

Decision maker:	Cabinet Member Infrastructure and Transport
Decision date:	Tuesday 19 May 2020
Scrutiny committee call-in date:	26 May 2020
Date decision may be implemented:	27 May 2020
Title of report:	DfT Access Fund – Destination Hereford phase 3 (DH3) - Extension
Report by:	Principal Energy & Active Travel Officer

Classification

Open

Key decision

This is a key decision because it is likely to result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates and because it is likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising one or more wards in the county.

Notice has been served in accordance with Part 3, Section 9 (Publicity in Connection with Key Decisions) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

Wards affected

All

Purpose

To seek approval to accept £500k from the Department for Transport (DfT) to deliver a one year extension to the current programme of walking and cycling promotions across the county in 2020/21.

Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- (a) The council accept grant funding of £500k from the Department for Transport;
- (b) Authority for all necessary operational decisions be delegated to the Head of Environment, Climate Emergency & Waste to implement the programme as set out in Appendix 1

Alternative options

Not to accept the funds and not to proceed.

- 1 The council is currently delivering 'Destination Hereford Phase 3' (DH3), which is funded through the preceding, successful DfT Access Fund. If the council chooses not to proceed with the extension the allocated funds would not be drawn down, the project would not be undertaken and the existing DH3 project would terminate in April 2020.
- 2 Not proceeding would result in a missed opportunity to significantly improve and upscale existing walking and cycling promotions across the county by implementing the projects set out in the application form in Appendix 1. These activities are in line with the council's policies within the Local Transport Plan and the complementary measures within the Hereford Transport Packages, they will contribute progress towards the council's target of county wide carbon neutrality by 2030/31.

Reasons for recommendations

- 3 Between 2011 and 2020 Herefordshire Council has delivered the DfT funded Destination Hereford projects which have successfully delivered behavioural change and modal shift from car use to sustainable transport alternatives.
- 4 In 2017 the council successfully secured £1.5m to deliver Destination Hereford Phase 3 (DH3) under the preceding DfT Transition Fund which is currently live and runs until 31 March 2020.
- 5 The main objectives of the project are to increase levels of walking and cycling, support access to jobs and education, addressing health and wellbeing and reduce CO2 emissions all of which are corporate priorities.

Key considerations

Background

- 6 The main objectives for the DfT Access Fund are supporting local sustainable growth, improving active access to jobs, skills, training and education and reducing CO2 emissions.

Proposed Project

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Richard Vaughan, Principal Energy & Active Travel Officer, Tel (01432) 260192, Email
richard.vaughan@herefordshire.gov.uk

- 7 The proposed extension is a one year extension to the Access Funded Destination Hereford 3 project.
- 8 The project extension continues to build on the successes of the previous Destination Hereford projects.
- 9 The Access Fund application is attached as Appendix 1. The grant will be used to fund these activities.

Community impact

- 10 Increased levels of physical activity and improved access to education and employment through walking and cycling will have a positive impact on public health, wellbeing and the local economy.
- 11 Modal shift from car use to sustainable transport alternatives will have a positive impact on air quality and CO2 emissions whilst also helping to reduce traffic congestion.

Equality duty

- 12 Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. Our providers will be made aware of their contractual requirements in regards to equality legislation.

- 13 An equality impact assessment was undertaken for the original project and is still applicable to this one year project extension, this is attached under Appendix 2.
- 14 All residents will benefit from reduced congestion and better access to education, employment and training.
- 15 Economic growth and reduced congestion will benefit all residents, road users and particularly local businesses.
- 16 Specific scheme elements will benefit young and low income job seekers, local businesses and their employees, primary and secondary school children and local residents in general

Financial implications

- 17 The total project value is £629,199 which will be funded through the £500k from the DfT and £129,199 of in-kind match funding from existing budgets.
- 18 Provision has been made within the grant application to match fund the continuation of posts delivering the project elements. Additionally provision has been made to commission the Delegated Grants team to support with governance and compliance.

Legal implications

- 19 This is an Executive function under the Council's Constitution Part 3 Section 3 and is a key decision because it is likely to be significant having regard to the strategic nature of the decision; and/ or whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards in Herefordshire) affected. It is also likely to result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making or savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function concerned.
- 20 The Cabinet member infrastructure and transport has been given delegated authority from Cabinet in exercise of its functions under Part 3 Section 3 of the constitution to accept grant funding and authorise the Head of Environment, Climate Emergency & Waste to implement the programme. All commissioning and procurement for this project will be undertaken in line with the council's contract procedure rules, with support from the Commercial Team.
- 21 The council has a power under sections 1-4 of the Localism Act 2011 to apply this grant funding for the purposes identified in this report.
- 22 The grant is awarded by the Department for Transport on the understanding that Herefordshire Council will deliver the objectives set out in the extension bid (Appendix 1). The DfT appreciates that during implementation, opportunities or challenges may arise that require a change to the project in order for outcomes to be realised to their full potential. Any such changes should be reported to the DfT. However should the change be substantial enough so as to cease to represent the programme for which funding was awarded, or should the council's ability to deliver the objectives for which funding was awarded be significantly compromised, the Department reserves the right to withhold, suspend or reclaim any unspent revenue funding.
- 23 There are no legal problems with the Cabinet member doing what is proposed

Risk management

- 24 The Delegated Grants team will be providing support on governance and compliance.
- 25 Not proceeding with this project will increase the risk of not delivering on the sustainable transport policies within the Local Transport Plan and moving towards the countywide target of net carbon neutral by 2030.

Risk Type	Risk	Description	Pre-mitigation			Mitigation	Residual Risk		
			Likelihood	Impact	Score		Likelihood	Impact	Score
Programme	COVID-19	Delays to project delivery due to Corona virus pandemic.	4	3	12	DfT have confirmed their intention to allow the programme deliverables to roll into the financial year 2021/22. Sustainability & Climate Change team have reviewed work elements to reprofile activity to ensure early delivery of some projects giving those that will be delayed more resource later on.	4	1	4
Programme	Weather	Wet weather can deter people from active travel.	2	4	8	Promoting sustainable alternatives to active travel in wet weather e.g. Promotion of car sharing or video conferencing. Acceleration of promotional campaigns from March - Sept in order to maximise uptake during peak active travel season	2	3	6
Programme	Mobilisation	Delays due to procurement, commissioning and project set-up	2	3	6	This is an extension to our successful DH3 project. The projects within the extension are continuations of successful, existing activities, the lessons learnt and new opportunities.	1	1	1
Programme	Public Opinion	Investing in active travel in an austerity environment may be perceived as a low priority spend	2	2	4	Dedicated Communications Officer on project team and board in order to deliver and support proactive communications plan highlighting the broader benefits of active travel	1	1	1
Programme	Communication clutter	Communication clutter inhibiting campaign cut-through	1	2	2	Established and successful existing campaign identity with strong evidence of local brand recognition. Implementation of comprehensive communications plan based on previous experience	1	1	1
Project	School Engagement	Not getting sufficient schools to engage in our Schools Programme	2	3	6	Strong established current school contacts via our Schools Active Programme delivered by Sustrans, our Bikeability delivery and road safety and EcoSchool projects	1	2	2
Project	Business Engagement	Not getting sufficient businesses to engage in our Active Travel in Businesses Programme	2	3	6	Strong, established contacts and commitment from businesses through Business Travel Network, Business Futures Forum, Job centre Plus, Chamber of Commerce, Hereford Enterprise Zone and Hereford Business Improvement District.	1	2	2
Project	External Support - Partners	Lack of collaboration and commitment from identified project partners	2	2	4	The extension builds on existing DH3 partnerships with partners that submitted letters of support for DH3.	1	3	3
Project	Participation levels	Participation is below expected target	2	3	6	Existing and successful projects are being extended, additionally the team has the ability to switch project resources to match opportunities.	1	2	2

We have received written confirmation from the DfT that they recognise the impact of COVID-19 on the programme, they have given us the flexibility to deliver outputs from the

2019-20 programme in 2020/21. They have also informed us verbally that they intend to extend this offer to the 2020/21 programme outlined in this report, allowing for any project slippages.

In addition to this extra flexibility provided by the DfT helping the programme through the COVID-19 period, we are in discussions with the DfT regarding our business travel grants and Beryl shared bike elements of the programme. We have the potential to scale up the business grants element of the programme to support more businesses to operate remotely, away from their offices and allow workers to work from home more easily. Additionally we are working with the DfT and Beryl to support key workers with free rides for essential journeys.

Consultees

26 Letters of support for the initial 3 year project were received from the following partner organisations:

- Marches Local Enterprise Partnership
- New Model in Technology & Engineering, NMiTE
- Hereford Enterprise Zone
- Business Futures Forum
- Sustrans
- Hereford BID

27 The views of Members and Group Leaders have been sought and no comments have been received

Appendices

- Appendix 1
- Appendix 2

Background papers

- None identified