

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	12 MARCH 2015	AGENDA ITEM:	15
TITLE:	LOCAL SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FUND UPDATE		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	TONY PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	TRANSPORTATION & STREETCARE	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	Ruth Leuillette / Chris Maddocks	TEL:	0118 937 2069 / 0118 937 4950
JOB TITLE:	Interim Head of Transport / Senior Transport Planner	E-MAIL:	ruth.leuillette@reading.gov.uk / chris.maddocks@reading.gov.uk

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

- 2.1 The Sub-Committee is asked to note 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.

- 2.2 The Sub-Committee is asked to approve scheme and spend approval for the Local Sustainable Transport Fund 2015/16 Revenue project as set out in paragraph 3.4.
- 2.3 The Sub-Committee is asked to note the process followed by officers in relation to the Lower Henley Road and Wokingham Road advisory cycle schemes as set out in paragraph 4.7 and Appendix 1 and to retain the schemes in their current form.

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, which will help to support the Council's ongoing digital services initiatives.

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 involving Travel Advisors providing sustainable travel advice to residents and businesses throughout the Reading urban area was completed in October 2014.
- 4.3 **Fares, Ticketing and Information:** The first and second phases of the traffic signal upgrades are underway with works recently commenced at Henley

Road/Lower Henley Road, Henley Road/All Hallows Road, Basingstoke Road/Rose Kiln Lane and Basingstoke Road/Buckland Road junctions. The upgrade 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 Christchurch Green, Reading University, Town Hall Square, Reading Station and Caversham Centre continuing to have particularly high levels of usage and with the University's docking stations having the highest level of usage in the scheme during their term time. Reading Station South opened in mid-January and has been well used. Total rentals from the launch of the scheme in mid-June to the end of January are recorded as 16,837, covering an estimated 90,192 miles, with an ongoing mix of leisure, commuter and student use. Day tickets are popular for trying out the system and for occasional use, and we have a loyal annual membership which uses the bikes regularly (in January this represented 47 per cent of subscriptions).
- 4.5 A customer survey has revealed that 44 per cent of trips are replacing vehicle mode trips with 33 per cent of rentals from people who do not own a bike. 26 per cent of trips are new trips and 78 per cent said they would increase or continue their usage in 2015.
- 4.6 Construction work for the docking station at Earley Station has commenced and it is expected to open in the spring.
- 4.7 **Active Travel:** In relation to cycling, two corridor advisory schemes have been implemented along Lower Henley Road and Wokingham Road that include on-carriageway advisory cycle markings. A summary of the details and explanation of the schemes in the context of the adopted Cycling Strategy and local circumstances are set out in Appendix 1 to this report. As with all Highway schemes, the Council has to balance the needs of all road users and make the best use of the available road space. Both schemes have achieved these objectives and members of the Sub-Committee are therefore requested to note the process followed by officers and retain the schemes in their current form.
- 4.8 Construction of the reconfigured junction at St Mary's Butts/Castle Street is nearing completion, providing improvements for all users including signal upgrades, extended pavements and crossings on key desire lines for pedestrians.
- 4.9 Works to repair and upgrade the Grade II-listed St Laurence's Church Wall and associated pedestrian route have commenced and are scheduled to be completed in summer 2015.
- 4.10 Please refer to the Major Projects Update report (Item 10) for progress on the pedestrian cycle bridge over the River Thames.
- 4.11 **Park & Ride/Rail:** Please refer to the Major Projects Update report (Item 10) for progress on the park and ride sites at Mere oak and Winnersh Triangle.
- 4.12 **LSTF Revenue 2015/16:** Officers continue to work up a programme of sustainable transport initiatives for the LSTF Revenue 2015/16 project, focused on neighbourhood-based active travel interventions and developing more interactive

online resources. Progress on this project will be reported to future meetings of the Sub-Committee.

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.

Appendix 1: Active Travel - Cycling Schemes

Lower Henley Road

In August 2014, as part of the 2014/15 resurfacing programme, new advisory cycle lanes were introduced on Lower Henley Road. Advisory cycle lanes are parts of the carriageway which other vehicles should not enter unless it is seen to be safe to do so and are commonly used across the Country.

The scheme was introduced in line with Section 4 of the Cycling Strategy which states; the Council will 'review existing road markings as part of the annual road resurfacing programme and introduce new cycling facilities where possible'. In addition, the Cycling Strategy highlights the benefits of installing cycle lanes and recommends the implementation of new cycling facilities on an area basis and through the annual resurfacing programme'.

The scheme was introduced with 1.2m wide cycle lanes consistent with the minimum set out in the strategy with lanes in both the uphill and downhill direction whereas the previous arrangement was downhill only. In addition, the road centre line was removed, again in accordance with the cycle strategy. The cycle lanes were continued past the existing on-street parking areas without a formal door zone as the assessment completed by officers confirmed the relative risk of an incident occurring was low due to the type of parking in the area (residential), the volume and type of traffic using Lower Henley Road and the accident record from the previous three-years. The width of the new parking facilities is also consistent with the Strategy which states we will provide bays with a minimum width of 2.0m to 2.4m.

Wokingham Road

In December 2014, in line with the Council's ongoing cycling improvements associated with the LSTF programme, new cycle lanes and cycle markings were introduced on Wokingham Road between Cemetery Junction and the Borough Boundary.

The scheme was introduced in accordance with the Council's Cycling Strategy and incorporates a mix of advisory cycle lanes and cycle markings. Where they have been introduced, the minimum width of the advisory cycle lanes are consistent with the minimum set out in the Strategy at 1.2m and any adjacent parking bays are between 2.0m and 2.4m wide. In the area of the scheme where on-street parking is already provided (between Green Road and Holmes Road), the advisory cycle lanes were continued without a door zone as the assessment completed by officers concluded that the majority of parking is residential and there have been no occurrences of injury accidents involving cyclists recorded in this area for the past three years. This layout has also been successfully introduced along Berkeley Avenue where the centre line has also been maintained.

During the assessments, advisory lanes were not introduced along the section of Wokingham Road between St Peters Avenue and Palmer Park Avenue as there is a high turnover of short term parking and an existing record of injury accidents involving cyclists as a result.

Development of both schemes included careful consideration of introducing wider cycle lanes as requested by the local cycling groups. Unfortunately, due to the existing road widths, existing grass verges and existing demands on overall road space, substantial changes would have had to be made to the road layout and all on street parking would have had to be removed.

As with all Highway schemes, the Council has to balance the needs of all road users and make the best use of the available road space. Both schemes have achieved these objectives and members of the Sub-Committee are therefore requested to note the process followed by officers and retain the schemes in their current form.