

Cabinet Member Decision Note

Covid-19 Emergency Active Travel Fund – Tranche 1

To: Cabinet Member for Highways, Maintenance and Waste Services

Date: TO BE INSERTED BY CABINET OFFICE

Author:	Service Manager – Transport Planning, Development & Street Works Management
Wards:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 This report sets authority to use Swindon's initial allocation from the Emergency Active Travel fund for the schemes set out in the body of the report.
- 1.2 In response to the COVID-19, the Government in May 2020 announced a funding allocation for each Local Authority to reallocate road space for significantly-increased numbers of cyclists and pedestrians. Swindon Borough Council's allocation is £214,515 comprising Tranche 1 of the Emergency Active Travel Fund.
- 1.3 The road changes proposed are to facilitate social distancing in Swindon as the local economy begins to recover from the effects of the pandemic.
- 1.4 This report seeks authority to spend the funding, as per the terms and conditions of the grant letter dated 29 June 2020.
- 1.5
- 1.6
- 1.7
- 1.8

2. Recommended Action to be Authorised by a Cabinet Member Under Delegated Powers

Recommended that:

- 2.1 The Director of Strategic Development and the Head of Highways and Transport be authorised to use the Phase 1 EATF funding to implement the proposed measures recommended as part of Tranche 1 work. The proposed improvements are for Station Road, Farnsby Street/Commercial Road, Crombey Street, Faringdon Road, Marlborough Road, Old Town railway path, Kingsdown Lane, Plymouth Street, Magic and Roundabout/Fleming Way, as set out in sections 3.9 and 3.10.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Syed Shah on telephone 07970 771013 or via email sshah@swindon.gov.uk.

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- 2.2 The Head of Highways and Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways, Maintenance and Waste Services be authorised to make any adjustments to the schemes, as necessary.

3. Detail

- 3.1 In response to Covid19, the Government has provided a total of £225m for the Emergency Active Travel Fund over two Tranches. Tranche 1 totals £45m. The Council has received a revenue grant of £214,515 to support temporary measures to assist in increasing safety for those cycling and walking as part of the recovery. The Department for Transport issued guidance in May 2020 setting out how councils should reallocate road space for significantly-increased numbers of cyclists and pedestrians. It is for each local authority in partnership with local stakeholders to develop their own plans. The expectation is that works will commence on site in early August and officers across teams are working together to ensure that we are able to meet this challenging timeframe. Applications for a share of the £180m of Tranche 2 funding are to be sent to the Department for Transport by 7th August, 2020.
- 3.2 The grant is available to support a range of measures that align with the corporate priorities to “Improve infrastructure and housing to support a growing, low-carbon economy” and “Ensure clean and safe streets and improve our public spaces and local culture.” Helping pledges 12 to “promote healthy lifestyles for the population of Swindon” and 16 to “Deliver a programme of work to ensure that residents, visitors and businesses feel that Swindon’s town centre is a safe place to live, work, visit and do business.”
- 3.3 The proposed measures are designed to encourage active travel by providing additional road space for people to walk and cycle more easily. This will be achieved through a range of interventions, including (but not limited to) pop-up temporary cycle lanes, improved crossing facilities for pedestrian and cyclists, signing and lining works, and pavement improvements.
- 3.4 The proposed measures are being developed and technically audited, therefore agreement of delegated powers is requested to implement these changes and make any necessary adjustments to the proposed measures.
- 3.5 All works will be signed off by a Technical Approval Board consisting of appropriately qualified Officers prior to implementation, and the Highways and Transport team will monitor the effectiveness of the interventions in with the terms and conditions of the grant.
- 3.6 The guidance indicates that councils are mandated to:
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- 3.6.1 Take measures to reallocate road space to people walking and cycling, both to encourage active travel and to enable social distancing during restart.
 - 3.6.2 Identify and bring forward permanent schemes that are already planned, for example under Town Centre Movement Strategy/Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, and that can be constructed relatively quickly.
 - 3.6.3 Utilise speed restrictions, road closures or restricted access to provide safer and more attractive environments for active travel.
 - 3.7 Engagement with local stakeholders commenced to consider measures to support the safe active travel during this period of social distancing requirements.
 - 3.8 Consultation has also been undertaken with Ward Members around potential proposals that could support safe active travel; their comments and additional suggestions for use of the grant have been collated and considered.
 - 3.9 Schemes recommended to be taken forward are as follows and will be subject to refinement through the design and audit process.
 - 3.9.1 Station Road: Reallocate road space for cyclists on Station Road between Bridge Street (for the Western Flyer route) along to the west of the Swindon rail station forecourt – to enable the existing access to the rank taxi and bus stop on the forecourt itself to be maintained.
 - 3.9.2 Farnsby Street/Commercial Road: Close one lane to traffic for a one-way cycle lane to run with the flow of traffic. This will connect the Southern Flyer route on Farnsby Street to the Commercial Road/Regent Circus junction.
 - 3.9.3 Crombey Street: Suspend two parking bays between Dowling Street and Stanier Street to allow the cycle lane to continue.
 - 3.9.4 Faringdon Road between Holbrook Way/Fleet Street and Farnsby Street: The pavement here is too narrow to allow social distancing between Fleet Street and Farnsby Street. Reallocation of the road space is proposed to make way for more pedestrian space with the re-opening of shops (This scheme is being reconsidered as part of the detailed design process due to the alternations required for signal staging/phasing, when changing the number of the lanes within the Signalised Junction. This is to ensure that revised phasing to cause traffic issues, and how any changes would impact bus movements, car park entrance, and road safety).
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- 3.9.5 Marlborough Road: Create advisory cycle lanes between the Pipers - Coate roundabout junctions.
 - 3.9.6 Old Town railway path: Improve the surface of the path, in particular the section between Belmont Crescent and Croft Road
 - 3.9.7 Kingsdown Lane: Improve the surface of the off-road between Highworth Road at the South Marston Business Park and Turnpike Road in Blunsdon.
 - 3.10 Since the EATF press release was issued by the Council, two more schemes have been added to the list as part of the continuous scheme development process:
 - 3.10.1 Plymouth Street Toucan Crossing: Conversion of existing Pelican crossing, currently on cycleway to a Toucan. This will connect Cycle Network around the Magic Roundabout to link with the newly installed Spring Gardens Path, into the Town Centre.
 - 3.10.2 Fleming Way / Magic Roundabout Toucan Crossing: Conversion of existing 2 stage Pelican crossing at Fleming Way Magic Roundabout. Once complete, this will provide the missing link for cycle movements at the Magic Roundabout, connecting numerous cycle paths to create a cohesive network.
 - 4. Alternative Options**
 - 4.1 The Council does not have to implement any of these changes, although it is expected to implement these measures in order to help protect residents as they return to work.
 - 5. Consultation**
 - 5.1 The Opposition and Minority Group Spokespersons / Ward Members have been consulted on the proposed measures and their responses are summarised on the attached table as Appendix-2.
 - 6. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management**
 - Financial and Procurement Implications
 - 6.1 The Council is being recompensed by Central government for the works implemented up to a value of the grant award.
 - 6.2 Scheme will be delivered up to the value of the £214,515 revenue grant received.
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- 6.3 The Council's contract standing orders will be followed to ensure best value is achieved.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 6.4 Legal and Human Rights considerations have been taken fully into account in compiling this report.

Climate Change Impact

- 6.5 The proposals would encourage residents to travel by low carbon means, such as walking and cycling rather than by private car, and Officers believe that there will be a positive effect on the Council's carbon footprint.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 6.6 This will help residents through a very difficult time and no major impacts have been identified.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 6.7 No adverse effects have been identified on the nine statutory and one locally defined protected groups by the implementation of these reliefs. A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) has been undertaken and a copy can be obtained from the report author.

Risk Management

- 6.8 If the Council spends in excess of the amounts that Central Government will recompense there would be an additional burden on Council Taxpayers, but work has been undertaken to ensure the suggested schemes prevent this.

7. Consultees

- 7.1 The Corporate Director of Finance and Assets (s151 officer) and Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 Add text here [NB published documents e.g. Cabinet reports are not background papers]

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9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1: Reallocating road space in response to COVID-19: statutory guidance for local authorities

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reallocating-road-space-in-response-to-covid-19-statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities/traffic-management-act-2004-network-management-in-response-to-covid-19>

(If you are unable to access the webpage, please contact the named officer in the footer of the Cabinet Member Decision notice.)

- 9.2 Appendix 2: Consultation responses from Elected Members.
- 9.3 Appendix 3: Map of the proposed schemes.

10. Declarations of Interest

Opposition and Minority Group Spokespersons / Ward Members

- 10.1 Opposition spokespersons / Ward Members are reminded to consider whether they have any known interests in any of the matters referred to in this Decision Note. If such an interest exists this should be declared to the Monitoring Officer (or Senior Committee Clerk), and they should take no part in the consideration of the Briefing Note and should refer the Briefing Note to their Group Leader.

Cabinet Member(s)

- 10.2 Cabinet Members are reminded to consider whether they have any known interests in any of the matters referred to in this Decision Note. If such an interest exists this should be declared to the Monitoring Officer (or Senior Committee Clerk), and they should take no part in the consideration of the Decision Note and should refer the Decision Note to the Leader of the Council instead for consideration.

11. Sign-off

- 11.1 The Cabinet Member is requested to respond with 5 days of the date of this report (by TO BE INSERTED BY CABINET OFFICE).
- 11.2 The Cabinet Member is requested to indicate one of the following responses to the Recommendations set out in Section 2 of this report:

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Note and support the proposed action to be taken under delegated authority –

Yes / No

Note and request the proposed action be reconsidered – Yes / No

Reasons for Reconsideration:

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.....

Request Report be Referred to Cabinet - Yes / No

NB To protect against identity theft, Cabinet Member's signatures will be redacted on public versions of the signed Briefing Note.

Date

SignedCabinet Member

- 11.3 Decisions of Cabinet Members will be published in the Members' Bulletin. The Decision must not be implemented until such time that a five-day "Call-in" period has expired. This date will be specified in the Members Bulletin. If a Decision is "called-in" it will be referred to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration. It must only be implemented if the Scrutiny Committee has raised no objection. If an objection is forthcoming the matter will be referred back to the Decision-Maker.