

Transport Board

Active Travel Emergency COVID-19 Response

Purpose of Report

This report outlines the SCR proposal for active travel interventions submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) for £1.437m Emergency Active Travel Funding.

Thematic Priority

Secure investment in infrastructure where it will do most to support growth

Recommendations

That members of the Board:

- Endorse the allocation of funding to the four Local Authorities and SCR/PTE and the proposals submitted to the DfT to the value of £1.437m in relation to the government's Emergency Active Travel funding.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** The government released new statutory guidance on the 9th May, along with an announcement of £250m emergency funding this year for Active Travel. The statutory guidance was further clarified in a letter from the DfT advising that the changes we plan should be based on our LCWIP (Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan) and include:
- Re-allocating road space to active travel, including the use of cones etc.
 - Routing car travel away from congested places
 - Engaging with employers with information and measures to support active travel
 - Reducing speed limits
 - Creating pop-up features such as park and ride and temporary cycle parking etc
- 1.2** SCR had already been developing a COVID-19 Active Travel response and partner authorities were already drawing up and implementing schemes.
- 1.3** On the 23rd May it was further announced by the DfT that the Emergency funding would involve £25m for a national cycle repair schemes and that an indicative SCR allocation of the remaining funding would total £7.168m
- 1.4** On the 27th May a letter was sent to the SCR detailing that the funding would be split into two phases and setting out details of the process for applying for the first £45m (SCR indicative allocation £1.437m). The first phase is targeted on closing roads to through traffic, installing segregated cycle lanes and widening pavements. Further

written clarification from the DfT was received that work being implemented in response to the letter on 9th May would qualify for this funding provided it met the criteria.

- 1.5 On the 1st of June the MCA agreed to accept the Emergency Active Travel Grant Funding from the government and confirmed that proposals for the first tranche of investment should be considered by the Transport Board. The MCA also adopted the Active Travel Implementation Plan as the SCR LCWIP.

2. Proposal and justification

- 2.1 In response to the initial information about funding, the four Local Authority partners drafted plans for measures to address the challenges and opportunities for active travellers that the COVID-19 lockdown has presented. The schemes will help with social distancing near shops with queues, and busy footways and will be progressed quickly. Measures to create active travel lanes were also identified, and some have been implemented. The SCR Active Travel map has been a source of significant local intelligence on where there is local demand. It has over 1000 comments and over 350 additional people registered since 10th April – the total comments are well over 4000 and we have over 1000 registered users.
- 2.2 Active Travel measures will play a significant role in easing capacity constraints on public transport. This is recognised by the Government and public transport use was used by the Department to determine funding allocations.
- 2.3 With the additional information for phase 1, funding schemes that qualify were identified in three distinct groups:
- Those that had been progressed between 9th and 27th May
 - Those that were planned to be progressed from the 27th May until funding arrives (estimated at end of June)
 - Those that could be started within four weeks of funding, and completed in less than 8 weeks (estimated implementation in July and August)

The DfT Guidance indicates that if work has not started within four weeks of receiving the allocation under this tranche of funding or has not been completed within eight weeks of starting then the Department will reserve the right to claw the funding back by adjusting downwards a future grant payment to authorities.

The bid to the DfT is included at Appendix 1

- 2.4 Funding has been allocated across the Local Authorities on a per capita basis as follows:

Recipient	Proportion	Amount
SCR / SYPTE	Top slice 2.5%	£36,000
Barnsley	17.48%	£241,000
Rotherham	18.87%	£265,000
Doncaster	22.14%	£311,000
Sheffield	41.52%	£584,000
Total		£1,437,000

The SCR allocation will cover management costs.

- 2.5 The SCR bid to the DfT is included in Appendix 1. The deadline for submitting this was Friday 5th June. Board members are invited to endorse the bid that was submitted to Government.
- 2.6 Partner authorities are required to monitor usage of any facilities by active travellers, and the data will be used to inform future schemes and how they will be adapted to become permanent active travel facilities.
- 2.7 The DfT will undertake an assessment of our proposal to confirm the allocation of funding to SCR, we understand SCR will know the outcome of this towards the end of June or beginning of July.
- 2.8 We currently do not have information from government on arrangements for the second tranche of funding anticipated for later in the summer.

3. Consideration of alternative approaches

- 3.1 Enabling active travel through infrastructure and consistent public messaging will support travel choice and safe travelling at a difficult time. Sheffield City Region and SYPTA are in a position to co-ordinate this. In the absence of intervention there is a risk that displaced public transport users will use cars resulting in congestion and pollution. A 'do nothing' approach was therefore rejected
- 3.2 SCR considered allocating funding in different ways, for example in line with the delivery of the Active Travel Implementation Plan. However, given the emergency nature of this funding and that the Department has stipulated funding criteria and will appraise proposals, this is not recommended.

4. Implications

- 4.1 **Financial**
We await government confirmation of the nature (capital/revenue) and value of funding available to SCR.
- 4.2 **Legal**
We await the DfT's Terms and Conditions in relation to this funding. The SCR will enter into appropriate grant agreements with the Local Authorities for this funding.
- 4.3 **Risk Management**
There are risks of non-delivery of these funds due to resourcing constraints or shortages of required materials. Reallocation of resources to these schemes could risk slowing down progress on the development of other transport programmes.
- 4.4 **Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion**
Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion will be actively considered in the design of these schemes.

5. Communications

- 5.1 These schemes are already the subject of significant media coverage in South Yorkshire. There is an opportunity to promote these schemes through SCR communications activity in tandem with promoting the Active Travel Implementation Plan, 2040 map and SCR Active Travel map.

6. Appendices/Annexes

6.1 Proposal submitted to the Department for Transport on 5th June 2020.

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Background papers used in the preparation of this report are available for inspection at: 11 Broad Street West, Sheffield S1 2BQ

Other sources and references: n/a