

## READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	4 NOVEMBER 2014	AGENDA ITEM:	17
TITLE:	LOCAL SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FUND UPDATE		
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SERVICE:	TRANSPORTATION & STREETCARE	WARDS:	BOROUGH WIDE
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#### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Sub-Committee on progress with delivery of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) Small Package, for which £4.9m funding was approved by the Department for Transport (DfT) in July 2011 and the LSTF Large Partnership Package, for which £20.692m funding was approved by the DfT in June 2012.
- 1.2 Detailed decisions are mainly delegated to the Steering Group level in consultation with the Lead Member for Strategic Environment, Planning & Transport. The Steering Group comprises corporate and transport officers and representatives from the Public Health team and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). This report includes records of recent decisions made by the Steering Group for the Sub-Committee to note.
- 1.3 This report provides an update on each of the five delivery themes of the LSTF programme, with particular focus on projects that have reached milestones within the last three months.

#### 2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

The Sub-Committee is asked to note:

- 2.1 The progress made on the Local Sustainable Transport Fund Projects since the last report and that officers continue to deliver this programme and report progress to this Sub-Committee.

### 3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The LSTF is a £560m fund made available by the DfT with the aim of implementing local sustainable transport measures that will deliver lasting benefits to support the local economy and reduce carbon.
- 3.2 Reading successfully secured £4.9m funding in July 2011 for a LSTF Small Project to deliver a package of transport investment measures which are complementary to those already being progressed through the core Local Transport Plan (LTP) implementation programme. The package is also complementary to key planning documents including the Core Strategy, Reading Central Area Action Plan and Reading Station Area Framework.
- 3.3 In partnership with Wokingham Borough Council, West Berkshire Council, the Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the NHS Berkshire West Primary Care Trust (public health function now located within the Local Authority), Reading secured a further £20.692m for an LSTF Large Project in June 2012 to deliver a package of transport investment measures to benefit the wider urban area.
- 3.4 In addition, the DfT announced in July 2014 that Reading Borough Council has been awarded £996k LSTF revenue funding for 2015/16. The project proposal includes a range of sustainable transport initiatives focused on neighbourhood-based active travel interventions and developing more interactive online resources.

### 4. PROGRAMME PROGRESS

- 4.1 The five delivery themes of the complete LSTF Package are Personalised Travel Planning; Fares, Ticketing and Information; Cycle Hire; Active Travel; and Park and Ride/Rail. Over 25 projects have been identified within these themes, as set out in the bid and since further developed. Substantial progress has been made on many of these projects to date and others are reaching significant milestones shortly. A summary of progress by delivery theme is outlined below.
- 4.2 **Personalised Travel Planning:** The substantial programme of Personalised Travel Planning was completed in October, involving Travel Advisors providing sustainable travel advice to residents and businesses throughout the Reading urban area. An evaluation of the success of the PTP programme will be undertaken as part of the overall LSTF monitoring activities.
- 4.3 **Fares, Ticketing and Information:** The first phase of the traffic signal upgrades is underway with works completed at School Road/Norcot Road junction, and upgraded pedestrian crossings at Church Street/Hemdean Road, Henley Road (near Micklands Road) and Henley Road/Donkin Hill. The works at George Street/Gosbrook Road junction are scheduled to finish before the end of October. A contractor has been appointed to undertake the second phase of signal works and a detailed programme is currently being developed. The upgrades to the method of control of the signals will improve junction efficiency and provide benefits across modes.
- 4.4 Good progress is being made by the scheme promoters on delivery of the 11 proposals which were awarded grants through the Challenge Fund, including

development of a mobile phone app to incentivise sustainable travel, a local freight routing journey planner and the implementation of enhanced signage to encourage walking to St Martin's Catholic Primary School in Caversham.

- 4.5 **Cycle Hire:** The Readybike cycle hire scheme continues to be well used, with particularly high usage recorded at the three docking stations at Reading University coinciding with student open days and the start of the new academic year.
- 4.6 The docking station at Reading Station northern interchange has been relocated from its temporary position to the new pedestrian square. Plans are in progress to implement the final new docking stations at Reading Station southern interchange (after the works to the southern interchange have been completed) and at Earley Station.
- 4.7 **Active Travel:** A contractor has been appointed to undertake construction of the Pedestrian/Cycle bridge over the River Thames. Works to prepare the site for construction have begun, which will include laying a temporary construction access road from George Street. Construction of the bridge itself will start in November with expected completion in summer 2015. Once complete, the bridge will provide a key new route for pedestrians and cyclists between Caversham, Reading Station and central Reading.
- 4.8 Construction works have commenced to reconfigure the St Mary's Butts / Castle Street junction, which will provide improvements for all users including signal upgrades and extended pavements.
- 4.9 Procurement of a contractor to undertake the repair and upgrade works to the Grade II-listed St Laurence's Church Wall and associated pedestrian route are ongoing, with works scheduled to start later this year and complete by spring 2015.
- 4.10 Plans to install new cycle parking are being progressed for Kings Street, Broad Street West, London Road Surgery and Moorlands Primary School. This will be further complemented by the installation of a cycle parking hub at Reading Station providing around 600 spaces as well as a small maintenance area to enable cyclists to carry out minor repairs.
- 4.11 The CTC work programme has been reviewed to focus on supporting neighbourhood based activities and local groups. The revised programme will include offering training and development opportunities to ensure the longevity of projects beyond the LSTF period, organising and supporting community engagement events and working with partner services to maximise the promotion of cycling.
- 4.12 An 18-month fixed term post for a Health Walks Coordinator has been advertised to support both LSTF and Public Health objectives, with the successful applicant commencing in the New Year. The coordinator will be responsible for managing the delivery of the health walks led by fully trained volunteers, and the promotion and monitoring of relevant activities to ensure that the programme complies with Walking for Health requirements and their accreditation scheme.
- 4.13 Southcote Primary School is the second school to be awarded the Sustrans Bronze School Mark Award for their commitment to the Bike It programme. Pupils have

been awarded with a visit from the Extreme Mountain Bike Team. St Martin's, Wilson Primary and The Ridgeway Primary have also taken part a number of launch events, including assemblies, bikers' breakfasts, incentive schemes and competitions

- 4.14 **Park & Ride/Rail:** On behalf of Reading and Wokingham Borough Council's, a contractor has been appointed to undertake construction of the park & ride sites at Mere oak and Winnersh Triangle, which together will deliver nearly 1,000 parking spaces. The two sites will be constructed simultaneously with works having started at the end of October and a planned completion date of late spring 2015.
- 4.15 The Mere oak Park & Ride site, located south of M4 junction 11, will provide 579 parking spaces and will be served by the regular Greenwave bus service to and from Central Reading, as well as serving GreenPark and Reading International Business Park. The site will include a terminal building and improved pedestrian and cycle paths alongside the car park, linking to the provision at Junction 11 to connect over the M4.
- 4.16 The Winnersh Triangle Park & Ride site, located near to Winnersh Station, will have 390 spaces and users will have the choice of travelling by bus or train into central Reading. The site will replace the existing P&R site at Loddon Bridge which is prone to flooding.
- 4.17 Construction works are on-going for the Park & Rail site at Theale Station. This project is being led by West Berkshire Council and First Great Western, alongside Network Rail.

## **5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

- 5.1 The LSTF Project supports the aims and objectives of the LTP and contributes to the Council's strategic aims, as set out below:
  - To develop Reading as a Green City with a sustainable environment and economy at the heart of the Thames Valley.
  - To promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all.

## **6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION**

- 6.1 Consultation activities on LTP3 during its development contributed to the LSTF submissions. Engagement is a key component of the LSTF programme and consultation with stakeholders and local communities will be undertaken throughout the project. Public events were held in Caversham in May to provide information on the pedestrian/cycle bridge.
- 6.2 A press officer has been hired to work one day a week on LSTF projects in order to initiate more proactive media engagement.
- 6.3 Individual consultations on key LSTF projects have been undertaken throughout the duration of the programme, including consultation forms being published and updated on the corporate website as appropriate.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Legal support has been allocated to progress planning and land acquisition requirements for key projects and to offer contractual advice for procurement exercises.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Funding approved by DfT for the Reading LSTF Small Package and the LSTF Large Partnership Package comprises both revenue and capital ring-fenced grants and local contributions.

## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 9.1 Cabinet reports - 11<sup>th</sup> April 2011 and 28<sup>th</sup> November 2011.
- 9.2 Traffic Management Advisory Panel reports - 9<sup>th</sup> September 2011 to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2013.
- 9.3 Traffic Management Sub-Committee reports since 13<sup>th</sup> June 2013.