

From: Simon Jones, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment & Transport

To: Peter Osborne, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

Subject: Active Travel Funding Grant (ATF5 – Tranche 5) – Capital and Revenue

Key decision: 25/00062

Electoral Division: All

Summary: This paper provides an update on the Active Travel Fund - Tranche 5 and the strategic approach to how Officers intend to deliver schemes.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Member for Highways & Transport is asked to give approval to accept the Active Travel Fund Grant (ATF5) and take the projects through their various stages of scheme development and delivery as listed below:

1. APPROVE the acceptance of the Active Travel Fund (ATF5) Grant award and the deployment of the grant funding in accordance with the grant conditions to take the ATF5 projects through their various stages of scheme development and delivery.
2. DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport and the S151 Officer to agree to enter into the necessary grant agreements.
3. DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport to deploy and manage the grant allocation funding to take the ATF5 projects through their various stages of scheme development and delivery.
4. DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member and S151 Officer, to accept and deploy future years funding allocations of the grant, providing it is on similar terms.
5. DELEGATE authority to Director of Infrastructure to progress and complete all relevant construction property and Compulsory Purchase Orders as necessary to deliver the schemes.
6. DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport to take other necessary actions, including but not limited to entering into contracts or other legal agreements, as required to implement the decision as shown at Appendix A.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Active Travel England (ATE - an Executive Agency for The Department for Transport) have awarded Kent County Council £1,886,065 (£1,671,054m Capital and £215,011 Revenue), under Tranche 5 of the Active Travel Fund, for the development or construction of active travel schemes across the County.

- 1.2 This is a directly awarded annual grant based on the population size of Kent and our self-assessment capability rating. The capability ratings are a key indicator of standards of active travel delivery across the country. They form part of future funding decisions, allowing Government to target funding and support. Local Authorities are rated from 0 to 4 on their capability to make schemes that support the Governments Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy.

The ratings focus primarily on 3 areas:

- Local Leadership
- Network Planning
- Delivery record

- 1.3 Kent were successful in moving up from Level 1 to Level 2 in the 2024 rating review. The five capability rating levels can be broadly characterised as follows:

- Level 0: Little local leadership or support and limited record of delivery
- Level 1: Some local leadership and support with developing plans and isolated interventions
- Level 2: Visible local leadership and support, with emerging network
- Level 3: Strong local leadership and support, substantial network in place with increasing modal share
- Level 4: Dense network in place with a high proportion of trips made by walking, wheeling and cycling. Very supportive leadership and policies to further improve transport choice.

- 1.4 To enable us to access the grant funding, KCC were required to submit an indicative list of schemes to Active Travel England for assurance and review before 31 March 2025 deadline. The list was produced initially by requesting all districts and boroughs to provide their priority list and then assessing these schemes to confirm local support and designs generally in line with the Local Transport Notes (LTN) which summarise the latest and most important ideas about traffic management issues and provide guidance for local authorities. LTN 1/20 provides guidance for local authorities on designing high-quality, safe cycling, walking and wheeling infrastructure.

- 1.5 There is an internal Member Cycling and Walking Group which meets monthly to discuss and guide officers on potential schemes to promote. This list was shared with the members of the group and officers' approach was endorsed at the 11 March 2025 meeting.

- 1.6 Table 1 below sets out the list of named schemes, their district or borough location, the type of scheme it is (development or construction) and the estimated costs:

Scheme name	District/Borough	Scheme type (development, construction, change control or maintenance)	Allocated Cost (£)	Capital	Revenue
Faversham East West Walking Route	Swale	Construction	70000	62020	7980
Hermitage Lane Maidstone Puffin Crossing	Maidstone	Construction	421065	373064	48001
West Malling 20mph Extension	Tonbridge & Malling	Construction	70000	62020	7980
Kingsmead Road Canterbury Zebra Crossing	Canterbury	Construction	120000	106320	13680
Littlebourne 20mph Zone	Canterbury	Construction	25000	22150	2850
Hartsdown Road Margate Zebra crossing	Thanet	Construction	100000	88600	11400
CON-CA-Island Road Sturry Zebra Crossing	Canterbury	Construction	75000	66450	8550
Hall Rd Toucan Crossing	Gravesham	Construction	73378	65013	8365
Hever Court Rd Toucan Crossing	Gravesham	Construction	66622	59027	7595
Otford Sevenoaks Cycle Route	Sevenoaks	Development	45000	39870	5130
London Rd Stone Cycle Route	Dartford	Development	100000	88600	11400
Langton to Rusthall Cycle Route	Tunbridge Wells	Development	80000	70880	9120
Faversham North-South Route Junction Improvements	Swale	Development	50000	44300	5700
Great Chart to Chilmington Footway	Ashford	Development	50000	44300	5700
Sturry Road cycle phase within existing signals	Canterbury	Development	10000	8860	1140
Dover Priory to town centre cycle route	Dover	Development	25000	22150	2850
Gravesend Road, A226, Shorne - junction upgrade	Gravesham	Development	100000	88600	11400
Hythe to St Marys Cinque Ports Cycle Route	Folkestone & Hythe	Development	75000	66450	8550
Shorncliffe Road Cycle Route	Folkestone & Hythe	Development	30000	26580	3420
High Street, Tonbridge Cycle Route	Tonbridge & Malling	Maintenance	150000	132900	17100
Colonel Stephens Greenway Resurfacing	Ashford	Maintenance	150000	132900	17100
Total			1886065	1671054	215011

Table 1 – list of named schemes

2.0 Governance

- 2.1 The schemes are located within most of the districts and boroughs and is consistent with 'Infrastructure First' principles by accelerating the delivery of key transport infrastructure and enhancing leverage of external infrastructure investment within the districts and boroughs from central government. The schemes will also contribute towards providing viable and attractive travel options that focus on both road and active travel modes. This supports the Framing Kent's Future – our Council Strategy 2022-2026.
- 2.2 The schemes will be solely funded by the Active Travel Grant and therefore supports Securing Kent's Future – 2022-2026. No funding is required from the Council's feasibility reserve. All costs are covered by the Grant – see 3.1.
- 2.3 The Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport and the Cross-Party working group that we have established provide an oversight and guidance for officers to investigate and prioritise schemes identified by districts and boroughs via their Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) and via KCC's Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (KCWIP).
- 2.4 In order to progress schemes as quickly and efficiently as possible, officers undertake the following governance for each scheme:
 1. KCC Officers develop schemes or plans with the districts and boroughs and assists them in producing their LCWIPs where applicable.

2. Consultations take place with the local communities and stakeholder groups prior to any progression of detailed designs and construction.
3. The KCC Cycling and Walking Member Group are kept up to date along with local KCC Members where schemes are within their elected ward boundaries.
4. Results of consultations and officer recommendations are reported to the local Joint Transportation Boards.
5. Joint Transport Board recommendations are agreed by the Cabinet Member for Highways & Transportation.

3.0 Financial Implications

- 3.1 The cost of the schemes will be fully covered by the grant awarded to KCC. These grants make allowance for the staff costs and design fees associated with the scheme delivery in addition to the construction costs and any legal costs associated. When necessary, a change control procedure allows KCC to manage costs within the funding envelope with no additional KCC funds required from base budgets.
- 3.2 There are no revenue implications to KCC, the schemes' costs are scalable to suit the budgets available and Change Control with the DfT via Active Travel England can take place to adjust projects within the overall programme.
- 3.3 The detailed costings for construction schemes will be revisited as the projects progress through the various design stages and will be using the Highway Term Maintenance Contract (evidencing best value). The costings include an element to cover risk and contingency and use of the existing procured contracts reduces any cost uncertainty to ensure it is affordable within the funding envelope.
- 3.4 The Council must commit to spend the grant funding on the specific named schemes following scheme assurance with ATE by the end of the funding period, 31 March 2026 and construction schemes to be completed by 31 March 2027. The assurance process requires best Value for Money evidence for construction and maintenance schemes but not for development schemes and maximises outcomes. Each scheme is assessed on its own merits rather than its location within the county and includes assessing key benefits from active travel including improved health and lower workplace absenteeism from physical activity; environmental and congestion benefits from reduced car miles; and journey quality benefits from safer and more pleasant travel.
- 3.5 The grant funding is specifically allocated to named active travel related schemes that have gone through the assurance process and cannot be allocated to other budget headings. There is a change control process which allows for movement of funds between named active travel schemes only.

4.0 Programme

- 4.1 Development schemes must be completed by 31 March 2026 and construction schemes by 31 March 2027 however there is the ability to request from Active Travel England changes to the programme via a change control process.

- 4.2 It is anticipated that construction will be undertaken using the Highway Term Maintenance Contract mainly but there is also the opportunity to use the Drainage Framework or via competitive tender procedures.

5.0 Options considered but discarded

- 5.1 Not to accept the direct grant. KCC would not be able to fund active travel projects that are shown to have health, environmental, accessibility, community and economic benefits for Kent residents.

6.0 Legal Implications

- 6.1 The Council is expected to have the necessary governance and assurance arrangements in place and that all legal and other statutory obligations and consents will be adhered to, which may include, but not solely, state aid/subsidy control, equalities duties, procurement, health and safety and fraud.

7.0 Equalities implications

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) will be provided as each scheme is developed and will show that there will be positive impacts for all users. There may be some temporary negative impacts during the construction, and this will be explored further.

8.0 Other Corporate Implications

- 8.1 There are no other corporate implications identified in taking this decision.

9.0 Conclusions

- 9.1 Active Travel England (ATE - an Executive Agency for The Department for Transport) have awarded Kent County Council £1,886,065 (£1,671,054m Capital and £215,011 Revenue), under Tranche 5 of the Active Travel Fund, for the development or construction of active travel schemes across the County.
- 9.2 To enable us to access the grant funding, KCC were required to submit an indicative list of schemes to Active Travel England for assurance and review before 31 March 2025 deadline. The grants fully cover all scheme costs.
- 9.3 The Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport and the Cross-Party Working Group provide governance oversight and guidance for officers to investigate and prioritise schemes identified by districts and boroughs via their Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) and via KCC's Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (KCWIP)

10.0 Recommendation(s)

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11.0 Appendices

- Appendix A – Proposed Record of Decision
- EQIA

12.0 Contact Details

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