

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	15 January 2015	AGENDA ITEM:	17
TITLE:	LOCAL SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FUND UPDATE		
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SERVICE:	TRANSPORTATION & STREETCARE	WARDS:	BOROUGH WIDE
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Sub-Committee on progress with delivery of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) Small Package, for which £4.9m funding was approved by the Department for Transport (DfT) in July 2011 and the LSTF Large Partnership Package, for which £20.692m funding was approved by the DfT in June 2012.
- 1.2 Detailed decisions are mainly delegated to the Steering Group level in consultation with the Lead Member for Strategic Environment, Planning & Transport. The Steering Group comprises corporate and transport officers and representatives from the Public Health team and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). This report includes records of recent decisions made by the Steering Group for the Sub-Committee to note.
- 1.3 This report provides an update on each of the five delivery themes of the LSTF programme, with particular focus on projects that have reached milestones within the last three months.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

The Sub-Committee is asked to note:

- 2.1 The progress made on the Local Sustainable Transport Fund Projects since the last report and that officers continue to deliver this programme and report progress to this Sub-Committee.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The LSTF is a £560m fund made available by the DfT with the aim of implementing local sustainable transport measures that will deliver lasting benefits to support the local economy and reduce carbon.
- 3.2 Reading successfully secured £4.9m funding in July 2011 for a LSTF Small Project to deliver a package of transport investment measures which are complementary to those already being progressed through the core Local Transport Plan (LTP) implementation programme. The package is also complementary to key planning documents including the Core Strategy, Reading Central Area Action Plan and Reading Station Area Framework.
- 3.3 In partnership with Wokingham Borough Council, West Berkshire Council, the Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the NHS Berkshire West Primary Care Trust (public health function now located within the Local Authority), Reading secured a further £20.692m for an LSTF Large Project in June 2012 to deliver a package of transport investment measures to benefit the wider urban area.
- 3.4 In addition, the DfT announced in July 2014 that Reading Borough Council has been awarded £996k LSTF revenue funding for 2015/16. The project proposal includes a range of sustainable transport initiatives focused on neighbourhood-based active travel interventions and developing more interactive online resources.

4. PROGRAMME PROGRESS

- 4.1 The five delivery themes of the complete LSTF Package are Personalised Travel Planning; Fares, Ticketing and Information; Cycle Hire; Active Travel; and Park and Ride/Rail. Over 25 projects have been identified within these themes, as set out in the bid and since further developed. Substantial progress has been made on all of these projects to date and many are reaching significant milestones shortly. A summary of progress by delivery theme is outlined below.
- 4.2 **Personalised Travel Planning:** The substantial programme of Personalised Travel Planning was completed in October, involving Travel Advisors providing sustainable travel advice to residents and businesses throughout the Reading urban area. An evaluation of the success of the PTP programme will be undertaken as part of the overall LSTF monitoring activities.
- 4.3 **Fares, Ticketing and Information:** The first and second phases of the traffic signal upgrades is underway with works recently completed at George Street/Gosbrook Road, Church Road/Church Street and Caversham Park Road/Henley Road junctions. The upgrades to the method of control of the signals will improve junction efficiency and provide benefits across modes.
- 4.4 **Cycle Hire:** Usage of the ReadyBike cycle hire scheme continues to be positive, with the docking stations at Town Hall Square, Reading Station North, Reading University and Caversham Centre continuing to have particularly high levels of usage. Total rentals to the end of November are recorded as 14,634, covering an estimated 83,200 miles. Over half of rentals were for under 30 minutes with an ongoing mix of leisure, commuter and student use. Day tickets are the most

popular product sold, although annual membership pass holders represent 70 per cent of usage currently. This reflects day tickets being popular for trying out the system and for occasional use, but we have a loyal annual membership which uses the bikes regularly.

- 4.5 The cycle hire docking station at Reading Station South has been installed following works to upgrade the southern interchange, with promotional activities undertaken to publicise availability of the new docking station.
- 4.6 **Active Travel:** The major construction works for the pedestrian cycle bridge over the River Thames are underway with expected completion in summer 2015. Once complete, the bridge will provide a key new route for pedestrians and cyclists between Caversham, Reading Station and central Reading.
- 4.7 Construction of the reconfigured junction at St Mary's Butts / Castle Street is underway, providing improvements for all users including signal upgrades, extended pavements and crossings on key desire lines for pedestrians.
- 4.8 A contractor has been appointed to undertake the repair and upgrade works to the Grade II-listed St Laurence's Church Wall and associated pedestrian route, with works scheduled to be completed in spring 2015.
- 4.9 A Health Walks Coordinator has been appointed to support both LSTF and Public Health objectives, with responsibility for managing the delivery of health walks lead by fully trained volunteers, and the promotion and monitoring of relevant activities to ensure that the programme complies with Walking for Health requirements and their accreditation scheme.
- 4.10 **Park & Ride/Rail:** Construction works are underway for the new park & ride sites at Mere oak and Winnersh Triangle, which together will deliver nearly 1,000 parking spaces. The two sites are being constructed simultaneously with a planned completion date of late spring 2015.
- 4.11 The Mere oak Park & Ride site, located south of M4 junction 11, will provide 579 parking spaces and will be served by the regular Greenwave bus service to and from Central Reading, as well as serving GreenPark and Reading International Business Park. The site will include a terminal building and improved pedestrian and cycle paths alongside the car park, linking to the provision at Junction 11 to connect over the M4.
- 4.12 The Winnersh Triangle Park & Ride site, located near to Winnersh Station, will have 390 spaces and users will have the choice of travelling by bus or train into central Reading. The site will replace the existing Park & Ride site at Loddon Bridge which is prone to flooding.
- 4.13 Construction works are on-going for the Park & Rail site at Theale Station. This project is being led by West Berkshire Council and First Great Western, alongside Network Rail.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 The LSTF Project supports the aims and objectives of the LTP and contributes to the Council's strategic aims, as set out below:

- To develop Reading as a Green City with a sustainable environment and economy at the heart of the Thames Valley.
- To promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 Consultation activities on LTP3 during its development contributed to the LSTF submissions. Engagement is a key component of the LSTF programme and consultation with stakeholders and local communities has been undertaken throughout the project.
- 6.2 Individual consultations on key LSTF projects have been undertaken throughout the duration of the programme, including consultation forms being published and updated on the corporate website as appropriate.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Legal support has been allocated to progress planning and land acquisition requirements for key projects and to offer contractual advice for procurement exercises.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Funding approved by DfT for the Reading LSTF Small Package and the LSTF Large Partnership Package comprises both revenue and capital ring-fenced grants and local contributions.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 Cabinet reports - 11th April 2011 and 28th November 2011.
- 9.2 Traffic Management Advisory Panel reports - 9th September 2011 to 14th March 2013.
- 9.3 Traffic Management Sub-Committee reports since 13th June 2013.