



Performance Scrutiny Committee Friday, 16 July 2021

ADDENDA

5. A Fair Deal for Oxfordshire - Shaping Our Immediate and Longer-Term Priorities (Pages 1 - 8)

Report by the Corporate Director for Customers and Organisational Development

*** Appendix 2 (Annex to the Cabinet Report) is to follow ***

The Committee is RECOMMENDED to consider the Cabinet report attached as Appendix 1 with its associated Annex attached as Appendix 2 and present their findings to the Cabinet meeting on 20 July 2021.

6. SEND Top-Up Funding for Schools (Pages 9 - 16)

Report by Corporate Director for Children's Services.

The Committee is RECOMMENDED to consider the Cabinet report attached as Appendix 1 and present their findings to the Cabinet meeting on 20 July 2021.

7. Department of Transport Tranche 3 Active Travel Bid (Pages 17 - 30)

Report by Corporate Director Environment and Place

The Committee is RECOMMENDED to consider the Cabinet report attached as Appendix 1 with its associated Annex attached as Appendix 2 and present their findings to the Cabinet meeting on 20 July 2021.

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Divisions Affected – All

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 16 JULY 2021

A Fair Deal for Oxfordshire Shaping our priorities

Report by the Chief Executive

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Committee is RECOMMENDED to consider the Cabinet report attached as Appendix 1 with its associated Annex attached as Appendix 2 and present their findings to the Cabinet meeting on 20 July 2021.

Executive Summary

2. Following the Oxfordshire County Council elections on 6 May 2021, a new administration was formed: the Oxfordshire Fair Deal Alliance.
3. The Cabinet report sets out the policy objectives and areas of priority for the new administration.

Yvonne Rees
Chief Executive

Appendices Appendix 1: Cabinet Report
 Appendix 2: Annex to the Cabinet Report

Contact Officers: Yvonne Rees - Chief Executive
 Claire Taylor, Corporate Director Customers,
 Organisational Development & Resources

July 2021

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Divisions Affected – All

CABINET – 20 JULY 2021

A Fair Deal for Oxfordshire Shaping our priorities

Report by the Chief Executive

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Cabinet is recommended to:
 - a) Approve the approach to the development of a new strategic plan for the period commencing 2022/23, including a programme of public consultation ‘Oxfordshire Conversations’ and stakeholder engagement to take place in the autumn.
 - b) Endorse the priorities of the Oxfordshire Fair Deal Alliance as set out in paragraph 6 (and the attached annex) to form the basis of these conversations and a new strategic plan.

Executive Summary

2. Following the Oxfordshire County Council elections on 6 May 2021, a new administration was formed: the Oxfordshire Fair Deal Alliance.
3. This report sets out the policy objectives and areas of priority for the new administration. In line with the administrations ambition to listen to our communities and to be open, transparent and ensure the organisation is more accessible to all, a clear one-page document has been developed. (see Annex 1).
4. More detailed work on how these priorities will be achieved for the period of the administration will be undertaken over the summer and set out as part of a revised strategic plan and the Budget and Business Planning process for 2022/23 to 2025/26.
5. Where the delivery of policy objectives will require funding during 2021/22, this will be brought forward as part of the monthly Business Management Monitoring Report to Cabinet. Where resources are required, it is proposed that one-off funding from General Balances is used to support the implementation of actions for 2021/22.

Introduction: the priorities of the Oxfordshire Fair Deal Alliance

6. The Oxfordshire Fair Deal Alliance recognises that the delivery of its immediate and longer-term policy objectives relies on strong working relationships with colleagues and partners. Therefore, all of our priorities are underpinned by a commitment to proactively engage and develop our workforce, recognising that the better we support our people the better we can meet the needs of the citizens of Oxfordshire.

The Alliance is clear that the best outcomes for the people of Oxfordshire will rest on a foundation of action to address inequalities and promote equality of opportunity. We will put this thinking at the heart of our work.

The climate emergency is one of the most significant challenges we face. As a community leader, large local employer and a local authority delivering services we can make a difference; action to address climate change and a commitment to net-zero carbon is central to our partnership and will be reflected in each of our priorities.

The policy objectives of the Oxfordshire Fair Deal Alliance are to:

- Tackle the Climate Emergency through rapid decarbonisation, proper accounting of carbon emissions and ambitious targets, as well as supporting climate resilience.
- Tackling inequalities and providing opportunities for everyone in Oxfordshire to achieve their full potential.
- Prioritisation of wellbeing – improved outcomes for residents and improved air quality and access to libraries, cultural facilities and the arts.
- Review and reform of the social care system to prioritise end users and carers, with a focus on co-operative and community provision of social care, helping those who want to stay in their own homes.
- Increased investment in an inclusive, integrated, county-wide active and sustainable travel network fit for the 21st century to improve choice and reduce car journeys across the county.
- Improved access to nature and green spaces for all communities, and landscape-scale nature recovery across the county.
- Supporting all our children and young people to achieve improved health, wellbeing and educational outcomes; improved provision for children with additional needs; all decision-making to have regard to impact on young people and future generations.
- The creation of a resilient local democracy, where decisions are devolved to the lowest possible level and residents are meaningfully involved in the decisions that affect their lives.
- Support for local employment and businesses, working with partners to make Oxfordshire a centre for green and sustainable technologies through a local 'Green New Deal'. We will use our purchasing power and contracts to maximise benefit to local employment and businesses.

Shaping our Medium and Longer-Term Objectives: a new strategic plan and budget priorities for the Council

7. The development of a new strategic plan (to replace the current corporate plan) will be an inclusive process comprising public engagement and a programme of 'Oxfordshire conversations', which will seek to understand the medium and long-term aspirations and concerns of residents and partners so that these can be built into future plans. Further opportunities will be sought to include all councillors and for wider stakeholder and staff engagement and to utilise data from surveys and customer feedback.
8. As well as the ongoing development of the policy objectives set out earlier in this report, Oxfordshire County Council will draw on relevant socio-economic, and environmental data, public and stakeholder feedback to develop the new strategic plan. The plan will be made widely accessible, and be presented and titled in a clear, accessible and engaging format, with residents as the key audience. This new strategic plan for Oxfordshire County Council will be used as the basis by which future performance will be evaluated and by which the council will report back to local communities and residents.
9. The new plan will be completed by end of March 2022 to reflect and complement the 2022/2023 budget. Both documents will form part of the formal consultation ahead of budget and council tax setting in February 2022.
10. Cabinet will consider the first report of the Budget and Business Planning process for 2022/23 at its meeting in October. This report will set out the context and background information as an early stage in the process that will culminate in council setting a Strategic Plan in February 2022 alongside a budget for 2022/23, a Medium-Term Financial Strategy and Capital Programme. The report will also include a process and timeline for both the Strategic Plan and the Budget and Business Planning process.

Consultation and Engagement

11. The development of a new strategic plan will be based upon public engagement and consultation. The draft plan will also form part of the formal budget consultation process prior to adoption of the budget by Council in February 2022. Consultation will be carried out utilising a variety of methods and approaches to ensure accessibility and engagement with a wide variety of stakeholders, including seldom-heard groups.

Financial Implications

12. The Council ended the 2020/21 financial year with a £5.9m underspend. This was added to General Balances, which stood at £34.6m on 1 April 2021. The performance measure for General Balances as set out in the Financial Strategy

approved by Council in February 2021 is that General Balances should be greater than or equal to the risk assessed level. The risk assessed level for 2021/22 is £28.8m. The cost of implementing actions to deliver on the new policy objectives during 2021/22 is not expected to impair the performance measure for General Balances.

13. Any proposals for additional funding in 2021/22 or which require a virement will be brought forward as part of the monthly Business Management reports to Cabinet for approval.

Comments checked by Lorna Baxter, Director for Finance.

Legal Implications

14. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Comments checked by Anita Bradley, Director for Law and Governance.

Risk Management

15. There are no immediate risks arising from this report.

Impact Assessments

Climate	No immediate impact arising from this report. The development of the new strategic plan and its accompanying actions will include action to address the climate emergency and a full impact assessment will be included in the final proposals.
Young People	No immediate impact arising from this report. The development of the new strategic plan and its accompanying actions will include specific consultation and engagement with children and young people to reflect their concerns and ambitions within the new plan.
Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion	No immediate impact arising from this report. The development of the new strategic plan and its accompanying actions will include specific consultation and engagement with all sections of the community. A full equalities impact assessment with regards to budget priorities will be included in the final proposals.

Yvonne Rees
Chief Executive

Annexes

Annex 1: Let's Begin the Conversation - A Fair Deal for Oxfordshire

Contact Officers:

Yvonne Rees - Chief Executive

Claire Taylor, Corporate Director Customers,
Organisational Development & Resources

July 2021

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Divisions Affected - ALL

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20 July 2021

SEND High Needs Funding for Academic Year 2021-22

Report by Corporate Director of Children's Services/Education

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is RECOMMENDED to consider the Cabinet report attached as Appendix 1 and present their findings to the Cabinet meeting on 20 July 2021.

Executive Summary

1. For mainstream schools, the national expectation is that there is use funding already in their budget to provide services for children with SEND. Top-Up funding is additional funding allocated to a setting or school to enable a pupil with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan to participate in education and learning. Mainstream schools require adequate and proportionate funding to be able to meaningfully include children with special educational needs. Top-Up funding is from the High Needs Block, part of the Dedicated Schools Grant.
2. For the academic year commencing September 2020, Cabinet agreed increases in Top-Up funding to Early Years, Primary and Secondary schools in September 2020 and to Special Schools in January 2021.
3. The Cabinet report recommends that the increase in Top-Up funding for 2020-21 is maintained for the academic year 2021-22. This an interim arrangement pending consultation on whole system reform (including a full funding formula review for implementation in September 2022).
4. If the increase were not agreed for the new academic year, then the High Needs deficit would initially reduce. However, a key strand of the SEND Strategy is to support children to remain in mainstream schools. By not continuing the current level of Top-Up funding, it is likely that some children will not remain in mainstream education, moving to more expensive provision and possibly long-term higher costs would be incurred by this budget.

Appendix: Cabinet Report

NAME
Kevin Gordon
Director for Children's Services

Contact Officer: Hayley Good, Deputy Director of Children's Services/Education

12th July 2021

Divisions Affected - ALL

**CABINET
20 July 2021**

SEND High Needs Funding for Academic Year 2021-22

Report by Corporate Director of Children's Services/Education

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to

- a) Agree an increase in Top-Up funding for Early Years settings, mainstream Primary, mainstream Secondary and Special Schools. The increase will only be available in the year 2021-2022.
- b) Note that for Secondary Schools, the increased top-up is applicable where the formulaic approach is insufficient for schools to meet the needs of the child. This decision would not reduce the amount of Top-Up funding a Secondary school currently receives.
- c) Note that system reform is required for SEND in Oxfordshire. A public consultation on this is planned for later in 2021. The interim arrangements above for Top-Up funding are a holding position while the detailed work in this complex area are worked through.

Executive Summary

1. For mainstream schools, the national expectation is that there is use funding already in their budget to provide services for children with SEND. Top-Up funding is additional funding allocated to a setting or school to enable a pupil with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan to participate in education and learning. Mainstream schools require adequate and proportionate funding to be able to meaningfully include children with special educational needs. Top-Up funding is from the High Needs Block, part of the Dedicated Schools Grant.
2. For the academic year commencing September 2020, Cabinet agreed increases in Top-Up funding to Early Years, Primary and Secondary schools in September 2020 and to Special Schools in January 2021.
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pending consultation on whole system reform (including a full funding formula review for implementation in September 2022).

4. If the increase were not agreed for the new academic year, then the High Needs deficit would initially reduce. However, a key strand of the SEND Strategy is to support children to remain in mainstream schools. By not continuing the current level of Top-Up funding, it is likely that some children will not remain in mainstream education, moving to more expensive provision and possibly long-term higher costs would be incurred by this budget.

Background

5. Cabinet approved Top-Ups for the Academic Year 2020-21 in September 2020 and January 2021 in recognition that accessing and providing support for children and young people with SEND in Oxfordshire has become increasingly challenging.
6. Many of our schools have worked hard to maintain inclusive cultures for SEND. We want to support schools and settings in this practice by providing them with another year of Top-Ups.
7. Broad reforms to SEN provision and arrangements in Oxfordshire are needed. For the past five years our spending on SEND children and young people have exceeded our budgets. The population of Oxfordshire is changing, with increasing demand and complexity of needs of some of our most vulnerable residents. It is essential that we have high-quality, locally available provision to deliver successful outcomes for children and young people with SEND in Oxfordshire.
8. This support must be provided within the resources available to us and we must shift the way we provide services, developing a more inclusive approach to supporting children and young people with SEND.
9. We will seek feedback from residents and stakeholders via a consultation later this year on the priorities and opportunities to change the way that we support children and young people with SEND.

How Top-Up funding currently works

10. For mainstream schools, the national expectation is that there is use funding already in their budget to provide services for children with SEND.
11. Top-Up funding is additional funding allocated to a setting or school to enable a pupil with an EHC Plan to participate in education and learning. The way this funding is currently calculated differs between Early Years settings, primary and secondary schools and special schools:
12. Top-Up funding Years settings is calculated on a set hourly rate. This is based on the support that each child requires in order to deliver the provision detailed

specified in the individual, statutory EHC Plan. Early Years settings and nursery classes do not have delegated funding so all funding detailed in the EHC Plan is provided to the setting from the High Needs Block. When a child leaves the setting, the funding ceases and moves with the child.

13. For mainstream schools, the expectation is that schools make additional provision up to a nationally prescribed threshold from within funding directly delegated into their budget; this threshold is up to £6,000 per child. Top-Up funding from the High Needs Block is in addition to this funding.
14. Top-Up funding for children with an EHC Plan in mainstream Primary schools is calculated based on the number of additional hours of support required to meet the provision individually specified in a child's EHC Plan. When a child leaves the school, the individually assigned top-up funding ceases.
15. For mainstream Secondary schools, Top-Up funding is delegated into the school based on a formula rather than individually assigned; it does not increase if more children with an EHC Plan are placed at a school and headteachers have to have plan provision mindful of any in-year entrants to the school.
16. Top-Up funding for special schools is based upon a formula and averaged for each child. The formula therefore pays the same amount for each child regardless of the needs of the child or the special educational provision that the school needs to make. The formula was designed to enable special schools to plan via predictability and stability of funding.
17. The above formulas have not been reviewed for a number of years.

New Approach to Top-Up funding

18. A child-led approach to the allocation of additional funding is being developed with input from schools, settings and parents. Detailed financial modelling will be carried out to ensure accuracy and reliability of the new approach, stability and predictability in budget planning for schools and that the arrangements can be delivered within the available financial envelope of the High Needs Block.
19. This new approach will sit alongside system wide reforms that promote inclusion and the best possible outcomes for children and young people in Oxfordshire.

Financial Implications

20. Dedicated School Grant (DSG) to Local Authorities is allocated in blocks. There are blocks of funding for Early Years, Schools, High Needs and Central School Services. The blocks are ringfenced for 2021-22 (meaning that funding can only be spent on the services/provisions covered by the blocks, unless specific arrangements are made).

21. The Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block (HNB) consists of all funding for education provision for high needs learners from ages 2 to 25. The High Needs funding for Oxfordshire is £81.9m.
22. The forecast for High Needs was included in the Budget and Business Planning 2021/2 papers to Cabinet in January 2021. The High Needs deficit was reported to Cabinet as £11.7m. This deficit assumed the continuation of the Top-Ups at the same rate as last year.
23. Nationally, surveys have been conducted to assess the level of High Needs demand and budget deficits. In May 2021, the Society of County Treasurers survey on behalf of its 40 members indicated that High Needs Deficits are estimated at £280m in 2021-22.
24. For 2021-22, Schools Forum considered and agreed an option that delivered the National Funding Formula to schools in full and agreed a transfer from the Schools block to the High Needs Block of £1m to contribute to the continuation of the enhancement to High Needs Top-Up rates agreed for 2020-21.
25. The continuation of the Top-Up arrangements is expected to cost £3.2m for the Academic Year.
26. Oxfordshire is forecasting increasing annual deficits driven by the growth in number and complexity of the learners supported. The strategic work continues in order to ensure that services are better targeted to meet demand; despite this, it is unlikely that the deficit can be eradicated in the face of increasing numbers of children requiring support, parental preference and the dominant provider market.

Comments checked by Sarah Fogden, Finance Business Partner

Legal Implications

27. Section 45 – 53 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 detail the funding framework governing Schools' finance.
28. The Children and Families Act 2014 detailed extensive education reforms for children and young people with special educational needs. The Children and Families Act 2014 sets out local authority statutory obligations and is supported by a SEND Code of Practice.
29. Further regard is required of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). There being a requirement when taking a decision for due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics, foster good relations between such groups and eliminate unlawful discrimination. The analysis of the impact of High Needs funding requires further account to be taken of equality impact considerations.

Comments checked by Sukdave Ghuman, Head of Legal Services

Equality & Inclusion Implications

30. The continued payments to schools and settings will support the education of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. They face significantly greater challenges in learning than their peers or have a disability which hinders their access to the teaching, curriculum and facilities typically found in mainstream educational settings.

NAME

Kevin Gordon

Director for Children's Services

Contact Officer: Hayley Good, Deputy Director of Children's Services/Education

12th July 2021

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Divisions Affected – County Wide

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16 JULY 2021

Department for Transport Active Travel Fund – Tranche 3

Report by Corporate Director Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Committee is RECOMMENDED to consider the Cabinet report attached as Appendix 1 with its associated Annex attached as Appendix 2 and present their findings to the Cabinet meeting on 20 July 2021.

Executive Summary

2. The Cabinet paper has been produced to provide an overview of the Department of Transport (DfT) Active Travel Fund in advance of the Cabinet decision on delegating the decision to approve the Tranche 3 submission to officers due to the short timescale set by the DfT.
3. The Council was previously successful in the award of Capital funding for Active Travel Tranche 2 in 2020. In 2020 an indicative allocation of the expected funding was provided, however the DfT have confirmed there will be no allocations this year, but that bids should be developed based upon previous years allocations combined with Council ambitions. Previous years allocations to Oxfordshire County Council for Tranche 1 have been £298,500 and £2.98m for Tranche 2. We are also expected to receive a minimum of £237,000 in revenue funding for Active Travel measures by the end of July.

CEDR Member Bill Cotton

Appendices: 1 Cabinet Report
 2 Annex A Active Travel Fund Bid invitation

Contact Officer: Simon Lymn, Programme Lead
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Divisions Affected – County Wide

CABINET 20 JULY 2021

Department for Transport Active Travel Fund – Tranche 3

Report by Corporate Director Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to authorise officers to finalise and submit Oxfordshire County Council's bid to the Department for Transport Active Travel Fund Tranche 3 submission.

Executive Summary

2. This paper has been produced to provide Cabinet with an overview of the Department of Transport (DfT) Active Travel Fund and to seek Cabinet approval to delegate the decision to approve the Tranche 3 submission to officers due to the short timescale set by the DfT.
3. The Council was previously successful in the award of Capital funding for Active Travel Tranche 2 in 2020. In 2020 an indicative allocation of the expected funding was provided, however the DfT have confirmed there will be no allocations this year, but that bids should be developed based upon previous years allocations combined with Council ambitions. Previous years allocations to Oxfordshire County Council for Tranche 1 have been £298,500 and £2.98m for Tranche 2. We are also expected to receive a minimum of £237,000 in revenue funding for Active Travel measures by the end of July.

Active Travel – Department for Transport Tranche 3 bid

4. The DfT announced on June 14th, 2021 Active Travel Capital funding amount across the country worth £239m to be provided to local transport authorities to embed walking and cycling as part of the new long-term commuting habits and to reap the associated health, air quality and congestion benefits and forms part of the Governments £2 billion commitment set-out in [Gear change: a bold vision for cycling and walking \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/94822/gear-change-a-bold-vision-for-cycling-and-walking.pdf).
5. There are three main components to the bid:

- (a) Details on scheme information
 - (b) Cycle and Walking Scheme pipeline information – 1, 4 and 10 year pipeline, supported by a network plan.
 - (c) Expressions of interest for the development of a Mini Holland and a GP Prescribing Pilot.
6. For the council to be successful all schemes put forward need to comply with cycling design standards as set out in local transport note LTN 1/20. Cycling schemes will also need to include segregation or point closures to through traffic, exceptions are possible although they are expected to be limited in nature, focused around physical capacity. Advisory lanes and those marked only with white paint will not be funded.
7. The Council should continue to develop Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) and schemes will need to be developed with local communities. In addition, all schemes put forward will need written confirmation from the Leader of the Council's long-term commitment to them.
8. Whilst no indicative funding has been made available to Oxfordshire County Council for Tranche 3 it is expected that the Council's allocation to be in excess of last years allocation i.e. £3m. To signify the Council's ambitions and reflect the full scale of investment needed to make a significant difference to communities it is proposed to bid for significantly more than the previous allocation. An officer working group has been established to develop the bid that has to be submitted on 9 August 2021. In addition, shortlisted local authorities who submit and EOI for Mini-Holland will receive up to £100,000 in revenue funding.
9. The timeline for the submission of the bid is very short and therefore it is not possible for the proposed measures and DfT submission document to be presented to the Cabinet for Approval. It is requested that Cabinet agree to delegating final sign-off to officers.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

10. This bid will support the following objectives as set-out in the Council's Corporate plan:
- a) Provide services that enhance the quality of life and take action to reduce the impact of climate change and protect the local environment.
 - b) Tackle inequality help people live safe and healthy lives and enable everyone to play an active part in their community.
 - c) The schemes put forward will also help to delivery those already set out in the area based Local Cycle and Walking Infrastructure Plans.

Financial Implications

11. The criteria for Tranche 3 funding includes a requirement to spend the funding by March 2023. The DfT have stated that performance in scheme delivery will be taken into account in future funding allocations, poor performing authorities can expect future grant payments to be adjusted downwards. The financial deliverability of the bid will be signed off in accordance with the scheme of delegation.
12. The County Council's submission may also include approved OCC or partner funding where available to strengthen the submission, but there is no additional capital or revenue impact associated with this submission.

Comments checked by:
Rob Finlayson
Finance Business Partner
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Legal Implications

13. No immediate legal implications are envisaging at this stage. Upon successful receipt of funding, all schemes that are delivered will be subject to the statutory Consultation process where necessary as part of the powers set out in the Highways Act (1980).

Comments checked by:
Christian Smith
Principal Solicitor
Christian.smith@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Staff Implications

14. As the bid is developed and finalised resources will be identified to deliver the bid if successful. The intention is to only create new staff posts that are funded from the bid and to appoint once funding is confirmed from DfT. Any posts generated will be employed on fixed term contracts within the duration of the bid and funding constraints.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

15. At the time of writing, there are no known equalities implications however, there is the understanding that as schemes are developed where necessary an Equalities and Climate Impact Assessment will be produced.

Sustainability Implications

16. The core aims of the bid submission is to support and encourage increased levels of walking and cycling as such it isn't envisaged that there would be any adverse impacts to the Council's overall Sustainability goals.

Risk Management

17. A risk register and management strategy are in development. The project is being proactively managed through the development of the funding bid and, if that is successful, the Business Case development stage and on to implementation of the bid.
18. There are likely to be a wide range of risks associated with both the bidding process and the delivery of the bid. These range from ensuring due diligence is completed to minimise cost risk exposure; capital implications on the council's budget for supporting the ongoing maintenance of the infrastructure; delivering effective communication and engagement strategies to meet community expectations; to contractually ensuring delivery can be expedited.
19. The consultation and engagement undertaken for Tranche 2 schemes has identified there is significant interest in some of the schemes. As a result of this, a review of the existing consultation approaches being used is ongoing. Any new approach will be developed in liaison with the Cabinet member.
20. The DfT have asked for a pipeline of schemes for future years funding, with the intention of providing a longer -term settlement plan. This will enable the Council to plan and manage schemes more effectively in the future.
21. These and other risks are being identified and assessed with officers across the council and will be managed through the Council's established processes.

Consultations

22. The proposed list of schemes to be included in the bid have been developed from the previous proposals submitted by members and stakeholders as part of development of Tranche 2 bidding process and adopted LCWIPs. This process resulted in the submission of some 475 proposals across the County. .
23. To finalise the list of schemes for inclusion within Tranche 3, LCWIP schemes have been considered along with those considered during the Tranche 2 process. Collectively they have been considered and assessed against the latest funding requirements, scheme deliverability and cost. This has enabled a large number of schemes be considered within the time available. These have been discussed with key stakeholders.

24. Should any stakeholders suggest additional schemes over and above those meeting the Tranche 3 funding conditions, these will be considered as part of the next Active Travel bid round anticipated in 2022.

**CEDR Member
Bill Cotton**

Annex: Annex A Active Travel Fund Bid invitation

Contact Officer: Simon Lymn, Programme Lead
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July 2021

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Department
for Transport

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14 June 2021

Dear Sir/Madam,

Active Travel Fund: Local Authority Capital Funding for 2021/22 and expressions of interest for Mini Hollands and GP Prescribing Pilot

This letter invites your local authority to bid for capital funding for the current financial year 2021/22, to support delivery of ambitious new cycling and walking infrastructure schemes. This funding is part of the Government's £2 billion commitment set out in "[Gear Change](#)" to deliver a step change in the provision of high quality schemes that deliver better streets for everyone.

Bids must be submitted by **Monday 9 August but you are encouraged to bid sooner**. Combined Authorities are expected to produce a single bid on behalf of their constituent authorities. Funding for London boroughs is being handled separately, and London boroughs do not need to submit proposals to the Department for Transport.

The Department does not intend to set indicative capital allocations. To give an indication of scale, the total amount of funding being made available is £239 million, and eligible local authorities may therefore receive broadly similar levels of funding to 2020/21; however, to qualify for any funding at all this year, authorities must commit to the following key principles:

1. The Department only intends to fund schemes which comply with the [Cycling Design Standards](#) set out in local transport note LTN 1/20. All cycling schemes will need to include segregation or point closures to through traffic. Advisory cycle lanes, and those marked only with white paint, will not be funded. We expect local authorities and developers to utilise the guidance in the design of all schemes regardless of whether they are seeking Government funding. Over the coming months, we will be offering training events aimed at local highway teams, active travel teams and accessibility teams, covering the key features of the standards, and its supporting tools.
2. All authorities are to undertake network planning to inform prioritisation of future schemes, in the form of [Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans \(LCWIPs\)](#) or similar local strategies. This helps to ensure that schemes are integral to long term investment plans and are driven by local demand for cycling and walking infrastructure. LCWIPs should be supported by your authority at the

very highest levels of leadership; developed in consultation with local communities; and integrated with your local transport plans, as well as wider plans for public health, economic development and carbon reduction. These plans must also show proper integration with cross-modal schemes, such as opportunities for boosting cycling and walking around HS2, East West Rail, Highways England, Restoring Your Railways, Historical Railways Estate and National Cycle Network schemes.

We know that many authorities have already developed LCWIPs with support via the Department's pilot support programme, or through your own independent work. If your authority has yet to develop a LCWIP, or it is at an early stage of development, the Department will be offering dedicated technical support in partnership with Sustrans to help you develop your future plans. We will provide further details of this support, and what you need to do to access it, shortly. Authorities without LCWIPs are still able to bid for capital funding this year, but it must be demonstrated that proposed schemes fit into a robust long-term network plan, which will need to be provided as part of the bidding process.

3. All schemes must include plans to be **developed in consultation with local communities**, in line with the process set out for the Active Travel Fund (see Annex A). As we have set out in previous letters, consultation does not mean giving anyone a veto, requiring consensus on schemes, or prioritising the loudest voices. It could include adopting measures (such as polling) to cut through the noise and come to an accurate understanding of public views.
4. All schemes must be **supported by local authority leaders**, who will need to provide written confirmation of the authority's long-term commitment to them. All schemes should be given sufficient time to bed in and for benefits to be realised before any changes are made to them: the Department will reserve the right to claw back funding where schemes which it has funded are prematurely removed.
5. To agree, if asked, to put larger schemes through a **design review**, to be managed by DfT and the future Active Travel England body.

Bids will be assessed in line with the following criteria, which will guide final allocations to authorities:

1. Propensity to convert short vehicle journeys into cycling and walking, resulting in carbon, air quality and congestion benefits;
2. Tackling areas with poor health outcomes and with high levels of deprivation;
3. Number of people that will benefit from the measures;
4. Compliance with the key principles above.

The bidding proforma should be completed via [Smart Survey](#). More detailed FAQs for bidding authorities are attached to this letter, along with a copy of the bid proforma. It is our intention that the bidding process should be swift and not onerous. In many cases authorities will already have proposals for LTN1/20-compliant schemes or may wish to make permanent some of the temporary schemes installed under the Emergency Active Travel Fund in the last year.

Funding can be used to support a range of scheme types and can also be used to support feasibility studies and scheme design as well as construction, providing that the funding can be capitalised. Local authorities should also consider, and take steps to mitigate, the wider impacts of any proposals, particularly on disabled people and others with protected characteristics as part of their Public Sector Equality Duty.

In applying for funding, we are asking authorities to supply the following evidence to the Department within the bid proforma:

- Updated LCWIPs (if applicable), including your latest network plans.
- Brief information on your authority's investment priorities for cycling and walking infrastructure schemes over the next 1 year, 4 years and 10 years. Only high level information is required for schemes to be delivered over the 4 and 10 year time period. This information will enable the Department to establish a clearer picture of future funding demand.
- Details of the schemes for which you are seeking funding in 2021/22, in priority order.

Applicants are also expected to assess and confirm, through their section 151 officer, the value for money of their schemes. For all schemes costing £2 million or more, the Department will require applicants to undertake a value for money assessment using the Active Mode Appraisal Tool (AMAT). Accompanying this letter, we have sent you value for money guidance to help assess your schemes which should make this process straightforward.

In the event that schemes are unable to be delivered, the authority should submit revised proposals which do offer value for money to the Department as soon as possible. Where this is not possible, the Department will reserve the right to claw back any funding by adjusting downwards a future grant payment to your authority.

The Department will also expect the impact of schemes to be monitored and evaluated. A copy of the monitoring and evaluation guidance issued with earlier tranches of funding accompanies this letter. This will be a requirement for all schemes costing £2 million or more and is recommended for other significant schemes.

Mini Hollands development programme

The Department is also taking this opportunity to invite expressions of interest from authorities in the Government's Mini-Hollands development programme. Mini Hollands involve intensive, transformational spending on local roads and streetscapes to make them, over time, as cycle and pedestrian-friendly as their Dutch equivalents. This includes installation of high quality segregated cycle lanes on main roads, low-traffic neighbourhoods and high streets, and greater roadspace allocation for people walking.

The results from three Mini Holland schemes in London have shown dramatic improvements, with cycling increasing by 18 per cent and walking by 13 per cent in the first year after construction. Congestion did not rise in the longer term, because the changes allowed many people who had previously driven very short journeys to walk or cycle instead.

We are therefore looking to develop a shortlist of around 12 non-London local authority areas, to benefit from intensive investment in mini-Holland schemes on the same model. The main focus will be on replacing short car trips. Candidate authorities must be places where there is serious political commitment to dramatic change – not just for cyclists, but for everyone who lives and works there. There must also be clear plans for the mini-Holland schemes to be properly integrated into wider cycling and walking network plans (e.g. within the 4 and 10-year project pipelines).

More details on how to apply are set out in the attached FAQ guidance. Revenue funding will be made available to shortlisted authorities (up to £100k per authority) to develop detailed proposals later in the year. Longer term funding will be provided following the next multi-year Spending Review, expected later in 2021.

GP prescribing pilot

We are looking for a small group of Local Authorities to take part in a pilot to provide cycling and walking interventions as part of a social prescribing offer. These pilots must be supported by the local Clinical Commissioning Groups and Primary Care Networks.

Taking up cycling is amongst the most effective health interventions a person can make: according to a recent Glasgow University study, cycling to work can contribute to a 45% lower risk of developing cancer, a 46% lower risk of heart disease and a 41% lower risk of premature death, compared to a nonactive commute.

We will develop a shortlist of up to four authorities to take part in the pilot. The Department wishes to invite local authorities with areas of poor health and low physical activity rates to express their interest via a short letter. We invite EOIs from authorities with a range of experiences in social prescribing, from more to less mature. A commitment to innovation and buy-in from key stakeholders is important.

The project will seek to deliver personalised care through approaches determined most appropriate for the identified areas. A key network for this will be link workers experienced in social prescribing in primary care networks. Pilots will prescribe cycling or walking wherever appropriate, and make available cycles, as well as training, access to cycling groups and peer support.

To support patients to feel safe to cycle in their local community, places will need to invest in infrastructure improvements such as segregated lanes, low-traffic neighbourhoods and secure cycle parking. There must also be clear plans for the prescribing pilots and related infrastructure improvements to be properly integrated into wider cycling and walking network plans. Access to good quality green space and green routes, away from traffic, can both increase attractiveness of cycling and bring mental health benefits. Such interventions could be connected to NHS campaigns in the pilot areas.

As with the mini-Hollands development programme, more details on how to apply are set out in the attached FAQ guidance. Revenue funding will be made available to shortlisted authorities (up to £100k per authority) to develop detailed proposals later in the year.

Longer term funding will be provided following the next multi-year Spending Review, expected later in 2021.

Further advice and guidance

Cycle Infrastructure Design Guidance (LTN 1/20) one-day training events will be available to all local and combined authorities. This training is aimed at local highway teams, active travel teams and accessibility teams and will comprise a one-day interactive course. The training will be provided from July 2021 through to January 2022 by Sustrans with support from the LCWIP consortium (Sustrans, Living Streets and Cycling UK). Courses will generally be provided for single authorities (or combined authorities) and will be for 8 to 12 places for each authority (or combined authority) per course. To register your interest please book a slot for your authority at the following Eventbrite link

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/designing-high-quality-walking-cycling-infrastructure-ltn-120-guidance-tickets-155795834535>.

We are arranging two one-hour online sessions for LAs during the early phase of the bidding window, to discuss the key requirements of the bidding process, and answer any remaining questions. These sessions will cover general bid and value for money requirements, monitoring and evaluation and guidance on consultation. Invitations for these sessions will be circulated in due course.

The Department is in the process of commissioning a number of roundtable events, where Local Authority Leaders and Cabinet Members, will have the opportunity hear from senior representatives of the Department for Transport, joined by other speakers, to discuss their experiences of implementing ambitious active travel programmes. More details on speakers, facilitators, aims, outcomes, and how to reserve a place will be circulated in due course.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R Furness', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Rupert Furness

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