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Cabinet

Monday, 3rd August, 2020
at 10.00 am

Contacts

Cabinet Administrator

Claire Heather

Tel: 023 8083 2412

Email: claire.heather@southampton.gov.uk

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION

Tuesday, 14 July 2020

Decision No: (CAB 20/21 28124)

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET
PORTFOLIO AREA:	Cabinet Member for Green City and Place
SUBJECT:	Southampton Green Transport Recovery Plan
AUTHOR:	Iain Steane

THE DECISION

- (i) For the Cabinet to provide overall approval of the Southampton Green Transport Recovery Plan (provided in Appendix 1) which sets out both the key work done to date, work that is currently in progress and work planned for the future, to complement and supplement Connected Southampton 2040 (LTP4) and the schemes identified in Table 1.
- (ii) Cabinet is recommended to accept the Emergency Active Travel Fund (EATF) grant of £0.245m and approve the addition of this amount to the capital programme 2020/21, together with approval to spend as per the details provided in paragraph 13 of this report.
- (iii) Cabinet delegates authority to the S151 officer to accept and authorise spend of any future additional ETAF grant allocation which is expected to be £0.980m but subject to further DfT guidelines and a business case submission that will be approved by the Director of place following consultation with the Cabinet Member and is in accordance with the details provided in paragraph 13 of this report.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

1. Since the UK Covid-19 lockdown was imposed on 23rd March 2020 there has been a significant impact on traffic and transport in Southampton. The advice to stay at home and only travel when essential has seen average traffic levels reduce by 60% compared to the week before the lockdown commenced. Bus travel has similarly reduced, with 85% fewer people travelling by bus in May compared to February. These changes in traffic and travel habits have created a new dynamic and cycling has been a primary beneficiary, with a doubling in the number of cycle trips. This has been most marked on leisure routes such as Weston Shore, Riverside Park or SCN1 towards the New Forest (See Appendix 2 for local traffic trends). The reduction in traffic has also seen improvements in air quality.
2. As the lockdown is progressively and incrementally eased this presents a point in time to take advantage of the opportunities and tackle the challenges to how people travel.

DETAILS OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

1. Do Nothing – Not to implement any schemes in the GTRP. This was rejected because the Council has received direction from DfT to support social distancing and active travel. Not having a robust plan would mean that the additional Emergency Active Travel funding available to SCC could not be accessed.
2. Do Minimum – select fewer schemes within the GTRP. This was rejected as it would not have the desired effect to support people who have taken up walking and cycling as a means of exercise or transport during the lockdown.

OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS CONCERNING THE DECISION

OSMC considered the matter on 9 July 2020 and made the following recommendations:

- (i) that City Council publications and communications on the Green Transport Recovery Plan provide appropriate context to reported statistics by including numbers alongside percentages;
- (ii) that the importance of improving traffic flow across the city is recognised within future updates of the Green Transport Recovery Plan; and
- (iii) that the Cabinet Member considers how Ward Councillors can be consulted on the contents of the Tranche 2 application for the Department for Transport Emergency Access Travel Fund, prior to it being submitted to Government.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None.

CONFIRMED AS A TRUE RECORD

We certify that the decision this document records was made in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 and is a true and accurate record of that decision.

Date: 14th July, 2020

Decision Maker:
The Cabinet

Proper Officer:
Claire Heather

SCRUTINY

Note: This decision will come in to force at the expiry of 5 working days from the date of publication subject to any review under the Council's Scrutiny "Call-In" provisions.

Call-In Period expires on

22 July 2020

Date of Call-in (*if applicable*) (*this suspends implementation*)

28 July 2020 (reconvened on the 30th July)

Call-in Procedure completed (*if applicable*)

30 July 2020

Call-in heard by (*if applicable*)

Cabinet

Results of Call-in (*if applicable*)

Cabinet reconsidered its decision made on 14 July 2020 taking into consideration the following recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee at its meeting on 30 July 2020 as set below:

The following recommendations were made to be addressed by Cabinet:

- (i) Cabinet withdraws its proposed Green Transport Recovery Plan as it is not fit for purpose, undemocratically instigated, not evidence led and fails to demonstrate it supports economic growth, as set out in our Southampton City Strategy – given the impact of Covid-19 on our economy.

If Cabinet is not minded to withdraw the plans in full:

- (ii) Cabinet agrees to suspend the decision on the Green Transport Recovery Plan whilst it reviews it against the recently released Government policy announcement of 'Gear Change', paying particular attention to this line "we will need to ensure that understanding of transport users' needs, motivations and behaviours is central to what we do, in order to maximise our chances of success" – that shows understanding and taking people with us is crucial to success.

On the assumption Cabinet neither withdraws or pauses:

- (i) Cabinet introduces measures to help with traffic flows, looking to reduce congestion and stop start traffic across our City;
- (ii) Cabinet undertakes proper consultation, that can help shape any of the future proposed schemes, outside the emergency measures already taken, with a focus on spending money where it has the highest chance of long term facilitation of active travel;
- (iii) Cabinet place a higher focus on Council led "school streets" schemes and the creation of low traffic residential zones. It is not acceptable to only have St. Denys as an identified neighbourhood scheme and action needs to be taken around all schools with traffic related issues, not just those who wish to engage with the Council;

- (iv) Cabinet immediately engage with disability representatives and amend existing and future schemes to ensure our most vulnerable are not discriminated against. Including immediately reinstating at least some of the parking on the Common side of Hill Lane, as this has been removed with no consultation or regard to vulnerable users of the Common, impacting their well-being and access to the Common.
- (v) Cabinet pauses any major future plans, such as Millbrook Road West bus lanes, whilst we wait for analysis on the impact of Covid-19 on our local economy, our air quality and the new 'Gear Change' policy that suggests segregated facilities for cyclists.
- (vi) Cabinet agrees to immediately removing the temporary road space reallocation on Bassett Avenue and Bitterne Road West in full, due to concerns over additional congestion and the effect this will have on local air quality. If Cabinet is not prepared to do this, it states the conditions that would need to be met for them to remove the road space reallocation and considers making public the weekly data that is the base of the decision not to remove these measures.

Cabinet confirmed their decision taken on 14 July 2020 and rejected the recommendations above