

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Finance & Resources
DATE	08/05/2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	A92 Murcar North – Active Travel Scheme Development
REPORT NUMBER	CR&E/24/129
DIRECTOR	Gale Beattie
CHIEF OFFICER	David Dunne
REPORT AUTHOR	Ken Neil
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.4

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report advises Members of the outcomes of the Outline Business Case (OBC) undertaken for the A92 Murcar North Active Travel scheme. A summary on the findings from the report is provided, along with recommendations on the next steps for the approved option.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee: -

- 2.1 Approve the Outline Business Case (Appendix 1);
- 2.2 Instruct the Chief Officer – Capital to progress all necessary procurements, approvals, permissions, licenses, agreements and consents required to develop and implement the project within its budget;
- 2.3 Note that available funding through the AWPR Non-Motorised User Fund is sufficient to fund the elements identified in 2.2 of this report, with the exception of implementation; and
- 2.4 Instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to seek additional external funding to allow the implementation of the project.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

Background

- 3.1 Transport Scotland and Aberdeen City Council have a Service Level Agreement to deliver a number of environmental mitigation projects to offset the environmental impact of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR), which opened fully to traffic in February 2019. Delivery of an active travel route

between the Murcar Roundabout and Blackdog is one of the projects covered by the agreement, with an overall objective to improve conditions for people walking, wheeling and cycling in the area.

- 3.2 A STAG (Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance) appraisal for the scheme was carried out and the outcomes were reported to the Net Zero, Environment and Transportation Committee on 27 March 2024 (Report Ref: COM/24/069). The Committee approved the East Option as the preferred option for the route and instructed that an Outline Business Case be completed and reported to the Council's Finance and Resources Committee.

Outline Business Case Development

- 3.3 An Outline Business Case (OBC) has been developed for the approved option along the East side of the A92, (refer to Appendix 1). The OBC provides a summary of the appraisal process, a description of what the project will deliver, key decisions associated with it, the expected costs and the funding position. It includes an outline of the benefits and dis-benefits, along with risks and assumptions associated with the project. Finally, it provides a summary of planned or agreed dates and time constraints.
- 3.4 This OBC sets out the preferred option to deliver active travel infrastructure along the eastern side of the A92 between Murcar and Blackdog. Developed Design has been undertaken as part of the OBC development. Further engineering assessments and Technical Design will follow with the Full Business Case, subject to approval of the OBC, and will provide further information on benefits, risks and challenges of delivering the preferred option. The outputs of the project are:
- the provision of a shared footway / cycle track on the east side of the A92 between Murcar Roundabout and Hareburn Road including a buffer to protect users from motorised vehicles;
 - the introduction of a footway along the western side of Hareburn Road;
 - crossing improvements for active travel users; and
 - updates to traffic signs and road markings.
- 3.5 The east option Developed Design outline cost estimate total is £3.0 million (2023 prices), not including future inflation and future maintenance. This includes all construction estimates (inclusive of optimism bias of 44%), land purchase, further design, drainage, geotechnical, potential bridge works, placemaking and landscaping, site supervision and project management, traffic management and monitoring and evaluation.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 To date this project has been funded through a budget allocation from the AWPR Service User agreement between the AWPR/B-T Managing Agent and the Transportation Team.
- 4.2 The current high level cost estimate for the scheme is £3.033M. There is sufficient budget remaining from the AWPR Non-Motorised Users fund to proceed with further development work and detailed design should the Outline Business Case be approved by this Committee.
- 4.3 There is, however, currently insufficient budget for the project to proceed with the implementation (construction) of the scheme. Therefore, should further approval be given by the Finance and Resources Committee at a later date to proceed to delivery, progress will be dependent on the sourcing of additional funding. In the first instance officers will investigate sources of funding from external bodies.
- 4.4 It should also be recognised that, should the project proceed towards delivery, there will be future costs associated with maintaining any new or upgraded infrastructure. Initial cost estimates have not yet been compiled for any future costs. Any future development work will identify implications for the Council's Revenue budget as options are developed further and refined. To minimise the requirement for revenue response maintenance in the future it is crucial to strive for the highest standards of quality in infrastructure, which shall be a key consideration in the next stages of project progression and delivery.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There will be a need for land acquisition, Traffic Regulation Orders, planning and other approvals, and the detail of this will be developed as part of the design process. Further procurement exercises to deliver this project and its wider benefits shall also be required.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of the STAG report. Any subsequent design stages shall include an Environmental Impact Assessment to inform any environmental implications of the project.

7. RISK

The assessment of risk contained within the table below is considered to be consistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement.

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	<p>Delivery of active travel 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.</p> <p>Failure to deliver active travel improvements where there is evidence of their effectiveness could undermine the Council's ability to realise these aspirations.</p>	Continue to work with project partners to deliver the strategic objectives of this project and its wider benefits, therefore mitigating against the risk of the Council failing to deliver on its strategic sustainability priorities	L	Yes
Compliance	Should approval be secured to move forward then there will be a need for land acquisition, Traffic Regulation Orders, planning and other approvals and the detail of this	Compliance with statutory processes, procurement regulations, grant conditions (if required) and Scheme of Governance with regular progress and spend reporting to external funders and	L	Yes

	will be developed as part of the design process. Further procurement exercises to deliver this project and its wider benefits shall also be required.	the Transportation Programme Board.		
Operational	There will be costs associated with maintaining the infrastructure associated with the active travel proposals, should these reach the implementation stage.	Future development work shall identify implications for the Revenue budget as schemes are developed further and refined. To minimise the requirement for revenue response maintenance in the future it is crucial to strive for the highest standards of quality in infrastructure, which shall be a key consideration of the next stages of project delivery.	L	Yes
Financial	Removal or reduction in potential external funding streams for further development work and implementation.	Continual engagement with external funding bodies and appropriate monitoring of any funding applications.	M	Yes
Reputational	Failure to deliver active travel improvements to help meet the Council's (and partners) strategic transport objectives undermines the Council's commitments to improving the transport	Continue to work with project partners to deliver the strategic objectives of this project and its wider benefits, therefore mitigating against the risk of the council failing to deliver on its strategic sustainability priorities.	L	Yes

	<p>network, achieving the PLACE outcomes set out in the LOIP (Local Outcome Improvement Plan), and supporting Scotland's Climate Change Plan commitment to reduce car kilometres by 20% by 2030.</p>			
<p>Environment / Climate</p>	<p>The Council's Net Zero vision and strategic infrastructure plan – energy transition: transport emissions are a significant contributor to climate emissions so increasing sustainable travel will be necessary to achieving this sector's required reduction.</p> <p>If active travel measures are not delivered, the Council would not provide conditions which could encourage more sustainable travel movements which are likely to bring environmental improvements to the city and region.</p>	<p>Continue to work with project partners to deliver the strategic objectives of this project and its wider benefits, therefore mitigating against the risk of the Council failing to deliver on its strategic sustainability priorities.</p>	<p>L</p>	<p>Yes</p>

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2024</u>	
Impact of Report	
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</p> <p><u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u></p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspects of the policy statement: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing our cycle and active transport network, and work with Aberdeen Cycle Forum to deliver our shared vision of making Aberdeen a cyclist friendly city and provide covered secure cycle storage in suitable locations across Aberdeen.
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</u>	
<p>Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes</p> <p><i>1. No one will suffer due to poverty by 2026.</i></p> <p><i>2. 400 unemployed Aberdeen City residents supported into Fair Work by 2026.</i></p> <p><i>3. 500 Aberdeen City residents upskilled/ reskilled to enable them to move into, within and between economic opportunities as they arise by 2026.</i></p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcomes 1 to 3 as a good transport network and infrastructure provision means anyone regardless of their social status/economic means can choose a sustainable mode of travel for commuting.</p> <p>A reliable transport network supports economic growth and movement both locally and otherwise and affords the public the opportunity to choose a sustainable mode of travel to and from their workplaces.</p>
<p>Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes</p> <p><i>11. Healthy life expectancy is five years longer by 2026</i></p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 11. Active travel is known to improve a number of health conditions, potentially increasing life expectancy. Increased use of active travel produces less local emissions helping to combat the environmental risk to public health caused by poor air quality.</p>
<p>Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes</p> <p><i>13. Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon</i></p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcomes 13 and 14. Private vehicles are a significant contributor to carbon emissions so increasing sustainable travel opportunities will be necessary to help encourage greater levels of walking and cycling and achieving this sector's required emissions reduction.</p>

<p><i>emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate.</i></p> <p><i>14. Increase sustainable travel: 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026.</i></p>	
<p>Regional and City Strategies</p>	<p>The proposals within this report support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Local, Regional and National Transport Strategies, all of which aim to deliver fewer miles travelled by private car and a cleaner transport system which results in fewer emissions; • The Net Zero Vision for Aberdeen, the Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap, the Air Quality Action Plan, and the Low Emission Zone (LEZ) by looking to improve opportunities for travel by low/zero emission forms of transport.
<p>AWPR NMU – Service Level Agreement</p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the following aims and objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The aim of the service level agreement which is to provide safe access to pedestrians and cyclists around the proposed route corridor and address issues of Non Motorised Users fragmentation. • To upgrade/provide new paths to allow safe, improved access between local communities and recreational areas. • To enable opportunities for a range of different users to undertake commuter, recreational and utility trips.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<p>Integrated Impact Assessment</p>	<p>A new Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed for this project.</p> <p>https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-03/A92%20Murcar%20North%20Active%20Travel%20Infrastructure.pdf</p>

Data Protection Impact Assessment	Neither a brief DPIA or full DPIA is required at this stage
Other	N/A

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Ref: PLA/19/359 (City Growth and Resources Committee, December 2019)

10.2 Ref COM/24/069 (Net Zero and Transportation Committee, March 2024)

10.3 A92 Murcar North Active Travel Infrastructure STAG-Based Appraisal

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1 – A92 Murcar North Active Travel Infrastructure Outline Business Case

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Ken Neil
Title	Senior Engineer
Email Address	KenN@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	01224 053924