

# **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

## **REPORT TO: ENVIRONMENT AND PROSPERITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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**Date of Meeting: 24 July 2012**

**Report of: Strategic Director, Places and Organisational Capacity**

**Subject/Title: Local Sustainable Transport Fund**

**Portfolio Holder: Cllr Rod Menlove, Environmental Services**

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### **1.0 Report Summary**

- 1.1 This report presents the Committee with information relating to the Council's successful bid for Local Sustainable Transport Fund funding.

### **2.0 Decision Requested**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the details contained in the bid summary attached, and the uses to which the funding agreement with the Department for Transport commits us to.

### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 The Council submitted a bid for funding to the Department for Transport for £3.509m from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. The Council has been notified that the bid was successful. As part of the agreement for funding, the Council will be expected to achieve certain targets and outcomes to demonstrate the effective use of the funding, and that our expenditure is in accordance with the submitted bid.

### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 Crewe North, Crewe East, Crewe South, and Willaston and Rope.

### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 See 4.1 above

### **6.0 Policy Implications including – Carbon Reduction - Health**

6.1 A significant element of the rationale behind the LSTF is that councils will be expected to use the funding to promote more sustainable forms of transport. Hence, there are direct impacts on carbon reduction, and these are incorporated into the bid (and consequent agreement). It is anticipated that if all targets are achieved, up to 8,000 tonnes of carbon emissions would be avoided.

6.2 The accepted bid is in accordance with the Council's adopted third Local Transport Plan.

## **7.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Director of Finance and Business Services)**

7.1 The funding profile of the grant offer is set out in section A7 and Table 8.1 in Appendix G of the bid application. Cost and benefits are noted in Table 11.1 of Appendix G.

## **8.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)**

8.1 The Council is required to formally accept the offer of grant funding from the DfT. There are no other legal implications.

## **9.0 Risk Management**

9.1 There are no substantial risks attached to this project.

## **10.0 Background and Options**

10.1 The Department for Transport has set up a fund to support local sustainable transport projects. The fund – valued at £560m over four years – is used to support local authority transport schemes. There are two key aims to the fund:

- To promote jobs and employment growth
- To promote sustainable travel (such as walking, cycling and public transport)

10.2 The funding was allocated via a competitive bidding process, with authorities choosing to either bid for major schemes (up to £50m capital and revenue funding) or minor schemes (up to £5m capital and revenue funding). The minor scheme application process was split into two streams, an initial tranche for authorities with "bud ready" schemes, and a second, larger, tranche for schemes that required more preparation prior to application.

10.3 Cheshire East Council submitted an expression of interest for a minor

scheme bid in the second tranche application round. A formal bid document was then created setting out the Council's aspirations. A copy of the bid document is available electronically and has been provided to the committee via email. It contains full details of the bid, the targets we have agreed to achieve, and the costs, benefits and long term legacy. It has targeted Crewe, since the town has the highest potential for growth and the highest levels of economic inactivity, with barriers to growth and employment caused partly by transport issues.

10.4 The Committee's attention is drawn to the main elements of the bid, which is entitled "Growing Smarter Travel Choices in Crewe":

- **Theme 1 : Access to employment, apprenticeships, skills and training**
- **New town bus service**  
This would serve areas of relatively high unemployment and provide a fast, frequent service to main areas of employment
- **Incentives**  
Launch incentives to attract car users to use the new service are anticipated
- **Bus priority and urban traffic control measures**  
Improvement to bus priority infrastructure will make public transport more attractive by making journey times faster and more reliable
- **Subsidised bus tickets**  
Our bid partners (such as the Department for Work and Pensions and Crewe Chamber of Commerce) have identified barriers to employment resulting from high up-front costs of transport. Incentives are anticipated to help particularly anyone who is classed as long term unemployed
- **Wheels – 2 – work scheme**  
Schemes such as scooter and cycle loan are aimed particularly at younger unemployed people and people pursuing courses of further education and apprenticeships
- **Business travel-planning support and advice**  
Through better engagement of employers and employees, detailed and bespoke travel planning advice will reduce usage of private motor cars for journeys that can be undertaken through other modes of transport
- **Theme 2 : Links to the Railway Station**
- **Station travel plan**  
There is a substantial programme of investment either underway or in the pipeline for Crewe Railway Station. As these plans become a reality, a detailed travel plan will help integrate all modes of transport into the railway station
- **Active travel infrastructure**  
Better facilities for cyclists, pedestrians etc
- **Signage, wayfinding, and information**

Surveys have shown that a lack of signage is a barrier to active travel, as well as being uncondusive to visitors. In addition, better information (eg bus service information) would promote public transport usage

- **Theme 3 : Travel awareness, marketing and communications**
- **Promotional campaigns, web portals etc**  
In order to promote active travel, use of public transport, etc, better promotion and marketing is required. In addition, contacts with business, commerce, and other employers would be used as a conduit for encouraging sustainable travel modes, and to promote employment opportunities
- **Personal travel planning advice and support**
- **Real-time travel information**  
The council has previously trailed real time information. It was successful, and the funding would be used to ensure as many routes in Crewe as possible would benefit for further roll-out.
- **Travel signage and facilities**

#### **11.0 Access to Information**

Local Sustainable Transport Fund, Full Application (available electronically, provided to Committee members via email)