



Report of the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management

Cabinet – 21 October 2021

Financial Procedure Rule 7 – Active Travel Fund Additional Grants 2021/22

Purpose:	<p>To approve the funding application for Active Travel Fund (ATF) Additional Funding, and confirm the outcome of the bid, and seek approval for expenditure on the associated projects in 2021/22.</p> <p>To approve the delegation of any remaining details associated with the schemes, in-line with the grant approval, to enable the scheme to be delivered within the grant term, to the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management and Director of Place.</p> <p>To comply with Financial Procedure Rule No. 7 (Capital Programming and Appraisals): to commit and authorise schemes in the Capital Programme.</p>
Policy Framework:	Joint Transport Plan for South West Wales (2015 – 2020)
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: 1) Cabinet approve the additional Active Travel Fund 2021/22 schemes, together with their financial implications.
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Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Caritas Adere
Access to Services Officer:	Catherine Window

1.0 Introduction / Background

- 1.1 A funding bid for Active Travel Fund Additional Funding (ATF) was submitted to the Welsh Government on 16th July 2021 in accordance with guidance from the Welsh Government.
- 1.2 The guidance stated that there was an indicative funding allocation of a further £9.5 million for the Active Travel Fund for FY2021/22.
- 1.3 This funding is available to all Welsh Local Authorities. The Welsh Government elected to set a maximum value for each scheme.
- 1.4 This report seeks the retrospective approval of Cabinet for the submission of the ATF additional grant applications, and that the schemes together with their financial implications are approved, and included in the capital programme for 2021/22.
- 1.5 This report also seeks, subject firstly to the approval of the schemes by Cabinet, delegation to the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management and Director of Place of any remaining details associated with the schemes within the application, in-line with the grant award, to enable the scheme to be delivered within the grant offer term.
- 1.6 It was not possible to seek approval from Cabinet prior to the submission of the bids because of the limited time granted by the Welsh Government between the invitation and the actual submission date. Approval from the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement and Infrastructure Management was however sought and granted prior to the completion of the bids.

2.0 Submitted Bids

- 2.1. The City & County of Swansea submitted five bids totalling £946,000, and the Welsh Government has subsequently allocated £696,000 for the delivery of four of the schemes under ATF in 2021/22. The schemes and their bid amounts are shown in the table below.

Table One – Summary of Bids for ATF Additional Funding Bids 2021/22

Scheme	Total ATF (£k)	Match Funding (£k)	Total Project Costs (£k)
ATF Additional Funding - Cycle Hire Scheme	250	0	250
ATF Additional Funding - NCN43 Swansea Canal	250	0	250
ATF Additional Funding - Placemaking	156	0	156

ATF Additional Funding – Craig Cefn Parc	245	0	245
ATF Additional Funding – Capacity Enhancement	45	0	45
Total	946	0	946

Table Two – Summary of Allocations for ATF Additional Funding Bids 2021/22

Scheme	Total ATF (£k)	Match Funding (£k)	Total Project Costs (£k)
ATF Additional Funding - NCN43 Swansea Canal	250	0	250
ATF Additional Funding - Placemaking	156	0	156
ATF Additional Funding – Craig Cefn Parc	245	0	245
ATF Additional Funding – Capacity Enhancement	45	0	45
Total	696	0	696

3.0 Details of Schemes – ATF Additional Funding

- 3.1 The Active Travel (Wales) Act (2013) seeks to improve the uptake of walking and cycling for utility journeys across Wales. The Welsh Government had originally allocated £50million to active travel across Wales in 2021/22 to support the development and delivery of schemes. An additional £9million of funding has recently been announced in-year, taking the total for 2021/22 to £59million.
- 3.2 The projects awarded funding for Active Travel Funding Additional Funding 2021/22 are summarised below, and a summary map for applicable projects viewable in the appendices.
- 3.3 **NCN 43 Swansea Canal** – This bid for £250,000, proposes the construction of an improved route adjacent to Swansea Canal, working with the Canal and River Trust to establish agreement on improvement to the section of National Cycle Network Route 43 through Clydach, adjacent to the canal. The towpath is currently narrow, with vegetation overgrowth and has a stone-dust surface. Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (NPTCBC) have recently made improvements to the section from Trebanos to Pontardawe, and this work would seek to establish continuity of agreed surfacing with Canal and River Trust to continue the widening and surfacing of the route into Swansea.

- 3.4 Funding was initially awarded from the Active Travel Fund in 2021/22 for design and development of the scheme within the core allocation funding from Welsh Government, and approved by Cabinet on 15th April 2021.
- 3.5 The Council has since been able to progress the design of the scheme to such a point that it is in a position to be proposed for in-year delivery.
- 3.6 The proposed improvements to this section of towpath, will provide an off-road, shared use path, conforming to Active Travel Design Standards. This will greatly enhance the infrastructure currently present at this point on the network, providing continuity of route quality at both its northern and southern end. The shared use path, measuring 1.4km, will be widened and the surface upgraded, to provide a surface suitable for active travel, whilst retaining the towpath character with a surface dressing system, agreed with Canal and River Trust. Appendix F of this report shows a summary map of this proposed scheme.
- 3.7 **Placemaking** – This bid for £156,000 aims to further enhance and enrich the existing walking and cycling network across the City and County of Swansea, through the installation of artwork to the benefit of place marking, enjoyment and engagement across the active travel network.
- 3.8 The project will aim to support local enterprises, groups and culture by showcasing talent and expression, creating a platform for communities to participate in shaping their local area and increase physical activity and exercise.
- 3.9 The project will aim to focus on creating approximately six statement artworks and heritage pieces across the network in Swansea to connect users to places of natural, built or social heritage.
- 3.10 A number of key locations across the network in Swansea will be chosen to promote the cycling and walking network. Site selection will ensure that efforts are focused on key routes and points of entry to the network, providing a gateway feature in prominent and popular locations.
- 3.11 **Craig Cefn Parc** – This proposed scheme for £245,000 seeks to further develop the existing network in the north east of Swansea and provide a local link and recreational route with a surface suitable for active travel for the communities of Clydach, Vardre and Craig Cefn Parc with links to local community and recreational areas.
- 3.12 Craig Cefn Parc is not currently connected to the off-road active travel network. With the creation of this link, improved access and connectivity will provide local connections to the nearby communities of Clydach, Pontardawe and Morriston.

- 3.13 This scheme aims to upgrade an existing off-road route between Craig Cefn Parc and Clydach to create a shared use path, conforming to Active Travel Design Standards. The route currently meets required widths for the majority of the route, with small sections of localised widening needed in areas. The route requires surfacing to meet design standards.
- 3.14 The proposed link will provide an off-road, traffic-free shared use path measuring 1.4 km in length. This section will begin off-road to the north of the B4603, and continue north-west to The Lone. Appendix G of this report shows a summary map of this proposed scheme.
- 3.15 **Capacity Enhancement** - This revenue funding of £45,000 has indicatively been allocated to all local authorities across Wales to provide additional revenue support for capacity enhancement. This funding will support Swansea Council's capacity to deliver its 2021/22 active travel programme, and will include promotional activities to support this work.
- 3.16 It is anticipated that with the capacity enhancements funded under this project, that the promotion of schemes is maximised, and further links are established with local schools and community groups to encourage greater and wider participation in the community benefits programme and active travel.

4.0 Integrated Assessment Implications

- 4.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
 - Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
 - Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
 - Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 4.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

- 4.3 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.
- 4.4 If approved, the projects will consider their impacts more fully at the appropriate design stages when they will be screened in their own right. These transport infrastructure projects will all serve to improve public amenity, connectivity and access and will be the subject of consultation as appropriate. Close consultation with local disability and access groups will be undertaken to ensure accessibility for all.
- 4.5 An Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form has been completed. The outcome of the Assessment is that full Integrated Impact Assessments will be required if these schemes are progressed.
- 4.6 All schemes will be designed in accordance with the national design guidance and will be compliant with the Equality Act 2010.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The schemes described in this report, rely upon the Active Travel Fund to provide grant funding to secure their delivery.
- 5.2 Summary:

**Table Three – Financial Summary for ATF Additional Allocations
2021/22**

Scheme	Total ATF (£k)	Match Funding (£k)	Total Project Costs (£k)
ATF Additional Funding - NCN43 Swansea Canal	250	0	250
ATF Additional Funding - Placemaking	156	0	156
ATF Additional Funding - Craig Cefn Parc	245	0	245
ATF Additional Funding – Capacity Enhancement	45	0	45
Total	696	0	696

- 5.3 Financial summaries for each of the above schemes are attached as appendices to this report.
- 5.4 The schemes are 100% reliant upon grant to secure their delivery.

- 5.5 The Welsh Government's transport capital infrastructure grants will require that all spend is done in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- 5.6 Claims are to be made to the Welsh Government on a quarterly basis. If the funding bids are successful, the Welsh Government will require the funding to be fully spent and claimed by the end of March 2022.
- 5.7 Any revenue costs arising from capital schemes will be met by existing revenue budgets.

6. Staffing/ IT Implications

- 6.1 The grant application for Capacity Enhancements of £45k revenue funding, is proposed to be used to support additional staff resource which will assist in delivery of the Council's ambitious active travel programme.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 The Welsh Government's transport capital infrastructure and revenue grants will require that all spend is done in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- 7.2 When delivering Transport Schemes, compliance will be required with the relevant Highways and Transport Act measures and guidelines. The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 puts an obligation on local authorities to provide walking and cycling infrastructure.
- 7.3 It will be necessary to ensure that all terms and conditions attached to the external grant funding are complied with and that the Council's Financial Procedure Rules Regarding Grant Applications and Acceptances are followed.
- 7.4 Land agreements whether by purchase or lease should be in place prior to the commencement of scheme construction and delivery.
- 7.5 Planning Consent may be required for the following schemes:
- a. **NCN 43 Swansea Canal**
 - b. **Placemaking**
 - c. **Craig Cefn Parc**
- 7.6 Separate legal advice will need to be sought regarding any contract and procurement issues relevant to the schemes.
- 7.7 The Council must comply with all terms and conditions attached to the offer of grant funding.

- 7.8 Accepting the grant funding and approving the schemes will enable the Council to comply with its obligations under the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

- Appendix A – NCN43 Clydach Canal Financial Summary
- Appendix B – Placemaking Financial Summary
- Appendix C – Craig Cefn Parc Financial Summary
- Appendix D – Capacity Enhancement Financial Summary
- Appendix E – Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form
- Appendix F – NCN 43 Swansea Canal Summary Map
- Appendix G – Craig Cefn Parc Summary Map