

From: Matthew Balfour, Cabinet Member – Planning, Highways, Transport & Waste  
Barbara Cooper- Corporate Director - Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee – 15 June 2017

Decision No: **17/00044**

Subject: **Step Ahead of the Rest (StAR) - Sustainable Travel Revenue Programme**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

**Past Pathway of Paper:** Cabinet Member Decision

**Future Pathway of Paper:** N/A

**Electoral Division:** Countywide

**Summary:** Following a successful bid to the Department for Transport's (DfT) Access Fund, Kent County Council has been awarded £1,452,000 to deliver its bid Step Ahead of the Rest (StAR). StAR is an integrated package of measures to support economic development and healthy lifestyles by encouraging use of active and sustainable modes of travel to access employment, education and training. They are targeted at locations that have received Local Growth Fund investment, as well as significant economic development sites across Kent due to be completed before 2020, and will build on previous Local Sustainable Transport Fund schemes.

The attached decision was taken between meetings as it could not be reasonably deferred to the next programmed meeting of the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee for the reasons set out in paragraph 6.1 below.

**Recommendation(s):**

The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to note that decision number 17/00044 has been taken in accordance with the process set out in Appendix 4 Part 6 of the Council's constitution to accept the DfT funding to enable the StAR programme to be delivered. Specifically this comprises approval to spend this grant in order to:

- i) Pay staffing costs associated with delivering the programme;
- ii) Delegate authority to the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste to procure, award and amend contracts as necessary; and
- iii) Make grants to transport operators, community interest companies and businesses, in accordance with our agreement procedures.

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 In 2016 the Department for Transport created and invited bids for the Access Fund (2017-2020), to support sustainable transport projects that seek to grow the economy. Kent County Council was successful in its bid, Step Ahead of the Rest (StAR), securing £1,452,000 for the three year period. The StAR programme includes measures such as bike loans, adult cycle training, workplace travel challenges, travel ambassadors in schools and improved signage. Full details are shown in the StAR bid application form, attached at Appendix A. This report provides an overview of the StAR programme.

1.2 The StAR programme will complement the Local Enterprise Partnership funded Local Growth Fund (LGF) capital schemes in West Kent and Kent Thameside (reported to this committee on 9 April 2015) as well as to extend the benefits countywide. It will also complement the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) Kent Connected programme (reported to this committee on 21 July 2015).

1.3 The main projects include:

- Workplace Travel Challenge
- Brief Interventions (behavioural change advice)
- Wheels to Work (moped and cycle loans)
- Youth Travel Ambassadors in schools
- Small Steps pedestrian road safety training
- Adult cycle training
- Sustrans Cycle Rangers
- Signage Refresh
- Park and Pedal (cycle from Park and Ride sites)
- Workplace cycle loans
- Cycle refurbishing and community sales
- Cycle/ Walk videos on Kent Connected
- Walk/ Cycle maps
- Cycle corridor route assessments and wayfinding strategies

## **2. Financial Implications**

2.1 The programme is externally funded, made up of DfT grant and external partner match funding. A small amount of match funding has been provided by the County Council in the form of staff time to deliver the Workplace Travel Challenge and oversee the programme. The payments to the County Council will be released by DfT in 2 segments each year: 75% in July and 25% in the following May.

## **3. Policy Framework**

3.1 Improving transport is identified in the KCC Strategic Statement 2015-2020 under outcome 2: Kent Communities feel the benefits of economic growth by being in work, healthy and enjoying a good quality of life.

3.2 StAR relates to priorities 3, 4, 5 and 7 within the Growth Environment and Transport Directorate Business Plan 2017 - 2018:

- (3) Explore and develop multi-agency approaches to improve delivery of GET's services
- (4) Develop and deliver GET's county-wide strategies
- (5) Develop GET's offer of a preventative model to supporting the health and wellbeing of Kent's residents and related outcomes across KCC and our partners
- (7) Plan and deliver appropriate growth in the County, and in doing so, explore and utilise smart technology to support delivery of better outcomes

3.3 StAR also contributes towards achieving KCC's Active Travel Strategy and Action Plan by encouraging people to walk or cycle all or part of their journey to work or education.

#### **4. Legal implications**

4.1 KCC will enter into legal agreements with partner organisations who are delivering individual projects. This will secure agreement for the delivery as outlined in the bid to the DfT.

#### **5. Equalities implications**

5.1 An EqIA has been carried out and is attached at Appendix B. No adverse impacts on protected characteristic groups were found. It was found however that some groups may benefit less from certain projects promoting walking and cycling than others. Actions to address this are included in the EqIA action plan. There is significant potential for positive outcomes for certain protected characteristic groups as a result of the programme.

#### **6. Decision taken by Cabinet Member**

6.1 The attached decision was taken between meetings as it could not be reasonably deferred to the next programmed meeting of the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee. Confirmation of the grant from DfT was received in April 2017. The StAR programme runs for 3 years (01 April 2017 to 31 March 2020) with specific deliverables due each year. Taking the decision before the Cabinet Committee in June enabled progress to be made in April, May and June towards mobilising partners and delivering the projects. This has meant that valuable time has been saved in the first 12 month period, helping to ensure the Council makes full use of the grant available and achieves its objectives.

#### **7. Conclusions**

7.1 StAR is an important scheme which aligns with County Council policies to keep Kent moving, to improve accessibility, reduce congestion and pollution and encourage active travel to benefit the economy, the environment and public health. At a time of severe and ongoing budget pressures on the County Council this is a welcome injection of revenue funding to enable the Council to remain at the forefront of delivering transport innovations to support the travel needs of Kent's residents and businesses.

## 8. Recommendation(s)

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## 9. Background Documents

### 9.1 Record of Decision

### 9.2 StAR bid application form -

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=SD5171&ID=5171&RPID=15203912>

### 9.3 Equalities Impact Assessment –

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=SD5170&ID=5170&RPID=15203924>

## 10. Contact details

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