

CABINET

DATE	6 th October 2021
REPORT OF	Councillor Stewart Swinburn Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Sharon Wroot Executive Director Environment, Economy and Resources
SUBJECT	Acceptance of Department for Transport's Local Authority Capability Fund
STATUS	Open
FORWARD PLAN REF NO.	GENERAL EXCEPTION – not included on the Forward Plan and to be considered under the General Exception rules as laid out in the Constitution

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

The Local Authority Capability Fund grant funding will allow the delivery of projects which contribute towards the Council's Stronger Communities outcome by promoting physical activity, reducing transport related carbon emissions and supporting accessibility. In addition, it contributes to the Stronger Economy outcome by encouraging safe and sustainable access to employment, education, training and wider opportunities.

In addition, the grant funding will enable the delivery of projects that contribute to addressing several of our local transport challenges around accessibility, safety, security and health and economic growth. The proposed projects also support the delivery of the Council's Local Plan strategic objectives (transport, climate change, economy and social & health inequality).

The delivery of projects utilising this funding will support the objectives identified in the emerging Zero Carbon Roadmap and the Council's commitments to reducing carbon emissions across the Borough by supporting initiatives that encourage low carbon forms of transport.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks formal Cabinet approval to accept a sum of £338,190 of grant funding from the Department for Transport to deliver active travel projects during 2021/22 and 2022/23.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Authorises the Executive Director of Environment, Economy and Resources, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport to accept £338,190 of grant funding from the Department for Transport on behalf of the Council.
2. Delegates authority to the Executive Director of Environment, Economy and

Resources , in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport to:

- a) finalise the terms of the funding arrangement with the Department for Transport and receive the funds.
 - b) commence related procurement exercises to deliver projects within the programme in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015, to make appropriate contract awards and deal with all actions arising or ancillary to the above, to achieve full implementation.
3. Authorises the Assistant Director Law, Governance and Assets (Monitoring Officer) to settle, complete and execute all documentation arising from the above.

REASONS FOR DECISION

In order for the Department for Transport grant funding to be received by the Council and for the delivery of projects to commence to meet the funding deadline.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 1.1. In spring 2020 the Department for Transport announced the opportunity for local authorities in England to share a new Local Authority Capability Fund (LACF) allocation to support sustainable transport projects and the efforts to tackle the long-term impacts of COVID-19. A funding bid was subsequently submitted to the DfT and in August 2020, North East Lincolnshire Council received confirmation that it had been awarded £338,190 of funding from the LACF.
- 1.2. 'Gear Change', the Government's national cycling and walking plan encourages local authorities to deliver capital infrastructure improvements for walking and cycling alongside measures to encourage and enable its use for short local journeys where active travel has the greatest potential to replace other modes. The package of measures identified in 1.3 provides a comprehensive list of 'inform and encourage' initiatives to be delivered over the next 18 months.
- 1.3. The following projects will be delivered in 2021/22 and 2022/23 utilising this grant funding:
 - 150 additional Bikeability cycle training places for Year 5 pupils at local Primary Schools;
 - Cycle confidence and Learn to Ride training for up to 300 local adults;
 - City & Guilds accredited training in cycle workshop maintenance for 8 local people;
 - Opening of a new Community Cycle Workshop;
 - Delivery of an annual programme of Love to Ride cycle challenges;
 - Year long "Walk to School" initiative at 10 local Primary Schools with a shorter 4-week challenge at a further 20 local schools;
 - 2 Ride Leader training courses for up to 20 new social bike ride leaders;
 - 2 additional Bike to Work Bike Libraries;
 - The launch of a new e-cycle loan scheme;

- An annual cycle security 'Lockswap' event and grant funding for local organisations to improve cycle security at their premises;
- Continuation of Doctor Bike and Be Seen, Be Safe community initiative, and
- Support for businesses to develop Sustainable Travel Plans for their staff and premises.
- Consultancy support to renew and update the Council's draft Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)
- Support to improve the collection, analysis and use of cycling and walking data in developing future external funding bids

2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

2.1. Overall, the package of measures presents a low risk to the Council, the key risks are identified below:

- Strategic Risks - Low, there are strong synergies between the intended projects and the national and local strategic policy including the Local Transport Plan (LTP), Local Plan and the Government's national strategy for cycling and walking 'Gear Change';
- Financial Risks - Low, the projects are fully funded through the Department for Transport's Active Travel (revenue) fund, there is no requirement for a local contribution to the projects;
- Delivery Risks - Low, the majority of projects that a proposed have been delivered previously in NEL including through the current Access Fund project. Poor or non-delivery is unlikely, and each project will be subject to periodic review of delivery with the appropriate Delivery Partner organisation, all of whom NELC have worked with previously;
- Reputational Risks - Low, the main reputational risks are associated with poor or non-delivery of the intended projects, this is unlikely given the safeguards that are currently in place via the Access Fund, and which will be continued to support the delivery of the Active Travel (revenue) funding;
- Exit / Abortive Strategy for this Project - Low, where necessary exit strategies are considered with delivery partners before projects are commenced;
- Insurance Risks - Low, there are unlikely to be any significant differences relating to insurance risks as a result of these project, and
- Impact Assessment - An equality and diversity impact assessment highlighted that the projects were likely to have a positive impact on grounds of age, disability, sex and race. Specific engagement will be programmed to work with these groups.

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1. In developing the package of measures identified in 1.3 above Officers have considered the funding bodies objectives and delivery of the current Access Fund projects to determine which schemes were put forward for consideration. As the LACF is revenue grant funding it cannot be used to deliver new infrastructure schemes, although it is recommended to use at least some of the LACF to support and develop Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) and other infrastructure plans which could then be the subject of

further bids for external capital funding.

- 3.2. Officers also considered the relative impact on the Local Transport Challenges, the Council's priority outcomes and the emerging Net Zero Carbon Roadmap when schemes were proposed.

4. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 There are potential positive reputational implications for the Council resulting from the decision. To deliver this, an action plan will be agreed with the Council's communications service and appointed delivery partners, covering all aspects of project delivery including the monitoring and evaluation of schemes post-delivery.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The grant funding covers 100% of scheme delivery costs. There is no requirement for local match funding towards the delivery of this package of measures.

6. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. Delivery of projects that encourage and enable cycling and walking as realistic options for local journeys around North East Lincolnshire will increase the numbers of cycling and walking journeys which as a consequence will reduce the number journeys by less sustainable means having a positive impact on local air quality and the impact of climate change.

7. CONSULTATION WITH SCRUTINY

- 7.1. There has been no engagement with Scrutiny on this matter.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The report is recommending the acceptance of the grant award from the Department of Transport (DFT) amounting to £338,190. This grant is the Capability Fund grant which replaced the Access Fund. The grant does not require any financial match funding and therefore there will be no additional financial cost to the Council. Resource will be required in respect of administering and monitoring the grant spend but this will be met within the services existing resource envelope.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Receipt of grant funding will be subject to conditionality from the funder and secured by a grant agreement.

9.2 All procurement exercises will be conducted so as to comply with the Council's policy and legal obligations, specifically in compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and supported by relevant officers.

9.3 The delegations sought are consistent with an exercise of this nature.

9.4 Officers should note that an award constitutes a further decision and will be subject to completion of an Officer Decision Record and be subject to call in. Award and implementation timelines should accommodate this.

10.HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct HR implications

11.WARD IMPLICATIONS

Delivery of the package of schemes identified in 1.3 has the potential to affect residents in all Wards.

12.BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

13.CONTACT OFFICER(S)

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