

Consultation Plan –Active Travel Fund Tranche 2

8 December 2020

Background

BHCC submitted a bid for Tranche 2 of the Department for Transport (DfT)'s Emergency Active Travel Fund (EATF) (NB now referred to as Active Travel Fund (ATF)) on 7 August 2020 to support the design and delivery of five key Active Travel Corridor schemes in the city, including thirteen complementary measures. We submitted further supporting information (Value for Money letter and accompanying economic assessments) on 11 September 2020.

The key schemes are broadly:

1. **Old Shoreham Road A270** – continuation of existing temporary cycle route and associated complementary measures
2. **Kingsway / Wellington Road A259** – continuation of existing temporary cycle route
3. **London Road A23** – permanent improvements to existing cycle route and key junctions
4. **Western Road** - permanent pedestrian improvements

The fifth scheme included in the bid was Marine Parade A259. Since submitting the bid and upon further investigation of the proposed schemes, it is not proposed to take forward the Marine Parade scheme due to the difficulties in delivering this as a temporary scheme, particularly when considering bus movement in this key area of the city and learning from the issues experienced at Palace Pier Roundabout in Tranche 1, and the need to consider the scheme in the context of longer term plans for this area currently in development (for example Valley Gardens Phase 3). It is proposed to replace Marine Parade with the **Madeira Drive** scheme, which is evolving based on feedback from a previous experimental scheme - the road is now operating one-way eastbound following the full closure previously. Future works to be completed in phase 2 include provision of a cycle lane, increasing the number of blue badge bays, and changing orientation of pay & display parking. The change of scheme from Marine Parade to Madeira Drive has been agreed by DfT.

Alongside the infrastructure schemes, a number of supporting complementary behavioural change measures are planned, as well as a range of communication and consultation activities.

[Full details of the Tranche 2 bid](#) are published on the Council's website.

At the ETS committee on 29 September 2020, the following decisions were made with regards to ATF Tranche 2:

*(4) Agree to a pause in implementing Tranche 2 changes, in order to **ensure local residents and stakeholder groups are consulted and are able to offer input into the process**. Request that officers agree a window with the Department for Transport that allows for meaningful consultation to take place, without placing the Tranche 2 funding at risk, and our expectation is that this window be no less than 6 weeks.*

*(5) Agree that subject to the Council securing funding for Tranche 2 of the government's Emergency Active Travel Fund, a report is brought to a Special meeting of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee to **agree the measures being taken forward and the associated consultation plan.***

The bid contained both temporary and permanent scheme elements, which will require different levels of design and construction, as well as different communications messaging.

On 13 November 2020 we were informed that we were successful in our Tranche 2 bid, receiving 100% of our funding allocation (£2.376m).

New requirements from DfT

The grant award letter from DfT highlights the importance of consultation and the local acceptance of schemes that work for their communities.

Local Authorities are now required to follow a 'five-point plan' from DfT as follows:

1. Publish detailed consultation plans to show how they will consult their communities before funding is released;
2. Show 'reasonable evidence' of consultation before schemes can be introduced;
3. Undertake appropriate public opinion surveys before and after implementation;
4. Submit monitoring reports on the implementation of schemes 6-12 months after their opening; and
5. Liaise closely with DfT on these requirements and attend briefing sessions where DfT will communicate the strengthened requirements in more detail.

If these conditions are not met, DfT will reduce future funding allocations for local transport measures. Furthermore, a new body - Active Travel England - is being set up by DfT and will provide quality assurance, support and review for local authority plans.

Consultation approach

The consultation on Tranche 2 schemes will be underpinned by the Council's community engagement framework and follow key principles:

1. Ensuring the consultation has a **clear purpose** and responses influence decisions.
2. Being flexible, so that engagement and consultation can be **tailored** to people's needs.
3. Being **inclusive**, ensuring a range of consultation methods are used to reach the widest range of people.
4. Ensuring Council **resources are well targeted**: local knowledge and intelligence is used to plan and deliver the consultation, and sufficient time is given to analyse feedback.
5. Being **transparent**, ensuring feedback is provided to participants and made publicly available.

The consultation will take place over a six-week period, starting no later than 1 February 2021, in order to fulfil the DfT requirements.

The overall consultation will entail **four separate scheme consultations** within the six-week period, which are the main focus of this plan, for the Old Shoreham Road, A259 Kingsway / Wellington Road, A23 London Road and Western Road. For Old Shoreham Road and A259 Kingsway / Wellington Road schemes, the whole scheme will be consulted on (i.e. also including phase 1 of both schemes, implemented in Tranche 1). For Madeira Drive the consultation will be delivered through the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) formal process, the scheme has already been amended based on feedback from previous ETRO consultations.

The consultation will largely focus on conceptual designs for the Tranche 2 schemes, enabling public feedback to truly shape the final designs brought forward for approval. Because of this, it may also be necessary to undertake further public consultation on detailed designs later in 2021.

Consultation objectives

Objectives of the consultation are as follows:

- To **meaningfully consult with a wide audience** of those who may be affected by / interested in the scheme/s
- To **gather quantitative and qualitative feedback** on the draft proposals to inform the scheme/s final design and implementation
- To **identify key concerns / impacts of the proposals** that may need to be managed and/or mitigated as part of the final design and implementation of schemes.

Consultation methods

The impact of Covid-19 means that consultation activities must be planned in line with the latest government guidance and rules. This will particularly limit the ability to hold face-to-face workshops / meetings as part of a consultation, however a range of methods are proposed as follows.

Delivery method	Audience	Details
Online questionnaire – BHCC website	City residents / businesses / visitors / groups or stakeholders with an interest / general public	Providing details of the schemes (including basic plans) and asking for responses via an online questionnaire. Accessible versions of the questionnaire will be available on request, i.e. paper copies / other languages. The online consultation portal hosting the questionnaire meets web content accessibility guidelines, including for use with speech recognition software and screen readers

Leaflet	Properties directly affected by schemes	Providing details of the proposed schemes (including basic plans) and asking for responses –submitting views via the online questionnaire or requesting a paper copy or other formats if required
Postcard	Wider boundary of properties affected	Providing summary information about the proposed schemes and inviting respondents to complete online or request a paper questionnaire
Public opinion surveys	Representative members of the public	Building on the recent work of the Climate Assembly in Brighton & Hove, and to fulfil the DfT requirements for opinion polls, it is proposed that separately to the scheme-specific questionnaires, public opinion surveys will be carried out before and after implementation of schemes in order to understand the level of public feeling on active travel and the need for change in the city
Online – BHCC website and social media	Wider residents, businesses	Information to be put on the BHCC website and circulated via BHCC online channels to promote the consultation more widely with those not directly affected, with an option to request a paper questionnaire
Local community groups	Stakeholder groups (including community groups / partnerships, active travel groups, disability groups, older peoples' groups) and their members / users	Email information to be sent to known stakeholder groups in the city, including those who can disseminate information to hard-to-reach groups including older people
Online information sessions	Stakeholder groups	Hold online sessions for community and stakeholder groups, to present information and take questions, like would take place in a session in person. Stakeholders and community groups for the area of the city concerned to be invited to sessions for each proposed scheme
Local disability groups	Local residents with disabilities	Accessible versions of the consultation information to be produced in conjunction with key disability groups in the city, in line with public sector accessibility regulations.

		<p>Information to be disseminated to local equality and disability networks, including via the BHCC equalities team</p> <p>Focus group/s to be facilitated in conjunction with disability groups, to gather qualitative feedback about the impacts of the proposals from people with disabilities and older people</p>
Email / phonecalls	Schools / Workplaces in affected areas	<p>Messaging to be distributed by School / Workplace Travel Teams, asking for the information to be forwarded to staff / parents & carers. Information to be disseminated to Workplace Active Travel & Health Partnership and potential for an online meeting to be held for the group</p> <p>Specific engagement to take place with the Business Improvement District and Chamber of Commerce, with option offered for online meetings to present the scheme / Q&A session</p>
Pupil engagement / feedback sessions	School pupils in areas near proposals (subject to school involvement)	Work to be carried out with the School Travel Team and Sustrans, who are already operating in schools, to inform and engage pupils in proposals being put forward and seeking feedback
Emails / phonecalls / meetings if required	<p>Statutory stakeholders (e.g. emergency services)</p> <p>Transport operators</p> <p>Royal Mail</p> <p>Members of Parliament</p> <p>All Ward Councillors</p>	To be undertaken by BHCC Project Manager for each scheme as standard
Partnership / stakeholder meetings	Key partner organisations including e.g. Transport Partnership, Equalities and Inclusion Partnership	Attend existing partnership and stakeholder meetings as scheduled during the consultation period (subject to invitation) to present information on the proposals, collect feedback and invite any further formal feedback from organisations via the online questionnaire

Online meeting / emails	Youth Council / Youth Climate Assembly	Present information to the assembly / council and to seek views and invite feedback

Consultation detail

The consultation will contain the following information for respondents to review:

- Background information on the Covid-19 changes, active travel and the need for the scheme (including reference to carbon neutral by 2030, clean air and public health benefits)
- Detail on what the scheme proposes and where this is
- Scheme diagram showing the proposals on a map
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the scheme
- Information on what happens next
- Questionnaire to fill in

The consultation questionnaires (paper and online) – specific to each of the four schemes – will broadly seek the following information from respondents. Survey content will also be informed by further advice from DfT which is forthcoming:

- Method of travelling in the area before / after the pandemic
- If this mode of travel has changed as a result of the pandemic
- Likelihood of using the scheme (broken down by scheme elements where relevant e.g. main proposals and complementary measures)
- Factors that may encourage more use of cycling by the respondent
- Factors that may encourage more use of walking by the respondent
- Any improvements that could be made to the proposals (open comments)
- Any other comments (open comments)
- About you – residents / business / visitor (including name, address and, if applicable, organisation name)
- Equalities monitoring questions (to ensure the consultation responses are representative of the city and views from groups with protected characteristics are included)

The public opinion surveys, to be undertaken before and after scheme implementation, will seek the following information:

- Levels of understanding of the need for change for travel in the city
- Levels of support for improving air quality, improving road safety, reducing traffic congestion and noise
- Understanding of key local transport issues for the public

Timescales

A condition of the Department for Transport grant award is that appropriate consultation takes place before scheme construction starts. Local Authorities must provide assurance of this by publishing their consultation plans by 11 December 2020 and confirming by **31 March 2021**, that reasonable levels of consultation have been carried out and reasonable adjustments to schemes made in response to concerns.

It was agreed at September ETS committee that consultation will take place over a period of no less than six weeks. Working within the above timescales and requirements, it is proposed to run a six-week consultation starting **no later than 1 February 2021**.

DfT advised in their letter on 16 October *“In contrast to Tranche 1 funding, it is **more important that the schemes are delivered robustly and that community support for them is established than it is that they are delivered rapidly.**”*

Requirements from DfT in terms of scheme delivery are that schemes are committed by the end of March 2021 and **delivered no later than end of March 2022**.

Consultation outcomes

Following the six-week consultation, results will be collated and presented appropriately – both quantitative and qualitative data. Firstly this data will be reported as a summary to DfT by the end of March 2021 in order to fulfil the funding requirements. This will then inform the basis of an ETS committee report, along with detailed designs on schemes informed by the consultation feedback where appropriate, with recommendations based on the feedback in terms of how to take the schemes forward.

Post-scheme surveys

A key new requirement from DfT is the need to undertake public opinion surveys both before and after implementation, the post-scheme surveys will be informed by the first stage of consultation outlined above. Reports will be produced in line with monitoring of schemes 6-12 months after their opening and would include the results of local resident surveys that test the impact of schemes post-implementation.

