

Report subject	Emergency Active Travel Fund Programme
Meeting date	9 September 2020
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	Update on progress of Tranche 1 Emergency Active Travel Fund Programme schemes and retrospective approval of the indicative schedule of schemes in the Tranche 2 application to the fund. This programme aims to introduce at pace temporary and experimental active travel measures that subject to trials could be made permanent to lock in the potential active travel benefits (shift to active travel by the public) as result of the Covid-19 pandemic.
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. note the progress to date regarding the delivery of the Tranche 1 Emergency Active Travel Fund Programme and 2. subject to a successful application for Emergency Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 approves the delegation of decision making regarding the progression of the indicative Tranche 2 Emergency Active Travel Fund Programme to the Director of Growth & Infrastructure in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Infrastructure.
Reason for recommendations	To enable expedient delivery of the indicative programme in the event that the Tranche 2 application is successful.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Andy Hadley – Transport and Infrastructure
Corporate Director	Bill Cotton – Regeneration and Economy
Report Author	Richard Pincroft – Head of Transportation
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. In May 2020 BCP Council was advised by the Department for Transport (DfT) that it had indicatively been allocated approximately £1.4million from the Emergency Active Travel Fund (EATF). The purpose of the fund is to support more people walking and cycling and to support Covid-19 social distancing. The overarching medium to long term objective of the fund being to lock in the benefits of reduced traffic volumes on the highway that have been experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic.
2. On 27 May 2020 the DfT issued application guidance that advised the Council that in order to secure the first Tranche of the available EATF (value = £280k), it needed to have 'swift and meaningful plans to reallocate road space to cyclists and pedestrians, including on strategic corridors.' Furthermore, 'the quickest and cheapest way of achieving this will normally be point closures. Pop-up segregated cycle lanes will also be funded but are likely to be more difficult to implement quickly. As the guidance states, they must use full or light segregation.'
3. The guidance also requested that an application form was submitted back to the DfT by 5 June 2020, which only allowed a 7-working day turnaround for a programme to be developed. The guidance also stipulated that proposals needed to be installed on the ground within 12 weeks.
4. Officers from the Transportation and Engineering Units within G&I developed a credible Tranche 1 EATF application comprising of a series of indicative temporary and experimental (trial) measures in line with the guidance with an estimated value of £280k.
5. The measures were taken from 1,000+ ideas for improvements to help walking or cycling across the BCP area that were submitted by members of the public prior to and during lockdown. Officers scored each idea based on criteria developed by them to reflect the objectives of the fund and ranked them before costing them up to a total value of £280k.
6. Due to the scale of the task (i.e. ranking of 1000+ proposals) and the timescales involved, Officers were only able to consult with the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Infrastructure by the submission date.
7. On 25 June 2020 the Council was advised that it had been successful. DfT advised that due to the 'strength' of the application that BCP Council's Tranche 1 allocation had been increased from £280k to £312k.
8. The indicative schedule of schemes included in the application can be found in Appendix A of this report.
9. The schemes were shortlisted because they ranked the highest when scored using the following criteria which was based on the text in the DfT guidance letter:
 - Impact on walking and cycling to school
 - Propensity to cycle
 - Proximity to existing or proposed strategic walking or cycle routes
 - Potential to improve road safety
 - Potential to improve bus punctuality and journey time reliability

EATF Tranche 1 Schemes Delivery Progress

10. At the time of compiling this report the installation of Tranche 1 Emergency Active Travel Fund schemes had either been completed or were in progress at Sandbanks Chain Ferry, Poole Quay and Lower High Street and Evening Hill (Poole).
11. Other locations where schemes were pending installation included Boscombe Overcliff Drive/Southbourne Overcliff Drive, Springbourne, Victoria Park (Bournemouth), Glenferness Avenue, Oakdale, Keyhole Bridge (Whitecliff Road) and Birds Hill area.
12. The 3no. schemes included in the Tranche 1 application 2no. in Christchurch were not progressed beyond feasibility following engagement with local businesses (facilitated by BCP Economic Development) in the instance of Christchurch High St. and Bridge Street for technical reasons following a detailed review of the traffic signals and 1m+ social distancing announcement. The remaining scheme that was not progressed was East Overcliff Drive following engagement with local businesses.
13. Progress and an opportunity to provide feedback regarding all EATF Tranche 1 schemes can be found by selecting the appropriate link on the following webpage: <https://www.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/News/News-Features/emergency-measures-to-support-active-travel/Phase-1-schemes.aspx>
14. A selection of images of the active trials can be found in Appendix B.

EATF Tranche 2 Programme

15. On 10 July 2020 DfT released guidance on Tranche 2 of the EATF which in summary stated:
 - *to receive any funding, authorities will need to satisfy the Department that they have swift and meaningful plans to reallocate road space to cyclists and pedestrians (both groups rather than one or the other), including on strategic corridors. Schemes that do not meaningfully alter the status quo on the road will not be funded. All cycling schemes, permanent or temporary, will need to include segregation or point closures to through traffic: advisory cycle lanes, and those marked only with white paint, will not be funded.*
 - *Tranche 2 funding can be used to support both temporary, low-cost schemes, and permanent schemes with a short lead time, so long as they meet the criteria outlined above. The Department has also made available a “Rapid Cycleway Prioritisation Tool” which is intended to help identify promising locations for new cycleways, complementing local knowledge.*
16. The EATF Tranche 2 deadline for applications was 7 August 2020 and the guidance also stated that any successful applicants needed to have committed to invest the funding by the end of March 2021.
17. The BCP Council application to Tranche 2 containing an indicative schedule of schemes across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole with total value of £1.985million was submitted to DfT on 7 August 2020.
18. The proposed £1.985million EATF Tranche 2 programme included a local contribution of £0.4million of Local Transport Plan Funding and a request for £1.585million of EATF Tranche 2 funding. The request for £1.585million was

£405,000 more than BCP Council's indicative allocation. The rationale for submitting a higher application was that BCP Council received a higher amount of Tranche 1 funding from DfT based on the 'strength' of the application. The indicative schedule of schemes can be found in Appendix C of this report.

19. The schemes in the schedule are a combination of the highest prioritised schemes from the aforementioned 1,000+ ideas for improvements to help walking or cycling across the BCP area that were submitted by members of the public prior to and during lockdown. And also, high ranking schemes that can be developed in full consultation and funding committed to deliver by the end of March 2021. As per Tranche 1 officers scored each idea based on the criteria developed by them and set out in section 9 of this report as this closely matched the Rapid Prioritisation Tool referred to in the Tranche 2 guidance.
20. Due to the scale of the task (i.e. ranking of 1000+ proposals) and short timescale, Officers were only able to consult with the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Infrastructure during the latter stages of the process close to the submission date and it was not possible to meet Cabinet timescales for reporting or to facilitate wider Cabinet or ward member engagement, hence, this report is retrospectively seeking approval to progress the programme if the application is successful.

Noting: the listed proposals are indicative and if following engagement with ward members and the wider public, or for technical reasons are not practicable for implementation they could be removed from the programme and replaced with the next highest ranking deliverable scheme on the list – the same is applicable for Tranche 1 (subject to Director for Growth and Infrastructure approval in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Infrastructure).

21. Following the release of the Tranche 2 application guidance the Prime Minister on 28 July 2020 launched what he described as the government's most ambitious plans yet to boost cycling and walking. A vision committing to thousands of miles of new protected bike lanes, cycle training for any child or adult, and first ever zero-emission transport city. Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

'From helping people get fit and healthy and lowering their risk of illness, to improving air quality and cutting congestion, cycling and walking have a huge role to play in tackling some of the biggest health and environmental challenges that we face.

But to build a healthier, more active nation, we need the right infrastructure, training and support in place to give people the confidence to travel on two wheels.

That's why now is the time to shift gears and press ahead with our biggest and boldest plans yet to boost active travel – so that everyone can feel the transformative benefits of cycling.'

The vision can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycling-and-walking-plan-for-england>

Both the Tranche 1 and 2 proposed schemes are aligned with this vision.

22. The aforementioned launch of the cycling and walking vision also included the release of the DfT's new cycling infrastructure design guidance. The design guidance can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/906344/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-1-20.pdf

Proposed schemes would be developed utilising this updated design guidance.

Options Appraisal

23. EATF Programme level option summary below regarding Tranche 1:

- a) Do nothing – no funding received from DfT and no active travel benefits achieved during Covid-19 recovery phase.
- b) Do minimum – Tranche 1 funding received, and some schemes progressed, albeit if not progressed at pace then funding clawed back by DfT and potentially no or reduced Tranche 2 allocation. Some active travel benefits achieved during Covid-19 recovery phase.
- c) Do something – Full commitment to EATF Tranche 1 Programme has resulted in increased Tranche 1 allocation and invitation to apply to Tranche 2. Lock in of Active Travel benefits will be maximised during Covid-19 recovery phase.

24. EATF Programme level option summary below regarding Tranche 2:

- a) Do nothing – no funding received from DfT for Tranche 2 and no further active travel benefits achieved during Covid-19 recovery phase.
- b) Do minimum – unlikely that Tranche 2 funding would be received. For the Tranche 1 application, some authorities received substantially less than their indicative fund, due to a lack of ambition in their submissions. Some active travel benefits achieved during Covid-19 recovery phase albeit only from Tranche 1 schemes.
- c) Do something – Full commitment to EATF Tranche 2 Programme could result in greater share of indicative £1.1million set aside for BCP Council. This would maximise the lock in of Active Travel benefits during Covid-19 recovery phase.

25. Options associated with individual Tranche 2 schemes cannot be finally determined until they have been approved, engaged upon and then developed to outline design stage. Unlike Tranche 1 which required schemes to be implemented within 12 weeks, the Tranche 2 guidance requires schemes to be committed to by the end of March 2021, hence, these timescales allow for more extensive consultation including greater engagement with ward members during scheme development.

26. An allocation for making Tranche 1 schemes permanent has been included within the Tranche 2 application. This is not to pre-empt the outcome of any Tranche 1 scheme consultation and subsequent recommendation to Cabinet but to ensure that if following a successful trial funding is available to remove any temporary Tranche 1 infrastructure and to replace it with permanent infrastructure. For example, could be removal of temporary bolt down islands/barriers replaced by or enhanced by tree pit or bike share bay etc.

Summary of financial implications

27. The EATF allows applicants to bid for a combination of revenue and capital funding. Tranche 1 funding comprised of £111k revenue and £201k capital (= £312k total).

28. The guidance states that any funded awarded as part of Tranche 2 needs to be spent by the end of March 2021.

29. The Tranche 2 application submitted to DfT was for £1.585million comprising £317k revenue and £1.268million capital.

30. The estimated costs included in the Indicative list of Tranche 2 Programme schemes in Appendix C includes allowance for all costs (i.e. associated corporate costs for financial, communications, legal support etc and fees for G&I officers).

Summary of legal implications

31. To enable local authorities to move at pace the government has adjusted the rules associated with the Traffic Regulation Order process used to implement experimental and temporary changes to the highway during the Covid-19 pandemic.
32. The DfT has actively encouraged councils to use the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) process to temporarily implement such schemes.
33. The advantage of ETROs is that they only require 7 days' notice to implement them on the basis that they can be adjusted at any stage based on an objective review of the feedback and monitoring. ETROs need to be in place unaltered for a minimum of 6 months before any decision can be made as to whether they can be made permanent.
34. All schemes installed as part of EATF Tranche 1 programme are trials (experiments) and public engagement regarding them has gone live from the moment that they are/will be advertised on street and in the press. All schemes within the programme are/would be reviewed after 6 months and a recommendation prepared for Cabinet as to whether the respective changes are made permanent based on an objective review of the impacts of the trials via monitoring, feedback from the public engagement and consultation with ward members.
35. All TRO activity has and would continue to be undertaken in compliance with relevant legislation.
36. The potential cycle route in Baiter/Whitecliff would require consultation with Fields in Trust and require planning permission. Any relevant processes will be adhered to before any scheme is potentially progressed. If following consultation, a scheme is not progressed at this location then this scheme would be replaced with alternatives to the same value.

Summary of human resources implications

37. Growth and Infrastructure (G&I) has had repeated success securing external funding for programmes including the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF), Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (DLEP), Challenge Fund Tranche 2B and EATF Tranche 1. All of these programmes are currently in progress and are over and above business as usual delivery of annual Local Transport Plan grant.
38. The Council has been increasing both design and transportation resources via its consultancy framework contract with WSP to provide capacity to deliver this strategic programme. This resource will require increasing again to deliver EATF Tranche 2 type schemes.
39. EATF Tranche 1 schemes have already diverted some resource away from TCF albeit only on a very short-term basis when proposals are still at a formative stage.
40. Similarly, as part of the preparation for the TCF programme additional communications, consultancy, procurement, financial and legal support has been arranged and this resource in the short term could be diverted to deliver EATF Tranche 2 application schemes provided that it does not adversely impact TCF delivery.

41. In the short term there would need to be recognition that business as usual progression of non-urgent Local Transport Plan priorities including some Minor Traffic Schemes which generally comprise of changes to Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) e.g. yellow lines and lining restrictions would be delayed due to the Traffic Team resource being required to implement and monitor the TROs associated with the EATF schemes. Progress is being made on the bolstering of this team following LGR albeit recruitment and/or sourcing of suitably trained staff has been delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Summary of sustainability impact

42. The proposed schemes encourage residents, employees of businesses and visitors to walk and cycle for short journeys thereby reducing the number of short journeys by motorised vehicles. The EATF programmes achieve this by creating safer and quieter environments for pedestrians and cyclists. Furthermore, reduced use of motor vehicles will improve air quality and reduce noise levels, contributing to the Council's Climate & Ecological Emergency Action Plan. The former being particularly positive around schools as children are more prone to respiratory problems caused by vehicle emissions.

Summary of public health implications

43. The proposed schemes encourage residents, employees of businesses and visitors to walk and cycle for short journeys thereby reducing the number of short journeys by motorised vehicles. The EATF programmes achieve this by creating safer and quieter environments for pedestrians and cyclists. Encouraging people to adopt active travel will improve their mental and physical wellbeing. Furthermore, reduced use of motor vehicles will improve air quality and reduce noise levels.

Summary of equality implications

44. A programme wide Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and each individual scheme within the programme has been Equality Impact Assessed. Any future schemes would also be Equality Impact Assessed before they are progressed to ensure that the needs of or impacts on persons or groups with protected characteristics are fully considered before any decisions are made and if applicable any required mitigation is built into the respective schemes.

Summary of risk assessment

45. No risks over and above those already listed in the following respective headings above have been identified; financial, legal, HR, sustainability, public health, equalities other than the potential for DfT to overlook BCP Council for future funding opportunities if it did not fully engage with this opportunity for funding.

Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix A – Indicative list of Tranche 1 Programme schemes
Appendix B – Images of active trials
Appendix C – Indicative list of Tranche 2 Programme schemes

Appendix A – Indicative list of Tranche 1 Programme schemes

Poole Quay/Lower High St. - point closures to create low traffic neighbourhood/route - ETRO (experimental measure that could become permanent following consultation)

East Overcliff Drive - point closure(s) to create low traffic route - ETRO (experimental measure that could become permanent following consultation)

Sandbanks Ferry - creation of safe access and queueing area for pedestrians and cyclists wishing to use the service - temporary to facilitate safe social distancing and ensuring that pedestrians and cyclists are able to use this key link between Poole and the Purbecks

Boscombe Overcliff Drive/Southbourne Overcliff Drive - point closure(s) to create low traffic route - ETRO (experimental measure that could become permanent following consultation)

Christchurch High St. and Bridge Street Christchurch – temporary measures including suspension of parking to widen walking routes at pinch points and improve environment for cyclists - enables safe social distancing

Wimbome Road (Poole) at New Inn Junction plus Darbys Lane - point closure(s) to create low traffic neighbourhood/route - ETRO (experimental measure that could become permanent following consultation)

Oakdale (West of Wimbome Road) and Tatnam/Sterne - point closure(s) to create low traffic neighbourhood/route - ETRO (experimental measure that could become permanent following consultation)

Victoria Park Area - point closure(s) to create low traffic neighbourhood/route - ETRO (experimental measure that could become permanent following consultation)

Evening Hill (Shore Road/Sandbanks Road to Critchell Mount Road) - light segregated cycle lane (uphill) - ETRO (experimental measure that could become permanent following consultation)

Keyhole Bridge (Whitcliff Road) - point closure to create low traffic neighbourhood/route - ETRO (experimental measure that could become permanent following consultation)

Springbourne - point closure(s) to create low traffic neighbourhood/route - ETRO (experimental measure that could become permanent following consultation)

Birds Hill - point closure(s) to create low traffic neighbourhood/route - ETRO (experimental measure that could become permanent following consultation)

Glenferness Avenue – light segregation cycle lanes plus - point closure(s) to create low traffic neighbourhood/route - ETRO (experimental measure that could become permanent following consultation)

Upgrade of priority traffic signal sites to utilise sensors to call crossing demand and reduce pedestrian wait times - encourages walking and also prevents users from needing to physically touch street furniture.

Appendix B – Images of delivered schemes

Lower High St. – point closures to create traffic free area



Lower High St.



Lower High St.



Poole Quay



Poole Quay – café/restaurant seating facilitated by road closure



Evening Hill – protected uphill pop-up cycle lane



Appendix C – Indicative list of Tranche 2 Programme schemes

Indicative scheme location and description	Estimated cost [£]
Canford Cliffs Road - on carriageway light segregation cycle lanes	300,000
Richmond Hill and Wimborne Road to East Avenue - on carriageway light segregation cycle lanes	150,000
Winton area - point closures to create Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTN) and other possible measures to be confirmed via engagement	150,000
Christchurch Town Centre area - point closures to create Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTN) and other possible measures to be confirmed via engagement	125,000
Baiter/Whitecliff - new fully segregated cycleway alongside existing sub-standard cycleway/footway (Poole Park Lake culvert structure to Sandbanks Road)	850,000
Tranche 1 - make permanent 'approved' Tranche 1 schemes following 6-month review	250,000
Programme monitoring – new cycle counters, surveys, engagement	150,000
Christchurch Bikeshare bays – new bays to support roll out of bikeshare in new area	10,000
Total	1,985,000

Funding breakdown

Source	Funding amount [£]	
LTP Local Contribution	400,000	20.2%
EATF T2 bid: £1,268,000 Capital (80%)+£317,000 Revenue (20%)	1,585,000	
Total	1,985,000	