

Report to: Transport Committee

Date: 14 October 2022

Subject: **Active Travel Update**

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Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 To provide an update on Active Travel policy and funding at the Combined Authority in light of the creation of Active Travel England (ATE).
- 1.2 To provide an update on the success of previous bidding and the outline approach and timeline for future funding applications.

2. Information

Active Travel England

Set up of new national body

- 2.1 Active Travel England (ATE) has been set up as an arms-length executive body of the Department for Transport. Its purpose is to support and enable Local Authorities and Mayoral Combined Authorities in achieving the goals laid out in the Government's Gear Change strategy, including a target of 50% of journeys in England being made via walking and cycling by 2030.
- 2.2 ATE will inspect all highway schemes, including those targeted principally at other modes to make sure that cycling infrastructure (compliant with Local Transport Note 1/20) and walking infrastructure are of high quality. In doing this work, ATE is now a major stakeholder in, and potential author for future

iterations of, key highway design guidance that the Combined Authority uses across schemes, including:

- Local Transport Note 1/20
- Manual for Streets 3 (expected 2023)
- Inclusive Mobility
- Guidance on the Use of Tactile Paving Surfaces
- Decarbonising Transport
- Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy
- National Model Design Code
- Bus Back Better
- Getting Buses Moving (LTN 1/97)

- 2.3 Active Travel England will both support and assist in the design and development of schemes to ensure compliance with standards. It will then inspect schemes delivered by the Combined Authority and our district partners to ensure that they meet standards and the agreed designs. Where they are found to not comply, a record of non-compliance will be taken and this will be used to negatively affect future funding awards across the wider transport budget.
- 2.4 Active Travel England's framework document was published on the 21st July 2022, with financial delegation to ATE from the 8th August. The full body will number 98 Full-Time Equivalent Staff and be based in York from early 2023. Until suitable accommodation is found it operates out of Wellington Place in Leeds.
- 2.5 The Combined Authority and our district partners welcome the creation of Active Travel England and look forward to working closely with them to deliver our joint ambition of enabling active and accessible travel, in terms of walking, wheeling and cycling, across the region. The Combined Authority is demonstrating this ambition through the part-time secondment of staff to support the new body inspect schemes and to help develop its processes for engagement with Mayoral Combined Authorities.
- 2.6 ATE has indicated that it is keen to avoid duplication where possible and so it seeks to support our ongoing quality control and appraisal processes as appropriate, including potentially having a role in any Quality Panel process for Active Travel Fund and City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement programmes. This potential approach is being considered amongst the relevant teams as part of our close working relationship with Active Travel England.

Funding Announcements for Active Travel

- 2.7 As part of the Active Travel Fund Tranche 3 competition in August 2021 West Yorkshire local authorities were invited to bid for capital schemes, a pilot programme around social prescribing and to bid for a funded feasibility study into being a national non-London mini-Holland demonstrator (as reported to Transport Committee in September 2021, see **Background Documents**).

Bradford and Leeds districts have been successfully awarded over £1.3m each as two of the eleven social prescribing pilots nationally and Calderdale has been awarded £80,000 to design and assess the potential impact of a mini-Holland in Skircoat, South Halifax, one of nineteen such studies nationally.

- 2.8 The next Active Travel Fund Tranche (ATF4) is being administered by ATE and is expected to consist of a three year capital programme (running 23/24 – 25/26 with a national budget of c. £500m) and two separate revenue funds – for one year (the Local Authority Capability and Ambition Fund) and the following two years respectively.
- 2.9 This level of capital funding is significantly above the one year design and delivery windows of previous Active Travel Fund rounds. This will enable more complicated and more ambitious schemes to be delivered, including emerging schemes from the ongoing West Yorkshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) work and schemes which complement and support other projects from other funding sources such as the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement. Discussion about these projects has begun with the districts although as the funding and bidding guidance is yet to be published and confirmed this work has only been at a high level.
- 2.10 The revenue funding guidance for the first year award (“Local Authority Capability and Ambition Fund”) has been announced with a deadline of 30th September and the Combined Authority has been invited to bid for a nominal sum of c. £1.6m. This money will be used to support our continued award-winning work around behaviour change (led by the CityConnect team), further tranches of network and scheme development work, an understanding of current barriers and perceptions around issues regarding walking, wheeling and cycling and also to upskill district and Combined Authority staff with regard to Active Travel England and the standards contained in Local Transport Note 1/20 on cycling infrastructure. Similar activities (provided that the guidance remains similar) are planned for the second tranche of revenue funding to continue building capacity to enable the development of schemes ready for future capital funding and its activation through complementary behaviour change work.
- 2.11 As part of Active Travel England’s programme to target investment more effectively at deliverable and appropriate schemes, each highway authority within the Combined Authority was invited, by ATE, to conduct a Local Authority Self-Assessment, with the Combined Authority submitting its own self-assessment as well.
- 2.12 The self-assessment forms, combined with previous monitoring returns to the DfT on previous Active Travel Fund tranches and other evidence will be used to “score” local authorities’ ability and appetite to deliver LTN 1/20 compliant infrastructure at various levels of ambition. This means that authorities that bid for funding for schemes which are broadly comparable with their expressed appetite for, and delivery track record of, active travel infrastructure and the

road space re-allocation required to deliver it, have a higher chance of success.

- 2.13 Appendix A gives examples of types of infrastructure and the corresponding level required to have been met by the local authority at the end of the scoring process. Note that ATE have been clear that no local authority in England is expected to meet the criteria for Level 4 at this time. The summary of each level is shown below:

Level	Definition
Level 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No local leadership or support for active travel, no plans in place, delivered lower complexity schemes only.
Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some local leadership and support with basic plans and isolated interventions
Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong local leadership and support, with strong plans and emerging network
Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very strong local leadership and support, comprehensive plans, and majority of network in place with increasing modal share
Level 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established culture of active travel with successive increases in cycling and walking, underpinned by dense integrated network and highly supportive policies to reduce the need for car trips

- 2.14 As part of the Capability and Ambition Fund guidance the Combined Authority and its constituent authorities has been awarded Level 3 for the current funding round. We are one of five Level 3 authorities in England, with no authorities having been awarded Level 4 at this time. This “score” makes us eligible for higher levels of capability and infrastructure funding in funding rounds and competitions controlled by Active Travel England. In future rounds it is expected that individual districts and the Combined Authority will be given separate scores.

Active Travel Strategy

- 2.15 Active Travel England is also keen to build the evidence base of supporting and complementary interventions which support the deployment of infrastructure, such as behaviour change programmes, monitoring and evaluation approaches and public engagement methodologies.
- 2.16 As part of its ongoing work regarding an Active Travel Strategy, the Combined Authority has been engaging to best understand how to utilise existing knowledge in ATE to support and develop a nationally-leading strategy, building on the ongoing stakeholder engagement and research phases of the Active Travel Strategy work.

- 2.17 The Active Travel Strategy continues to be developed in line with the emerging Local Transport Plan refresh and, along with the ongoing Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan, will be consulted on in-line with the timescales associated with that work.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 Through enabling more and walking and cycling, working with ATE will enable modal shift from private car journeys to foot and cycle, including potential for improved public transport both directly (by enhanced access through better walking and cycling routes) and indirectly (by removing congestion from roads which is the primary cause of bus delay). Modal shift and reduction in car vehicle kms travelled is essential for West Yorkshire to hit its decarbonisation targets.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 Improving routes for walking, wheeling and cycling is the most inclusive form of transport investment that the Combined Authority can make, increasing access to jobs, training, retail and leisure opportunities for all. Evidence also suggests that re-allocating roadspace away from motor traffic throughput and storage and instead replacing it with accessible pedestrian and cycling space can generate increases in footfall and local business revenue, helping to make our places more attractive and local businesses more resilient.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 As the most inclusive form of transport, investment in walking, cycling and wheeling is a core part of the Combined Authorities Equality and Diversity ambitions. This includes enhancing access to jobs, training, retail and leisure opportunities to those who need to travel outside the hours of our public transport network or who cannot drive or own a private motor vehicle. Through enhancing access to the public transport network, in addition to enabling many more short and medium length journeys to be undertaken, it also supports more medium and long-distance journeys being undertaken by these demographics as well.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Staffing Implications

- 8.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

9.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1 That the Transport Committee notes the Combined Authority's ambition to work closely with Active Travel England across its portfolio of projects and support the development of this new organisation.
- 10.2 That the Transport Committee notes the significant change in the nature, ambition and scale of active travel funding that is forthcoming as a result of Active Travel England's role.
- 10.3 That the Transport Committee endorses the submission by the Combined Authority to the Capacity and Ambition Fund.
- 10.4 That the Transport Committee supports the continued development of an Active Travel Strategy for West Yorkshire.
- 10.5 That the Transport Committee supports the development of a pipeline of future Active Travel capacity and infrastructure schemes to inform future funding awards.

11. Background Documents

- 11.1 *Department for Transport Active Travel Fund: Local Authority Capital*, in Leeds City Region Transport Update Report, Item 10, West Yorkshire transport Committee, 17 September 2021, available here:
<https://westyorkshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=138&MIId=1126>

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Capital Scheme Taxonomy in line with ATE Authority Levels