



## **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday 9 November 2022**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>ACTIVE TRAVEL FUNDING – TRANCHE 3</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES (MONITORING OFFICER)</b>

### **REPORT SUMMARY**

The report seeks approval for the amendment to the Capital Programme so that the £2,225,000 grant funding allocated to Wirral Council by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority from the Active Travel Fund Tranche 3 be allocated to the Conway Street/Europa Boulevard Movement Scheme. The budget secured from the Tranche 3 Programme will enable the scope of the proposed Conway Street / Europa Boulevard Movement Scheme to be extended as set out in Appendix 1 of this report. The scheme is funded via the Future High Streets programme.

The allocation of the funding will support all five themes of the Wirral Plan 2021-26: Inclusive Economy, Safe & Pleasant Communities, Sustainable Environment, Brighter Futures and Active & Healthy Lives.

This matter affects the Birkenhead and Tranmere Ward.

This matter is a Key Decision.

The associated Report of the Director of Regeneration and Place and the full Minutes of the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee meeting on 19 October 2022 are appended to this report.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

Policy and Resources Committee is recommended to approve the amendment to the Capital Programme so that the £2,225,000 grant funding allocated to Wirral Council by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority from the Active Travel Fund Tranche 3 be allocated to the Conway Street/Europa Boulevard Movement Scheme.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1.1 To enable the geographical scope of the proposed Conway Street/Europa Boulevard Scheme to be increased, which will support the wider town centre regeneration and facilitate the delivery of a significantly enhanced overall active travel scheme, enabling improved links to the wider existing or proposed active travel network.
- 1.2 To ensure that the Council achieves development and delivery of active travel schemes within the Borough as part of a Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) wide programme of schemes and interventions.
- 1.3 To ensure that the Council supports schemes which will deliver increased levels of sustainable travel as set out in the emerging Local Plan and to support actions required to address the Climate Emergency and the target in the Cool2 Strategy to 'a complete transition to fossil fuel free local travel by around 2030'.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 Other options have been considered and are included within the minutes of the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee and the appended report.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

#### **Future High Street Fund Programme**

- 3.1 The Birkenhead FHSF Programme has been a number of years in development owing to the multi staged application process set out by the Government. This commenced in December 2018 when the then Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) launched the programme to provide capital infrastructure investment to help renew and reshape town centres. Following a number of delays owing to COVID-19 and other clarification exercises requested by MHCLG, the Secretary of State for Communities Housing and Local Government announced on 26 December 2020 that Birkenhead had been allocated £24,581,011 and was one of only 15 areas receiving confirmed funding for their full application value.

#### **FHSF Movement Projects**

- 3.2 The FHSF programme includes 2 movement schemes:
  - Charing Cross/Grange Road; and
  - Conway Street/Europa Boulevard.

This report relates to Conway Street/Europa Boulevard only.

- 3.3 The proposed concept design introduces a two-way segregated cycleway between Argyle St junction and Conway Place junction. The current pavement on the north side of Conway Street will be replaced by high quality footway paving, to improve the pedestrian environment and accessibility. This includes the implementation of a new pedestrian super-crossing between the Bus Station and Europa Boulevard (West). The proposals also incorporate modifications to Europa Boulevard (between Conway Street and Price Street) converting the existing northbound carriageway to pedestrian and cycleway use with the existing southbound carriageway modified to run as two-way for general traffic.

### **Tranche 3 Active Travel Fund**

- 3.4 On 9 May 2020 the Secretary of State for Transport announced a £2 billion funding package for active travel. This funding was to support the delivery of Gear Change, the Governments Cycling and Walking Strategy which set out the ambition that; “England will be a great walking and cycling nation. Places will be truly walkable. A travel revolution in our streets, towns and communities will have made cycling a mass form of transit. Cycling and walking will be the natural first choice for many journeys with half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled or walked by 2030.”
- 3.5 In line with Department for Transport guidance, the LCRCA identified the need to develop measures to reduce the dependency on car-based journeys and through segregation provide increased confidence to people wishing to cycle.
- 3.6 The mechanism for the distribution of the funding has been through tranches. Tranches 1 and 2 have been awarded in recent years, and the council has secured £323,380 and £830,000 respectively from these earlier tranches.
- 3.7 LCRCA has recently received further capital grant funding of £11,979,000 known as “Active Travel Fund Tranche 3” from Central Government to deliver schemes which support cycling and walking.
- 3.8 The new executive agency of the Department for Transport, Active Travel England has been established. The agency has conducted an exercise to scrutinise all scheme proposals for their compliance with the new standards provided in the technical design guide known as LTN1/20, for their usefulness to cyclists and pedestrians and for their ability to contribute to a wider network which can transform conditions for active travel.
- 3.9 From the LCRCA allocation, Wirral Council has been awarded £2,225,000 to enable the geographical scope of a proposed movement project on Conway Street/Europa Boulevard to be extended. This project is funded via the Future High Streets Fund programme, Appendix 1 shows the extents of the original scheme to be funded via FHSF and the additional area which the scheme can now extend to, as a result of the Tranche 3 funding.

### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.4 In accordance with the Council’s Constitution the Policy and Resources Committee is charged by full Council to provide a co-ordinating role across all other service committees and retain a ‘whole-council’ view of performance, budget monitoring and

risk management, which includes responsibility for a decision on any virement between Budget funds (capital) or any amendment to the Capital Programme requested by a Committee or officer in excess of £500,000.

## **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 In accordance with Part 3B of Constitution (Committee Terms of Reference), the Policy and Resources Committee has two main areas of responsibility, which is to provide strategic direction to the operation of the Council, including making decisions on policies and co-ordinating spend not reserved to full Council, and to maintain a strategic overview of outcomes, performance, risk management and budgets.
- 5.2 The Policy and Resources Committee is charged by full Council to provide a co-ordinating role across all other service committees and retain a 'whole-council' view of performance, budget monitoring and risk management, which includes responsibility for a decision on any virement between Budget funds (capital) or any amendment to the Capital Programme requested by a Committee or officer in excess of £500,000
- 5.3 As part of the matter of business that was the subject of the report to Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee falls under that responsibility reserved to the Policy and Resources Committee, the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee's resolution is presented as a recommendation.
- 5.4 As the decision in this matter is the subject of a recommendation from another Committee, the Policy and Resources Committee must take into account the resolution of that Committee and give due regard to the guidance and comments made by its members. The Policy and Resources Committee must not, however, consider itself bound by that Committee's recommendations or otherwise fetter its discretion; its Members must come to their own decision. In doing so, the Committee must satisfy itself that it has been provided with all relevant information or a suitable précis to enable it to comply with its duties and make a lawful decision.
- 5.5 Other legal considerations are as set out in the appended report.

## **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

- 6.1 This report is for information only and does not contain any direct resource implications.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 7.1 The relevant risks are covered in the original report submitted to the Committee.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 Engagement and Consultation were covered in the original report submitted to the Committee.

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.
- 9.2. Whilst there are no equality implications arising from this report, the associated actions arising from the delivery may need to assess any equality issues and mitigate any negative impact that may emerge.

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 This report has no direct environmental implications.

## **11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 Community Wealth implications are covered in the original report submitted to the Committee.

### **REPORT AUTHOR:**

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Principal Democratic Services Officer

### **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 Minute Extract

Appendix 2 Full Report

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Valuation Advice Negotiated Heads of Terms

### **SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee	19 October 2022