

BARNSLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT OF: Acting Executive Director (Place)

TITLE: Active Travel (AT) Update – Goldthorpe and Elsecar

REPORT TO:	CABINET
Date of Meeting	23 March 2022
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Cllr Lamb – Environment & Transport
Key Decision	Yes
Public or Private	Public

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with:

1. An update on the current Active Travel Fund Programme (ATF) and the approval of the recent submission of the Full Business Case's (FBC) detailed in section 3 below as approved at the Sheffield Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) meeting on 16th December 2021.
2. And to seek Cabinet approval for the following:
 - Acceptance of grant funding from SYMCA for the delivery of the two Active Travel routes – Goldthorpe and Elsecar.
 - Prepare and progress any necessary statutory procedures required to develop and deliver the two schemes in line with SYMCA guidance.

Council Plan priority

Healthy Barnsley, Sustainable Barnsley

Recommendations

That Cabinet: -

- 1 **Notes the progress and delivery timescales of the approved Active Travel Fund Programme as outlined in section 3 below.**
- 2 **Authorises the continued progression of the ATF schemes to ensure that all external grant funding is secured, whilst ensuring that the overall aims and objectives of the scheme are achieved.**

- 3 Approves acceptance of grant funding from South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority totalling £0.979m (Section 3 refers) for the delivery of the Elsecar and Goldthorpe Active Travel Schemes.**
- 4 Approves the release of the resources (as detailed in Section 3 and Appendix A) required to fund the delivery of the schemes.**
- 5. The Executive Director of Place be authorised to undertake all necessary steps to ensure continued delivery of the AT programme.**
- 6. The Service Director of Finance in consultation with the Executive Director of Place be authorised to negotiate the terms and conditions of, and final approval of the SYMCA Grant funding agreements, for the delivery of the AT programme.**

1. INTRODUCTION

Active Travel Fund

- 1.1 In November 2020 following a successful bid by the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) to the Department for Transport's Active Travel Fund. South Yorkshire was awarded a further £5.46million to be spent to improve walking and cycling routes in South Yorkshire and create safer, less polluted neighbourhoods for residents to live and work.
- 1.2 Two schemes which meet the Department for Transport criteria were submitted to the Active Travel Fund; Elsecar to CortonWood and Goldthorpe Station Access, totalling £1.125m

The two schemes were approved by SYMCA and grant funding released, totalling £0.023m to facilitate the development to Outline Business Case (OBC).

In August 2021, the OBC's were approved, and further grant funding released totalling £0.124m to facilitate the development to FBC.

In December 2021, the FBC's were approved by the SYMCA which has released the final stage of the funding for the delivery of the ATF schemes:

- Elsecar - £0.497m
- Goldthorpe - £0.482m

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Given the tight timescales for delivery; the work was awarded to the internal Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) for them to undertake construction. Work is progressing well, with anticipated completion date of March 2023 in line with the Department for Transport / SYMCA agreement.
- 2.2 The grant funding letters have been received for both schemes, (albeit delayed) but given the need to complete the schemes by March 2023, work had to start on site without approval to accept the funding; this Cabinet has been the earliest date in which to do so

3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

3.1 Financial and Risk

Consultation on the Financial Implications of this report has taken place with representatives of the Service Director (Section 151 Officer) Finance.

Approval is sought to accept the grant funding from South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority totalling £0.979m to support the ATF programme and release the associated work packages into the capital programme for the following projects - highlighted in yellow in the table below:

<u>Project</u>	<u>Revised Programme</u>	<u>Stage 1 OBC Funding Allocation</u>	<u>Stage 2 FBC Funding Allocation</u>	<u>Stage 3 Delivery Funding Allocation</u>
Goldthorpe Station Access	550,176	11,004	57,000	482,172
Elsecar to Cortonwood	575,177	11,504	67,000	496,673
	1,125,353	22,507	124,000	978,846

It should be noted that individual scheme costs will be closely monitored by Finance Officers to ensure costs remain within the grant allocations provided by SYMCA and any financial risks are identified and mitigated.

It is important to note that there is no financial 'ask' from the Council to progress the recommendations outlined within this report.

Appendix A provides an overview of the impact of the recommendations in this report.

3.2 Legal

The Council Legal Team has considered the position on Subsidy Control.

From 1 January 2021 public authorities will need to determine whether their subsidy carries any appreciable risk of triggering a dispute with a trade partner under the terms of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement, the World Trade Organisation's Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures rules or the UK's other Free Trade Agreements

A subsidy is a measure which is given by a public authority, such as the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority to an enterprise, conferring an economic advantage that is not available on market terms and affecting international trade. An enterprise is anyone who puts goods or services on a market. An enterprise could be a government department or a charity if they are acting commercially. Subsidies to truly local companies or a small tourist attraction are unlikely to be caught as this is unlikely to affect international trade. All of these tests must be met for a measure to be deemed as a subsidy. If the measure meets the definition of a subsidy, the enterprise must which international obligations apply.

Since SYMCA is awarding the subsidy to the Highway Authority whose purpose is to carry out highway improvements in the public highway for the benefit of the end users of the Borough of Barnsley and not providing services on a market on a commercial basis because the provision of roads and footways are at nil cost to the end users, the test for a measure to be a subsidy is not met and it is not necessary to consider which international obligations apply, which in this case, is most likely to be terms of the Free Trade Agreements and in particular the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement as the provision of the two active travel routes at Elsecar and Goldthorpe Active Travel Fund Schemes are likely to be considered a 'service-based activity'.

3.3 Equality

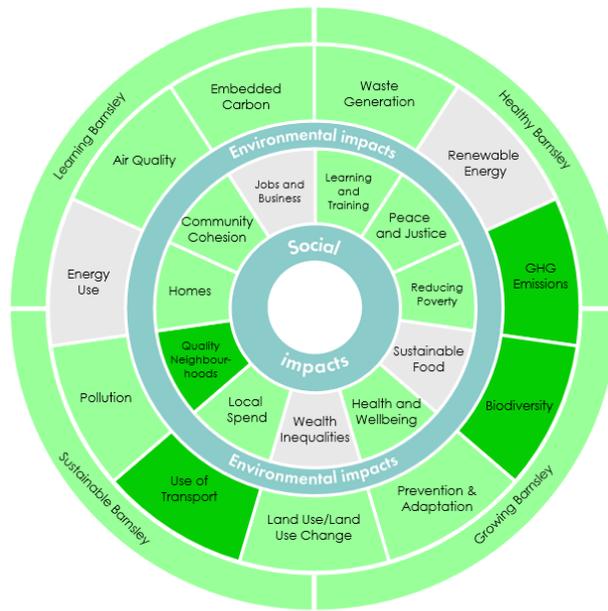
Better connectivity, affordable and inclusive travel, a cleaner environment and a healthier population are all key aims of the SYMCA Strategic Economic Plan and the Barnsley Transport Strategy 2014 – 2033.

The proposed projects support the principles of the SYMCA Strategic Economic Plan and the Barnsley Transport Strategy 2014 – 2033, and once completed will provide better connectivity and opportunities assisting linking people to employment, training and healthcare.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken for each of the schemes.

The proposed development may impact on protected groups in the short term during the construction phase, although in the long term the proposals are likely to enhance connectivity to all parties and provide a viable alternative to the private motor car

3.4 Sustainability



3.5 Employee

There are no issues arising directly from this report. A restructure has been undertaken by the Strategic Transport team which has provided the required in-house resources to deliver active travel schemes and develop a work programme. Any staffing implications will be subject to reports on specific schemes.

3.6 Communications

All South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority business case submissions are high profile schemes and appropriate communication strategies are being developed linked to the signing of the funding agreement. Releases will also need to be agreed and co-ordinated with South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Combined Authority arrangements.

Timely and accurate information will be provided through appropriate press releases via local press, social media/website updates, local member briefings, and engagement with key stakeholders.

4. CONSULTATION

Engagement / Consultation to Date

- 4.1 The pandemic has prevented the more traditional approach to consultation / engagement; therefore, we have undertaken an online survey for the residents of Barnsley to determine their views on providing Active Travel routes across the Borough. This was done in November 2021

Over 230 responses have been received representing a broad range of local views which have been very positive in terms of building our walking and cycling aspirations. Below is a selection of the results:

- 68% of respondents never cycle;
- The car is the main choice of travel for all activities;
- 63% of respondents thought more extensive and direct active travel routes would be useful or very useful to get them walking and cycling more;
- 64% of respondents thought more segregated walking and cycling routes from traffic would be useful/very useful to get them walking and cycling more.

4.2 A public consultation event to disseminate information on the detailed design, to capture public opinion and degree of support, and to record and measure responses was held in March 2021; unfortunately, with Covid, we were still in lockdown so this was held on line between 12th and 26th of March. As part of this consultation local members and community groups were also consulted via Teams meetings.

4.3 For the Elsecar online engagement, over 578 surveys were completed, with over 89% of responders were either very positive or positive about the Elsecar scheme and many of the reasons for this relate to the expected improvements to road safety and the proposed enhancements to the Trans Pennine Trail

4.4 For the Goldthorpe online engagement, over 273 surveys were completed. Most of the respondents were local residents and nearly 90% had access to a car which was their predominant mode of choice, although a high percentage did walk at least once a day. Most respondents thought the scheme would make it safer to walk.

4.5 A further letter drop to local residents informing them of the scheme was sent out in August 2021.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2.2 Option 1 – The Council accepts the funding from SYMCA to deliver the two active travel routes – this is the preferred option

The provision of the two active travel routes at Elsecar and Goldthorpe have been approved by SYMCA for delivery. Both schemes have had successful Outline and Full Business cases and meets with both the Sheffield City Region Transport Strategy policies / objectives and the Council's own draft Transport Strategy to enable mode shift from the private car.

2.3 Option 2 – Do Nothing

For the Council not to take advantage of the Active Travel funding to provide additional routes across the district. For the Council not to accept the funding would result in clawback from SYMCA and also incur costs to the Council. For

the Council not to deliver Active Travel routes goes against SCR policies and objectives as well as the objectives in the Council's draft Transport Strategy.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 To ensure that Cabinet remains informed on the progress of the work on delivering the Active Travel Fund schemes and to ensure that funds are accepted to enable the work to continue in a timely manner.

7. GLOSSARY

MCA – Mayoral Combined Authority
SYMCA – South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority
DfT – Department for Transport
TCF – Transforming Cities Fund
OBC – Outline Business Case
FBC – Full Business case

8. LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Financial Implications

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None provided

10. REPORT SIGN OFF

Financial consultation & sign off	See Appendix A
Legal consultation & sign off	Legal Services officer consulted and date Jason Field 2 March 2022

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Date: 17 February 2022