress
BPF004-1 A90 Ellon to Garthdee	Completion of STAG appraisal and identification of preferred options	Consultation completed and final appraisal report submitted to Transport Scotland. Bus Partnership Fund deliverables Gateway Review date to be agreed by Transport Scotland and Aberdeen City Council. Next steps are to report study outcome to the City Growth & Resources (CG&R) Committee on February 3rd 2022.
BPF004-3 A96 Inverurie to Aberdeen	Completion of STAG appraisal and identification of preferred options	High level option sifting and development has been completed with an agreed list of options for further development. Next steps will be to start undertaking option appraisal and further stakeholder engagement.
BPF004-5 A944/A9119 Westhill to Aberdeen	Completion of STAG appraisal and identification of preferred options	The consultant has been appointed to undertake the Detailed Appraisal and Outline Business Case development. The Inception Report with revised proposed programme and spend profile has been received from the consultant and accepted by both Transport Scotland and internal Aberdeen City Council governance. Initial appraisal tasks are underway.
BPF004-7 A92 Stonehaven to Aberdeen	Completion of STAG appraisal and identification of preferred options	Project Inception meeting to be held with consultant on 25th October 2021. Contract to then be finalised with updated quote and timescales / milestones. Review of Existing Studies and Policy Review expected to be completed during November and December 2021.
BPF004-9 City Centre	Outline Business Case development	A report on the City Centre Masterplan (CCMP) review was approved by the City Growth and Resources Committee in August 2021 and officers have commissioned additional work to inform the Traffic Management Plan instructed by that Committee. An update report on the City Centre Masterplan, including the first phase of the Traffic Management Plan, appears elsewhere on the Agenda for this City Growth & Resources Committee meeting. A key focus of the Transport Management Plan is bus accessibility and permeability within the City Centre, for example ensuring bus reliability and punctuality are maintained and improved. This work will feed into the

		Outline Business Case for improvements to City Centre bus infrastructure.
BPF004-11 Aberdeen Rapid Transit	Completion of Case for Change	Consultancy work has been awarded. Initial discussions with the consultant have been held with the Inception meeting due to take place in October 2021. Partnership workshop to be planned for November 2021.
BPF004-13 South College Street	Design and Preparation	The landscape design has been finalised and Traffic Regulation Orders have been republished. Work is currently ongoing to conclude agreements.
BPF004-14 Comms and Engagement	Scoping	The scope is currently being identified to gauge the level of communication and engagement required for the programme.
BPF004-15 Programme Management and Contingency/Optimism Bias	Ongoing	Programme Management is ongoing with monthly project reports being submitted to Transport Scotland. Quarterly financial claims commenced from October 2021.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Bus Partnership Fund grant award is fully funded by Transport Scotland, and no match funding is required from the Council or other North East Bus Alliance partners.
- 4.2 The grant award is for the financial years of 2021/2022 and 2022/2023, with a completion date of 31 March 2023.
- 4.3 Aberdeen City Council is the designated lead authority and Accounting Officer for the grant and will reclaim eligible spend in accordance with the grant conditions.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are conditions associated with the grant that must be complied with in order to claim eligible spend. These have been reviewed with Legal Services in accordance with the Scheme of Governance prior to accepting and signing the grant award.
- 5.2 Continued compliance with the grant conditions by all partners in the Bus Alliance, as reported to this Committee in August 2021 and referenced in 3.1 will be necessary for successful reclaim of eligible expenditure.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Strategic Risk	Delivery of public transport measures supports a number of the Council's strategic priorities, particularly in terms of a sustainable economy, a sustainable transport system, the continued health and prosperity of our citizens, reductions in carbon emissions and a high quality environment. Failure to deliver public transport improvements where there is evidence of their effectiveness could undermine the Council's ability to realise these aspirations.	M	Work with partners to deliver the projects within the grant award and continue to work in partnership to maximise 'match in kind' to add value to this grant in terms of meeting the strategic objectives of partners and Transport Scotland.
Compliance	There are conditions attached to the grant award that must be adhered to in order to secure payment of eligible spend. Certain actions, such as the progression of Traffic Regulation Orders, may be subject to statutory objection.	M	Compliance with statutory processes, grant conditions and Scheme of Governance. Regular progress and spend reporting to Transport Scotland, Aberdeen City Council and the Capital and Transportation Programme Boards, and to the North East Bus Alliance Board.
Operational	There may be risks around the business cases and procurement of public transport measures proposed and these will be detailed and addressed as each project progresses.	L	Compliance with the Scheme of Governance and monitoring/ updating of project risk registers.

Financial	Risks around spend being ineligible or rejected, and therefore having to be absorbed by this Council and partners.	L	All partners have confirmed they have read and understood the grant conditions, and have confirmed they will work with this Council to ensure compliance. Expenditure on projects is likely to be by this Council and Nestrans, both of whom have rigorous internal governance procedures. Regular reporting to Transport Scotland and partners will also help to reduce this risk. Any grant funds to go to Nestrans or Aberdeenshire Council will be through a separate grant letter obligating them to comply with the grant terms and conditions.
Reputational	Failure to deliver in accordance with the grant conditions to help meet the Council's (and partners) strategic objectives undermines the Council's commitments to improving the lives of those who live, work and visit Aberdeen.	M	Work with partners to deliver the projects within the grant award and continue to work in partnership to maximise 'match in kind' to add value to this grant in terms of meeting the strategic objectives of partners and Transport Scotland.
Environment / Climate	ACC's net zero vision and strategic infrastructure plan – energy transition: transport emissions are a significant contributor so increasing sustainable travel will be necessary to achieving this sector's required reduction.	M	Work with partners to deliver the projects within the grant award and continue to work in partnership to maximise 'match in kind' to add value to this grant in terms of meeting the strategic objectives of partners and Transport Scotland.

7. OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN

Impact of Report	
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	Facilitating and encouraging an increase in public transport usage through utilisation of this grant supports the delivery of Economy Policy Statement 4: Increase the city centre footfall through delivery of the City Centre Masterplan, including the redesigned Union Terrace Gardens, and Place Policy Statement 3: Refresh the Local Transport Strategy, ensuring it includes the results of the city centre parking review; promotes cycle and pedestrian routes; and considers support for public transport.
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The projects funded by this grant support the delivery of the following Stretch Outcomes: 2. 400 unemployed Aberdeen City residents supported into Fair Work by 2026 3. 500 Aberdeen City residents upskilled/ reskilled to enable them to move into, within and between economic opportunities as they arise by 2026. The development and delivery of active and sustainable travel infrastructure supports a range of economic policies and strategies that will benefit the economy and support access to key employment areas. There will also be employment opportunities during construction.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The projects funded by this grant support the delivery of the following Stretch Outcomes: 7. 95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026. 8. Child friendly city where all decisions which impact on children and young people are informed by them by 2026. 11. Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026. Active and sustainable travel are known to improve a number of health conditions, potentially increasing life expectancy. The projects funded by this grant include measures to support, encourage and increase active and sustainable travel thereby also producing less greenhouse gas emissions and improving air quality. There will be further opportunities for engagement through the development and design process and there will be employment opportunities during construction.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The projects funded by this grant support the delivery of the following Stretch Outcomes:

	<p>13. Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate.</p> <p>14. Increase sustainable travel: 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026.</p> <p>The projects funded by this grant aim to increase active and sustainable travel which will contribute to reductions in carbon emissions and improvements in air quality.</p>
Regional and City Strategies	The projects funded by this grant support the Regional Transport Strategy, Strategic Development Plan, the Regional Economic Strategy, and locally the Local Transport Strategy, Aberdeen Active Travel Action Plan, Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan, Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan, LOIP, Air Quality Action Plan, Local Development Plan and Aberdeen Net Zero Vision.
UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes	The projects funded by this grant contribute towards the delivery of the Scottish Government's National Transport Strategy (NTS2) and Cleaner Air for Scotland 2.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	The projects funded by this grant will be/ are being undertaken in accordance with the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance which appraises impacts across a range of categories (Economy, Environment, Accessibility and Social Inclusion, Safety and Integration). Further detailed assessments will be undertaken through the development and design process, as appropriate.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[City Growth and Resources Committee 25 August 2021 Bus Partnership Fund Item 11.2](#)

[Bus Alliance Action Plan April 2021](#)

10. APPENDICES

None

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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