

Subject:	Lewes Road LSTF Project – Update and Next Steps		
Date of Meeting:	27th March 2012		
Report of:	Strategic Director Place		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Robin Reed	Tel: 293856
	Email:	Robin.reed@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Key Decision:	No		
Ward(s) affected:	St Peters & North Laine, Hollingdean & Stanmer, Preston Park, Hanover & Elm Grove, Moulsecomb & Bevendean		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 In July 2011 the City Council was successful in bidding for £4.2m funding for the Lewes Road Corridor through the government's Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF). The funding will be used to implement infrastructure measures on Lewes Road and in the surrounding residential areas, as well as a range of initiatives to encourage people to travel more sustainably. A further £2.25m has been committed to the overall project by local partners including Brighton & Hove Bus Company, Brighton & Sussex Universities and Brighton & Hove PCT.
- 1.2 An initial public consultation was held over a 6 week period in November and December 2011 to inform people about the award of the funding and gather local opinion on the transport issues that exist in the area. This report shares the results of that consultation, and provides more detail on the nature of the infrastructure schemes that the City Council is seeking to deliver with the funding. A second consultation on the detailed proposals outlined in this report will take place in April 2012 for a further 6 week period. Subject to the results of that consultation, construction work could commence in late 2012.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Transport & Public Realm formally notes the outcome of the initial public consultation.
- 2.2 That the Cabinet Member for Transport & Public Realm agrees the principles of the schemes set out in this report and grants permission to consult with local people in accordance with the timescales outlined.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

Local Sustainable Transport Fund

- 3.1 On 13th December 2010, the Coalition Government announced plans for the creation of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF), for which £560 million has been set aside in the 4 year period to 2014-15. The establishment of the LSTF reflects the importance the Government attaches to revitalising local economies and tackling climate change and the commitment made in the Coalition Agreement to promoting sustainable travel initiatives. All Local Transport Authorities outside London can bid for LSTF funding in two bidding rounds.
- 3.2 The City Council submitted its bid to the Department for Transport (DfT) for the Lewes Road Corridor for consideration as part of the first round of bidding, the deadline for which was 18th April 2011. In total, 73 bids from across England were submitted and of those only 39 were successful. The City Council was fortunate to be one of the 39 successful bidders, and the project officially commenced on 6th July 2011.
- 3.3 Successful proposals were those judged to perform well against the twin objectives of supporting the local economy and facilitating economic development, and of reducing carbon emissions. If proposals met these initial criteria, they were also scored on their potential to deliver wider social and economic benefits, to improve safety, to bring about improvements to air quality, or to promote increased levels of physical activity. Proposals were required to demonstrate financial sustainability with benefits enduring beyond the life of the Fund, to incorporate a credible delivery plan, and to include a commitment to make a local contribution towards the overall costs.

The Lewes Road Corridor Bid

- 3.4 The City Council's Lewes Road Corridor bid consists of taking forward projects delivering smarter choices measures in combination with targeted infrastructure improvements. This combined package approach is designed to deliver significant economic benefits and reduce carbon outputs in the area. The smarter choices measures include a sustained community led Personalised Travel Planning (PTP) project with residents in the area as well as travel planning with the Universities, local schools and employers. The targeted infrastructure measures include upgrades to public transport infrastructure, cycling improvements, improvements to Lewes Road, pedestrian improvements, and improved links to the newly formed South Downs National Park. A full copy of the original bid document is included at Appendix 1.
- 3.5 In line with the requirements of the bidding process, a number of local organisations and stakeholders indicated their willingness to work in partnership with the city council in delivering elements of the bid. Furthermore, a number of local organisations will be contributing funding specifically towards delivery of specific elements within the LSTF project. This local contribution amounts to a further £2.25 million. Those organisations contributing significant amounts of funding include Brighton & Hove Bus Company, Southern Rail, Brighton University and Sussex University.

Initial Consultation

- 3.6 Following the award of funding, an initial public consultation was held over a 6 week period in November and December 2011 to inform people about the project and gather local opinion on the transport issues that exist in the area. Public exhibitions were held in community buildings located throughout the LSTF area at the following locations:
- Hollingdean Community Centre
 - Larchwood Café - Coldean
 - Hanover Community Centre
 - Bevendean Church Hall
 - Moulsecoomb Leisure Centre
 - Moulsecoomb Hall (Bates Estate)
 - United Reformed Church (Saunders Park Estate)
 - University of Brighton – Falmer & Moulsecoomb Campuses
 - University of Sussex
- 3.7 The events were advertised in The Argus, on the Council's website, through the Community & Voluntary Sector Forum (CVSF) and through a wide range of existing community group contacts. Events held at the universities were heavily promoted through established internal mechanisms. Officers also attended several Local Action Team (LAT) and other community group meetings as part of the consultation.
- 3.8 A questionnaire was available for respondents to complete either at the exhibitions or online. In total, 556 responses were received and 372 of these (67%) were received on-line through the council's consultation portal and 184 (33%) were completed at exhibitions. This a good response to a consultation of this type where the events were advertised through existing communication channels only and not through leaflets delivered to every household.
- 3.9 The results of the consultation show that the most commonly used form of transport in the area is bus (72%) and walking (67%). When asked which form of transport they use most, respondents indicated bus (38%) followed by cycling at 35%. Car (driver and passenger), was the usual form of transport for 32% of respondents.
- 3.10 Respondents indicated that their overall experience of travelling along Lewes Road using their usual mode of transport is predominantly poor or very poor (44.1%), whereas only 23.9% felt it is good or very good. The most common transport problems in the area were cited as being traffic congestion (68%), inconsiderately parked vehicles (54.1%) and a perception that it is unsafe to cycle (51.8%). The most commonly requested transport improvements were cycling improvements (57.2%), improved traffic flow (44.2%) and improved road safety (31.7%).
- 3.11 A full report of the consultation results is included at Appendix 2.

Proposed Schemes for Lewes Road

- 3.12 The feedback received through the initial consultations along with officers detailed knowledge of Lewes Road has been used to develop more detailed

scheme proposals which will be subject to further consultation in April 2012. The proposals comprise the following key elements:

- To introduce a combined Bus & Cycle Lane in both directions on the dual carriageway section of Lewes Road between The Vogue Gyratory and the A27 Falmer interchange (see artist's impression and cross-sections at Appendix 3).
- To introduce a continuous on-road 2 metre cycle lane northbound through The Vogue Gyratory as well as dedicated facilities for buses. There will also be improved pedestrian facilities and more efficient traffic lights to aid the flow of traffic. The existing southbound cycle lane would also be widened to 2 metres through the gyratory system
- To remove the restricted and unrestricted parking bays (approx 50 spaces) on the east side of Lewes Road between Natal Road and the Bus Garage, thereby removing an unpleasant and hazardous environment for cyclists and creating an opportunity for the pavements to be widened for the benefit of pedestrians. Parking surveys undertaken show that these spaces are mainly used by people parking long term and free of charge for the University of Brighton and the Bus Garage, thereby having little impact on residents parking. Loading facilities and disabled parking would be retained where necessary.
- To renew and improve the junctions at Saunders Park View and Coombe Road, providing enhanced facilities for pedestrians and cyclists
- To widen the narrow section of shared cycle & pedestrian path adjacent to Lewes Road north of Coldean Lane (a distance of approx 300 metres)
- To provide an enhanced cycle network in the north of the area with improved signage and access to Brighton and Sussex University Campuses at Falmer as well as the Brighton & Hove AMEX Stadium, and
- To extend the 30mph speed limit northwards to the A27 Falmer interchange.

3.13 The benefits arising from these proposals would be significant and wide ranging. A 30% improvement in bus journey times is predicted, along with significant modal shift from people travelling by private car to walking, cycling and public transport. Monitoring data from the bus priority measures implemented on the A259 coast road in 2008/9 shows that a reduction in general traffic of around 10% can be expected, along with an increase in bus patronage of approximately 25%. This represents genuine modal shift as monitoring data shows that the vehicles have not diverted to alternative routes.

3.14 Significant increases in the number of people cycling can also be expected due to the vastly improved conditions that would be created for cyclists should the proposals go ahead. The wider cycle lanes, slower vehicle speeds, cycle network improvements and improved conditions at the Vogue Gyratory would

represent a dramatic improvement in the quality of cycle infrastructure on Lewes Road.

- 3.15 The combined effect of the above would be a significant reduction in carbon emissions from traffic, a reduction in local air pollution and considerable economic benefit resulting from the improved journey times, as people can increase the amount of time spent undertaking productive tasks instead of travelling.

Proposed Next Steps

- 3.16 The proposals for Lewes Road outlined above will be subject to further consultation commencing in April 2012 for a period of 6 weeks. Consultation packs will be mailed to approximately 30,000 households in the LSTF area and a further 1000 will be distributed randomly to residents across the city, given the importance of Lewes Road as a key route into the city. As with the previous consultation, there will be a series of exhibitions held at community venues throughout the area where local people will be able to speak to officers about the proposals. Community engagement work through the Community & Voluntary Sector Forum (CVSF) will also continue to ensure awareness of the proposals.
- 3.17 The results of the consultation will be reported to a future Transport & Public Realm Committee Meeting where a decision will be made on whether to progress with the various scheme elements. If the project is given approval to proceed, it is envisaged that construction works could commence in late 2012.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Working in conjunction with CVSF, a great deal of community engagement work has been undertaken to date and this will continue for the duration of the LSTF project. An LSTF project board has been created consisting of senior officers, Councillors and 2 CVSF community reps. A community newsletter has also been developed and the first edition has been distributed to over 1000 contacts in the LSTF area. Further newsletters will be produced and distributed every 3 months to ensure local people are kept informed of how the project is developing.
- 4.2 The proposals identified in this report have been developed in partnership with representatives from the local community and enjoy wide ranging support from a number of key stakeholders including Brighton and Sussex Universities, Brighton & Hove Buses, The Big Lemon, Brighton & Hove Albion Football Club and The Jo Walters Trust - a charity set up by the family of Jo Walters who died cycling to University on Lewes Road in 2010.
- 4.3 556 responses were received through the first stage consultation and this has enabled officers to develop an in-depth understanding of the transport issues experienced by local people in the area. This knowledge has been used to formulate the specific proposals outlined in this report that will now be subject to further public consultation. The results of the next stage consultation will be reported at a future Transport & Public Realm Cabinet Meeting.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The costs associated with the consultation and implementing the measures outlined in the report will be largely met from the existing Local Sustainable Transport Fund. The total funding secured through the successful LSTF bid is £4.030 million. This is divided into £1.940 million of capital funding and £2.090 million of revenue funding covering the four years to 2014/15. For the current year, there is £0.250 million in capital funding and £0.547 million in revenue.
- 5.2 Additional funding from future years Local Transport Plan allocations will likely be required to implement the proposals in their entirety.

Finance Officer Consulted: Name Karen Brookshaw Date: 31/01/12

Legal Implications:

- 5.3 In carrying out consultation the Council must comply with the legal requirements for fair consultation that have been set out by the courts:
- consultation must take place while the proposals are still at a formative stage;
 - those consulted must be provided with information which is accurate and sufficient to enable them to make a meaningful response;
 - they must be given adequate time in which to do so;
 - there must be adequate time for their responses to be considered; and
 - the council must consider responses with a receptive mind and in a conscientious manner when reaching its decision.

The Council must take the Human Rights Act into account in respect of its actions but it is not considered that any individual's Human Rights Act rights would be adversely affected by the recommendations in this report.

Lawyer Consulted: Carl Hearsom Date: 01/02/12

Equalities Implications:

- 5.4 There are no equalities implications arising directly as a result of this report.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.5 The measures outlined in this report will promote and encourage greater use of sustainable transport, and particularly overcome current barriers to walking, cycling, and bus use. It is predicted that significant reductions in travel by private car would result from implementation of the schemes, with people instead choosing to travel by walking, cycling or bus due to their increased attractiveness and viability made possible through the improvements identified. The scheme will seek to enhance health by encouraging active travel amongst local people

and reducing the causes of air pollution along the corridor, namely excessive levels of motorised traffic.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.6 There are no Crime & Disorder implications arising directly as a result of this report.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.7 The main risk associated with the next stage of the process relates to the results of the consultation and whether or not a consensus of opinion can be reached on the proposals amongst members of the public. Longer term risks include the potential for the project costs to exceed the available budget and the risk of any identified enhancements having unforeseen negative consequences when implemented. The latter risk will be mitigated by a careful design process in the first instance, and thorough consultation with end users.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.8 Increasing the number of pedestrians and cyclists and encouraging greater use of public transport will directly lead to improved public health through increasing the amount of exercise undertaken by local people. Reducing the number of people travelling by private vehicle will also lead to an improvement in air quality which in turn will improve public health.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.9 Lewes Road is a key route into the City and therefore the citywide transport model will be utilised to fully understand and address any potential changes to strategic traffic flow.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 The consultation process outlined in this report allows for local people to be fully engaged in the further development of proposals for Lewes Road. Any alternative options would not provide for such high levels of engagement.
- 6.2 The proposed package of measures identified in this report would address the problems and issues raised by local people during the initial consultation, allowing people to travel more sustainably and reducing the impact of travel on the environment. Alternative options would not achieve this to the same degree.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 By formally noting the outcome of the recent public consultation, the Cabinet Member for Transport and Public Realm will support the process of developing proposals for Lewes Road in an open and transparent way
- 7.2 Agreeing the principles of the schemes identified for Lewes Road and proceeding to further public consultation will ensure the design process moves forward with the best balance of expedience and community involvement.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Brighton & Hove LSTF Bid
2. Feedback from LSTF Lewes Road Consultations
3. Artists impression and cross-section of possible Lewes Road Scheme

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. None