

TRANSPORT & ENVIRONMENT BOARD

4th March 2021

Transforming Cities Fund – Expressions of Interest for inclusion of new schemes into the TCF programme

Purpose of Report

To provide details of new schemes that are requesting inclusion in the TCF programme for consideration. Schemes are accepted to reduce programme risk through over programming, progression is entirely contingent on funding being available in the TCF programme.

Thematic Priority

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

Recommendations

That members of the Transport Board:

- Approve the inclusion of the five 'Expression of Interests' as set out in Section 2.1 within the TCF programme for development to Outline Business Case.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** The Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) for the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) programme was submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) on 27th November 2019. The subsequent acceptance of the £166m grant from DfT was reported at the MCA meeting on 1st June 2020.
- 1.2** Following concerns on the pace of the programme's initial delivery, the Transport and Environment Board (TEB) approved a proposal to commence a programme review. The results of the initial review were reported to TEB in January 2021. A number of proposed steps to increase oversight on performance and mitigate some of the delivery risk were approved, including '*To increase the resilience, and therefore likely performance, of the programme a level of over-programming could be more actively developed, the review process has indicated that the current pipeline for eligible schemes is weak*'
- 1.3** All five scheme delivery partners have subsequently been given the opportunity to put forward schemes to be considered as over-programming. Schemes could either be variations of existing activity (for example, additional interventions at rail stations already in the programme or investing in rail stations not currently in the programme) or new activity. Variations of existing activity will be considered through the established business case process. This new activity has been considered through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process, the outcome of which is the subject of this report.

- 1.4 If a scheme is approved for inclusion in the TCF programme, the programme SOBC will need to be updated accordingly and the Board will have an opportunity to confirm its decision when it is notified at the next meeting. Approved schemes will be able to access the early release of scheme development funding to contribute towards the costs of delivering an Outline Business Case (OBC). In June 2020, MCA approved a release of 2% of the total scheme cost to contribute towards the costs of this task.
- 1.5 Development funding is made available to fund to OBC, progression beyond this point is contingent on schemes meeting TCF outcomes, providing value for money and headroom being available in the TCF programme to fund further development then delivery. There is not currently £5.3m headroom within the TCF programme.
- 1.6 As a reminder, the following objectives were defined for the TCF programme:
- To better connect the areas of transport poverty with areas of opportunity in a safe and sustainable way
 - To affect a mode shift away from the private car on those corridors where new opportunities are likely to see an increase in demand or where growth could be stifled
 - To create a cultural shift towards making cycling and walking the natural choice for shorter journeys
 - To achieve the above in ways that address current health issues and improve air quality across the SCR

2. Proposal and justification

- 2.1 Five Expressions of Interest (EOI) have been received to date. They are all from BMBC – and are made up of three proposed ‘bike hubs’ and active travel routes that are complimentary to those already included in the TCF programme. Looking at each EOI in a bit more detail:

Barnsley Active Travel Hub (total cost circa £2.4m)

- Would replace the existing hub at the Interchange – which has now out-grown its space
- The success of the existing hub shows demand for a service
- Would be a new build on the Courthouse Car Park site (part of the development known as ‘The Seam’)
- Would be located close to the transport interchange on a site identified for low carbon town centre residential development and new green public realm

Darton Active Travel Hub (total cost circa £0.3m)

- Would use an existing building owned by BMBC, with support already secured from local Councillors
- Proposed building located on Church Street car park – around 200m from Darton Railway station
- Significant housing allocations in the local plan in Darton and Mapplewell
- Based on the successful Hub at Barnsley Interchange, proposed the new Hub provides the same services and products including bike servicing and repair, cycle hire (including electric bikes), cycle parking, as well as provision of the *Well Walk* scheme
- Hub would be adjacent to the proposed cycle route to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park (and link to the existing TCF active travel scheme along the A61 – accessed via Mapplewell) too. This route is also the subject of an EOI.

Goldthorpe Active Travel Hub (total cost circa £0.5m)

- New facility would be linked to the rebuilding of Goldthorpe station as part of the Northern Powerhouse Rail proposals. Transport for the North have been asked if an active travel hub could be provided as part of the new station design.
- Hub would either be a new build as part of the station development or a stand-alone building near-by/within the boundary of the station or its car park.
- Goldthorpe is an area of significant housing and employment growth
- Based on the successful Hub at Barnsley Interchange, proposed the new Hub provides the same services and products including bike servicing and repair, cycle hire (including electric bikes) and cycle parking
- Hub would complement the existing east-west TCF active travel schemes along the A635 and north-south towards the Fields End business park and Thurnscoe station. Other active travel routes in Goldthorpe will be funded through the Future High Streets fund and the Towns Fund.

Darton Active Travel link (total cost circa £1.6m)

- Package of measures which seeks to promote walking and cycling connectivity between the Yorkshire Sculpture Park (M1 j38) and the proposed A61 Active Travel Link via Darton Rail Station and Mapplewell.
- 6 km link would facilitate an uninterrupted walking and cycling route connecting M1 j38 with opportunities available within Barnsley Town Centre.
- Initial support for the idea already received from Wakefield
- Significant housing allocations in the local plan in Darton and Mapplewell
- Barnsley has significant health inequalities and health outcomes which are below England averages. The provision of this scheme could encourage more active lifestyles, which will in turn offer health benefits to residents.
- Concerns about safety and the lack of safe, segregated active travel infrastructure are often cited as one of the main reasons people do not engage with active travel. Evidence shows that there is demand for such routes for cycle commuting.

Dearne Valley Active Travel link (total cost circa £0.5m)

- Package of walking and cycling improvement measures for 2.4km of routes linking the A61 Gyratory at Old Mill Lane and A633 Grange Lane via A628 Pontefract Road.
- The proposal will also incorporate a spur which will improve connectivity to Old Tannery Road too. This scheme formed part of the original “high” funding scenario in the TCF bid.
- Local accessibility would also be improved through the development of a zig-zag route to replace existing steps to provide inclusive access to accommodate difference in levels at Dearne Valley Country Park
- There are two separate areas of transport poverty which will more directly benefit from this scheme. This includes the Old Town area due west of the A61 and the area located around Monk Bretton Priory.
- Barnsley has significant health inequalities and health outcomes which are below England averages. The provision of this scheme could encourage more active lifestyles, which will in turn offer health benefits to residents.
- Concerns about safety and the lack of safe, segregated active travel infrastructure are often cited as one of the main reasons people do not engage with active travel. Evidence shows that there is demand for such routes for cycle commuting.

2.2 It is expected that the level of detail of each project will develop over time, with key areas of uncertainty that need firming up in advance of OBC submission being:

Active travel hubs:

- obtaining a better understanding of the operational model (for example, space rented to private sector, operated by the community sector or within the public sector)
- Indicative demand for the service, especially where it is new in an area.

New cycling routes:

- Showing better links to improving access to employment opportunities
- Needing to work with the MCA Executive team to ensure the route meets the relevant MCA cycle design standards.

3. Consideration of alternative approaches

- 3.1** The Board may not support the proposed approach that seeks to invest in complimentary investment (including active travel hubs) rather than the more direct investment in walking and cycling infrastructure. However, this work (along with other measures such as marketing and promoting and cycle training) is likely to increase successful outcomes in the TCF investment programme.
- 3.2** A do-nothing approach to current delivery concerns within the TCF programme would result in significant under performance of the programme targets and inability to deliver the objectives of the SOBC.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial

Agenda item 13 concerns the recommendation to released scheme development costs for these Expressions of Interest.

Development funding is made available to fund to OBC, progression beyond this point is entirely contingent on funding being available in the TCF programme.

Any costs of developing schemes that don't then progress would become a revenue liability, with repayment of any grant from MCA required as this risk would always need to be retained by the promoting authority and not the MCA.

4.2 Legal

The MCA will enter into legal agreements to facilitate the release of any grant.

4.3 Risk Management

The key risk is that capital monies are 'advanced' to fund scheme development costs on schemes that may not then progress – and these costs should become a revenue liability. This liability must be retained by the promoting authority and not the MCA.

The development of robust, transparent and proportionate business cases is a key part of managing a successful programme. Early release of development funds will assist in facilitating scheme to OBC, further funding is subject to the availability of funding in the programme. There is not currently £5.3m headroom within the TCF programme.

Over programming will not be used to change or withdraw existing schemes without giving the Scheme Promotor the opportunity to rephrase their schemes. Deadlines have been set with Local Authorities on schemes that are not progressing to come up with their plans.

4.4 Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion

No specific equality, diversity and social inclusion issues are considered at this stage, but

one of the aims of the TCF programme included in section 1.6 is to better connect the areas of transport poverty with areas of opportunity in a safe and sustainable way.

5. Communications

5.1 None as a consequence of this report.

6. Appendices/Annexes

- 6.1** Appendix 1 – Barnsley Active Travel Hub
Appendix 2 – Darton Active Travel Hub
Appendix 3 – Goldthorpe Active Travel Hub
Appendix 4 – Darton Active Travel Link
Appendix 5 – Dearne Valley Active Travel Link

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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