

From: Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment & Transport

To: Michael Payne, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

Subject: Active Travel Funding Tranche 2

Key decision 21/00002

Classification: **Unrestricted**

**Electoral Division:**

| <b>District</b>    | <b>Electoral Division</b>      | <b>County Member</b> |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Canterbury         | Canterbury City South          | Ida Linfield         |
| Folkestone & Hythe | Cheriton Sandgate & Hythe East | Rory Love OBE        |
| Folkestone & Hythe | Folkestone West                | David Monk           |
| Folkestone & Hythe | Hythe West                     | Martin Whybrow       |
| Gravesham          | Gravesend East                 | Diane Marsh          |
| Gravesham          | Gravesend East                 | Alan Ridgers         |
| Gravesham          | Northfleet & Gravesend West    | Dr Lauren Sullivan   |
| Thanet             | Birchington & Rural            | Emma Dawson          |
| Thanet             | Birchington & Rural            | Liz Hurst            |

**Summary:** Subject to results of the initial high-level consultation (9<sup>th</sup> December to 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021), this paper seeks approval to move each of the five named active travel schemes to a detailed design stage including working towards a second more detailed level of public consultation.

**Recommendation(s):** The Cabinet Member for Highways & Transport is asked to give approval to proceed to the next stages of commissioning consultants to progress to detailed design and further consultation as shown at Appendix A. The schemes will be informed by the consultation results.

## 1 Introduction

1.1 The Department for Transport have provided two phases of active travel funding. The first tranche supported the installation of temporary projects for the COVID-19 pandemic and the second tranche is to enable and support the creation of permanent infrastructure to support walking and cycling and active travel.

1.2 The DfT ran a competitive bidding process for tranche 2, and Local Authorities were invited to submit their top five named schemes for consideration. There were very clear criteria to establish the types of schemes that LA's could include in the bids, and these were:

- Strategic schemes that challenged the status quo of the network
- Segregated cycle routes only (no shared or lining schemes to be included)

- The schemes had to score highly on the Government's 'Propensity to Cycle' tool and the 'Rapid Cycleway Prioritisation Tool'
- 1.3 Schemes were selected on this basis and Kent included an additional 10 schemes above the five requested. It was an ambitious bid that made reference to the unique and rural nature of Kent and the different landscapes and ambitions of the various districts.
- 1.4 The bid was submitted on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2020 and the announcement was made on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2020. Kent was awarded £6.098million. This was the third highest settlement in the Country. It covers the cost of the five named schemes.
- 1.5 In light of the nationwide push back on the Tranche 1 schemes (mostly related to the unrealistic timescales preventing consultation) the Government has now made some key amendments to the grant conditions of this fund, including
- Prior to the 11<sup>th</sup> December, Kent must evidence public consultation with local communities. Kent have made a positive start on this by launching a high-level early consultation on the five named schemes to test the community appetite of the principles around the active travel investment. [www.kent.gov.uk/kentactivetravel](http://www.kent.gov.uk/kentactivetravel)
  - The timescales for spending this fund have been relaxed to enable proper time to consult communities and develop the 5 schemes; expenditure by March 2022 has now been suggested.
- 1.6 The five schemes that were submitted have three broad strands to them: walking and cycling infrastructure, healthy neighbourhoods and placemaking improvements. Due to the broad range of interventions there is a strong likelihood that all schemes will gain support to progress to the detailed design stage – the exact scope of the improvements can be developed with the consultation feedback in mind. Notwithstanding this, if the consultation highlights a lack of support for the scheme proposals then there will need to be a further review of the schemes to be delivered.
- 1.7 The scheme proposals are intended to give people more opportunities to choose cycling and walking for their day-to-day journeys, as part of wider government plans to boost active travel.

## **2 The report**

- 2.1 The Department for Transport has awarded Kent County Council £6.098m for five named walking and cycling active travel schemes across the County.
- Canterbury: Littlebourne Road to the City Centre
  - Folkestone: Central Railway Station to Cheriton
  - Thanet: Birchington to Margate Sands
  - Folkestone: Hythe to Dymchurch
  - Gravesham: Gravesend to Northfleet
- 2.2 The schemes support the objective of promoting active travel in line with the Active Travel Strategy as well as delivering health benefits, reducing congestion,

promoting healthy neighbourhoods, and improving accessibility. These schemes will give residents more opportunities to choose cycling and walking for their day to day journeys and we will seek to ensure walking and cycling is safe, easy, attractive, and inclusive to all.

2.3 We have developed some initial ideas in five locations which give residents more opportunity to choose cycling and walking for their day-to-day journeys. The schemes are still very much in a concept stage and our consultation on the scheme ideas will run from 9<sup>th</sup> December to 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021. We want to understand and incorporate the views of local residents, businesses, stakeholders and the travelling public in our proposals. Feedback from these consultations will be vital in helping to shape how the schemes are progressed.

### **3 Financial Implications**

3.1 The DFT's grant conditions state that the expenditure is for the named schemes contained in the bid, for the purpose and benefit of Active Travel and it requires Kent to carry out advanced consultation.

3.2 The funds were originally intended for expenditure by March 2021, however since the Department for Transport spent some months deliberating the grant offer, we now have an extension, and the schemes should be delivered as soon as possible. DfT suggested March 2022 at the most recent briefing. We therefore propose to commission consultants to design the schemes and work with us towards second, more detailed, consultations for all schemes. We will come back to Committee in June for approval to construct/deliver the schemes.

3.3 The DfT grant of £6.098m will fully cover both the capital and revenue costs associated with the scheme as per current concept designs. These costs are split as follows:

- Revenue £1.220m
- Capital £4.878m

3.2 The schemes' costs are scalable to suit the budget available and therefore present no financial risk to KCC. A proportion to allow for risk was included in the cost estimates. Independent cost consultants will be used throughout the design process to ensure cost assurance for the whole life costs of the schemes.

### **4 Legal implications**

4.1 Land transfer may need to be sought from the Ministry of Defence (MOD) for one of the schemes in Folkestone & Hythe (Hythe to Dymchurch). Discussion with the MOD has commenced.

### **5 Equalities implications**

5.1 Five Equality Impact Assessments have been completed for the individual projects, see background documents. KCC will review these documents whilst keeping any affected groups informed and updated.

## 6 Conclusions

- 6.1 Kent County Council have been working closely with a consultant through the Kent Professional Services Framework Contract to deliver the first consultation on the concept of the five schemes. Following the responses from the consultation we want to move to the next stage of design and further consultations.
- 6.2 There is highly likely to be more funding opportunities coming forward from Central Government under the Active Travel agenda. Central Government are establishing an Ofsted style body to assess Local Authorities' active travel achievements and it is understood that Local Authorities will receive a sliding scale of funding in the future depending on their active travel achievements.

## 7 Background Documents

The five EQIA's can be seen on our corporate website.

### 8. Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Member for Highways & Transport is asked to give approval to proceed to the next stages of commissioning consultants to progress to detailed design and further consultation as shown at Appendix A. The schemes will be informed by the consultation results.

## 9. Appendices and background documents

### Appendix A – Record of Decision EqIA for each scheme;

<https://kccconsultations.inconsult.uk/consult.ti/kentactivetravelconsultation/consultationHome>

## 10. Contact details

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