



Report of the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management

Cabinet - 18 November 2021

Financial Procedure Rule 7 – Safe Routes in Communities Grant 2021/22

Purpose:	To confirm the Safe Routes in Communities grant allocation from Welsh Government and include the expenditure in the capital programme for 2021/22.
Policy Framework:	The Local Transport Plan, Active Travel (Wales) Act (2013).
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: 1) The Safe Routes in Communities grant of £283,200 is confirmed and this expenditure be included in the capital programme for 2021/22.
Report Author:	Alan Ferris
Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Jonathan Wills
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The following report has been prepared to advise on the success of the Council in bidding for grant funding from Welsh Government to implement measures to support sustainable modes of transport particularly in the vicinity of schools in the Gowerton area.
- 1.2 The report details the works proposed to be undertaken using the grant allocation from Welsh Government and invites members to confirm their acceptance of the grant and its inclusion in the 2021/22 capital programme.

2. Safe Routes in Communities bid details

- 2.1 In January 2021 Welsh Government invited Councils across Wales to submit bids for funding to support active travel modes in Council areas, particularly around schools. The information below provides details of the bid, the issues identified and the solutions proposed. The report also confirms the level of grant funding awarded and seeks approval to include the expenditure in the 2021/22 Capital programme.
- 2.2 **Gowerton:-**
- 2.3 In 2014 Welsh Government requested Local Authorities to provide a list of road safety concerns impacting on safe travel for pupils going to and from school. Highways officers in conjunction with Education Officers and Health and Safety Officers have continued to review this list. Analysing each individual school in the Swansea area to prioritise any requirement for road safety intervention. With two comprehensive schools in immediate proximity, Gowerton continues to raise concern in relation to conflict between vehicle and children's movements during the school commute. In addition, Gowerton suffers from high volumes of commuter traffic passing through the town travelling to the city centre beyond. This increases concerns for schoolteachers, parents and schoolchildren alike.
- 2.4 The developed bid aims to address these concerns and help to build on the existing active travel network. NCN4 passes through the town and interlinks with the new Kingsbridge Link (an improvement to the Swansea Bay silver Route). This provides excellent connectivity from the town to the city centre and the towns and villages to the north such as Gorseinon and Grovesend. However, there are limitations on the network within the town itself. This coupled with high traffic volumes as mentioned above limits local access to these facilities.
- 2.5 Analysis of existing links showed that the basic infrastructure was in place but internal links to the key routes required improvement or missing. This compounded by high traffic volumes were limiting the uptake of more sustainable transport modes both by children and by the wider community. The bid focused on addressing these two issues.
- 2.6 Firstly, the scheme aims to address both the speed of traffic through the town and the volume of commuter traffic, by introducing traffic calming through the central area of the town. This will be used to support a lowered speed limit of 20mph on the main roads, building on existing 20mph limits on Park Road and outside the primary school. The traffic calming will comprise a series of cushions, buildouts and plateaus to help slow traffic along the route whilst assisting pedestrian movements at key desire lines. The traffic calming will focus on the two main routes used by commuter traffic, Cecil Road and Gorwydd Road as well as the commercial centre of the town, Sterry Road.
- 2.7 The introduction of these measures will manage the speed of traffic through the town, creating additional opportunity for pedestrian and cycle movements to be undertaken safely. Previous experience has also shown that it will make it less attractive as a commuter route for those avoiding

using the A484 (Gowerton Bypass). The reduction in traffic volume through the town will be key in making this a more attractive community to live in.

- 2.8 In addition, a missing section of footway was identified on the B4295, Penclawdd Road. Construction of a new facility in this location will be key in creating a safe route for pedestrians and cyclists south of the B4295 to access both the Primary school and NCR4.
- 2.9 The potential to improve connectivity along the existing Active Travel routes was also identified. Both the Mill St junction and the Sterry Rd/Station Rd junction of the B4295 involve cyclists having to negotiate staggered split crossings, which are both tight and unattractive, giving cars priority in movement. The proposals allow for making these single phase crossings. This significantly improves the attractiveness of NCR4 through the town and also prioritises cyclists/pedestrian time over other traffic which will further detract from its attractiveness as a commuter route. These junctions also have pinch points with pedestrian cyclist conflict potential, reworking the junction layout will remove this.
- 2.10 Some elements of the bid were not supported. These included Mill Street where it was proposed to introduce a new Toucan crossing linking the rugby club to the town and improvements to a network of footways which were designed to improve access to residential areas
- 2.11 The total award from Welsh Government, including design and supervision, is £283,200. The funding is conditional on works being completed by 31 March 2022. In addition the Local Ward Member has agreed to support the implementation of the works through a £30,000 contribution from their Community Fund allocation.

3. General Issues

3.1 Staffing Implications

- 3.2 The grant awarded has an allowance for fee built into the award. This will be used in supporting the operation of the Highways section in delivering these projects.

4. 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.

4.1.1 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'.

4.1.2 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.

4.2 The fundamental objective of the scheme is to seek to encourage an active lifestyle by encouraging children to travel to school actively, helping with lifestyle choices for years to come. This is further built on by widening the scope to address issues around the wider community that may be limiting connectivity to sustainable modes. The success in implementing these measures supports a wide range of National and Local objectives by developing healthy lifestyle choices, addressing transport poverty issues and helping to address environmental issues through modal change. More locally, the potential for reduced congestion and lower vehicle speeds will help in creating an environment that is more attractive and open for people to move about safely and freely.

4.3 The works will be designed taking full account of the requirements to support the use of Welsh language. All traffic signs will be bi-lingual with Welsh appearing first.

4.4 An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) screening form has been completed with the agreed outcome that a full IIA report was not required. The screening concluded that this development would have a positive impact on children and young people as well as people of all ages in the community travelling through the town. Positive engagements with the schools and community leaders led to the award of funding to support the scheme and this will be carried through the detailed design and implementation to ensure that the benefits are realised for everyone. The cumulative impact is seen as being entirely positive. A copy has been appended to the report as Appendix A.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 Details of the proposed expenditure are shown in the Financial summary which is included as Appendix A to this report.

5.2 All works must be completed within financial year 2021/22. It will not be possible to draw down grant funding to complete unfinished work after 31 March 2022.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 The Highways Act 1980 Section 41(1) places a statutory duty of care on the Highway Authority towards road users of all kinds. The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 legislates for the provision of routes designed for walking and cycling. The success in implementing the works identified above will help the Council in meeting its obligations in this regard.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix A Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Forms
Appendix B Financial Summary

Appendix A - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

Which service area and directorate are you from?

Service Area: Traffic Management

Directorate: Place

Q1 (a) What are you screening for relevance?

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures
- Service review, re-organisation or service changes/reductions, which affect the wider community, service users and/or staff
- Efficiency or saving proposals
- Setting budget allocations for new financial year and strategic financial planning
- New project proposals affecting staff, communities or accessibility to the built environment, e.g., new construction work or adaptations to existing buildings, moving to on-line services, changing location
- Large Scale Public Events
- Local implementation of National Strategy/Plans/Legislation
- Strategic directive and intent, including those developed at Regional Partnership Boards and Public Services Board, which impact on a public bodies functions
- Medium to long term plans (for example, corporate plans, development plans, service delivery and improvement plans)
- Setting objectives (for example, well-being objectives, equality objectives, Welsh language strategy)
- Major procurement and commissioning decisions
- Decisions that affect the ability (including external partners) to offer Welsh language opportunities and services

(b) Please name and fully describe initiative here: **Gowerton Safe Routes in Communities**

This proposal is aimed at addressing both the speed of traffic through the town and the volume of commuter traffic, by introducing traffic calming through the central area of the town. This will be used to support a lowered speed limit of 20mph on the main roads, building on existing 20mph limits on Park Road and outside the primary school. The traffic calming will comprise a series of cushions, buildouts and plateaus to help slow traffic along the route whilst assisting pedestrian movements at key desire lines. The traffic calming will focus on the two main routes used by commuter traffic, Cecil Road and Gorwydd Road as well as the commercial centre of the town, Sterry Road. In addition work will also be undertaken to address existing mini-roundabouts to further assist in slowing traffic at junctions on Gorwydd Road.

The introduction of these measures will manage the speed of traffic through the town, creating additional opportunity for pedestrian and cycle movements to be undertaken safely. Previous experience has also shown that it will make it less attractive as a commuter route for those avoiding using the A484 (Gowerton Bypass). The reduction in traffic volume through the town will be key in making this a more attractive community to live in.

Building on this, the bid seeks to make improvements to existing pathways linking residential areas and community hubs to the Active Travel network. There are a number of routes in the vicinity which link residential areas to both the schools, and the central

hub of the town. At present, these are invariably very narrow and poorly maintained. Unattractive for walking and not suitable for cycle and scooter use. The proposal is to develop these routes to become shared use paths. Linking from the residential areas direct to the schools sites.

In addition, a missing section of footway was identified on the B4295, Penclawdd Road. Construction of a new facility in this location will be key in creating a safe route for pedestrians and cyclists south of the B4295 to access both the Primary school and NCR4.

Q2 What is the potential impact on the following: the impacts below could be positive (+) or negative (-)

further	High Impact		Medium Impact		Low Impact		Needs
	+	-	+	-	+	-	
Investigation							
Children/young people (0-18)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Older people (50+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other age group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Future Generations (yet to be born)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race (including refugees)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asylum seekers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gypsies & travellers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or (non-)belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty/social exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carers (inc. young carers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community cohesion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q3 What involvement has taken place/will you undertake e.g. engagement/consultation/co-productive approaches? Please provide details below – either of your activities or your reasons for not undertaking involvement

Highway Engineers, Education Officers and Health and Safety Officers initially carried out a review of school sites around the county identifying areas of concern in getting children to and from school. This process identified the Gowerton Comprehensive schools as being of concern. With two comprehensive schools in such close proximity, together with high volumes of commuting traffic there was clear pressure on the highways network during the school commute.

From this initial point, highways officers worked with head teachers and local representatives to identify specific areas of concern in getting children to school safely. The focus on this was in creating an environment where it was safe for kids to travel together with discouragement for parents to take their cars. However, this process also identified concerns with the high volumes and occasional speeds of commenting traffic. The head teacher of Gowerton Comprehensive had particular concerns over the impact that traffic on Cecil Road was having. This led to site meetings involving local representatives, teachers the police and PCSO's. A walkabout survey highlighted the impact that road traffic was having on pupils accessing both comprehensives.

Going forwards it is proposed to undertake consultations on the measures designed to allow the public to comment on the developed design to ensure that it meets the needs of the community.

Q4 Have you considered the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 in the development of this initiative:

a) Overall does the initiative support our Corporate Plan's Well-being Objectives when considered together?

Yes No

b) Does the initiative consider maximising contribution to each of the seven national well-being goals?

Yes No

c) Does the initiative apply each of the five ways of working?

Yes No

d) Does the initiative meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs?

Yes No

Q5 What is the potential risk of the initiative? (Consider the following impacts – equality, socio-economic, environmental, cultural, legal, financial, political, media, public perception etc...)

High risk

Medium risk

Low risk

Q6 Will this initiative have an impact (however minor) on any other Council service?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide details below

The developed measures are focused on improving the commute journey to the local schools.

Q7 What is the cumulative impact of this proposal on people and/or communities when considering all the impacts identified within the screening and any other key decisions affecting similar groups/ service users made by the organisation?

The proposals developed around the three schools are specifically aimed at increasing the numbers of pupils who walk, cycle or scoot to school with a positive impact on those making that journey.

This will be achieved through the introduction of new sections of footway, traffic calming and traffic management to direct and control flows to create a more sympathetic environment for pedestrians and cyclists, the introduction of controlled and uncontrolled crossing points, improvements to existing controlled crossings to create single phase crossings and traffic regulation orders to manage parking and loading areas more effectively.

Although targeted at the younger generation, the developed measures are broadly positive for all vulnerable road users in opening the community to pedestrians and cyclists of all age groups as well as creating a safer environment for disabled users.

Outcome of Screening

Q8 Please describe the outcome of your screening below:

- **Summary of impacts identified and mitigation needed (Q2)**
- **Summary of involvement (Q3)**
- **WFG considerations (Q4)**
- **Any risks identified (Q5)**
- **Cumulative impact (Q7)**

This development would have a positive impact on children and young people as well as people of all ages in the community travelling through the town. Positive engagements with the schools and community leaders led to the award of funding to support the scheme and this will be carried through the detailed design and implementation to ensure that the benefits are realised for everyone. The cumulative impact is seen as being entirely positive.

Full IIA to be completed

Do not complete IIA – please ensure you have provided the relevant information above to support this outcome

Screening completed by:
Name: Alan Ferris
Job title: Road Safety Manager
Date: 17 June 2021
Approval by Head of Service:
Name: Stuart Davies
Position: Head of Service Highways and Transportation
Date:

Appendix B Financial Summary

Financial Procedure Rule 7

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS : SUMMARY

Portfolio: PLACE

Service : HIGHWAYS

Scheme : SAFE ROUTES IN COMMUNITIES 2021/22

<u>1. CAPITAL COSTS</u>	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	TOTAL
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Works	266.3			266.3
Fees	46.9			46.9
Budget Code:				
EXPENDITURE	313.2	0	0	313.2
<u>Financing</u>				
SRIC grant	283.2			283.2
CCoS Community Fund	30.0			30.0
FINANCING	313.2	0	0	313.2
<u>2. REVENUE COSTS</u>	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	FULL
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	YEAR
<u>Service Controlled</u>				
<u>- Expenditure</u>				0
Employees				0
Maintenance				0
Equipment				0
Administration				0
NET				
EXPENDITURE	0	0	0	0