

CABINET



Report subject	Transforming Cities Fund End of Year Report
Meeting date	8 th February 2023
Status	Public Report (Department for Transport (DfT) paper confidential)
Executive summary	To inform Cabinet of progress to date regarding the Department for Transport (DfT) based Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) award, the associated DfT Year End Report for 2021/22 and Stakeholders Newsletter with details of work to date and progress into the next year.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that: Cabinet notes the progress to date regarding the TCF programme delivery, the DfT End of Year Report (April 2022) and Stakeholders Newsletter.
Reason for recommendations	Cabinet has delegated authority to the Council Governance Board (CGB) under the Assurance Framework for Transforming Cities Fund, to allow maximum flexibility in meeting the strict DfT timeline for delivery and ensure that the authority is best placed to progress scheme delivery at pace. Cabinet previously agreed that a regular update should be provided and this report along with the associated DfT End of Year report and Stakeholders Newsletter is designed to inform Cabinet of progress to date.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Mike Greene - Portfolio Holder for Transport and Sustainability
Corporate Director	Jess Gibbons – Chief Operations Officer
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Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Information

Background

1. On 11 March 2020, BCP and Dorset Councils were awarded £79 Million by the Department for Transport (DfT) as part of the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) programme to build a new network of cycling, walking and bus infrastructure across the region. The TCF SE Dorset City Region is shown in Appendix A. and the Corridors are shown in Appendix C. Details relating to this process were set out in the Cabinet Report, Agenda Item No.12 on 9 October 2019. The purpose of this report is a year-end update providing information on progress in the first two full years¹ of the TCF programme and is for information purposes only.
2. The DfT require Quarterly Proformas to be submitted and an End of Year Report. Regular quarterly meetings are held with the DfT, including attendance from Programme Management Board (PMB) members and the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO).
3. Representatives from DfT attended a site visit with officers and Cabinet Members from BCP and DC Councils, the DLEP and key Stakeholder representatives on 30th March 2022, including a tour of recently completed schemes, which was well received.
4. The Governance Framework has been in operation since February 2020, enabling the programme to continue at pace. As the programme is a joint undertaking with Dorset Council, Councillors and Officers from both authorities are involved at each level of governance and delivery. The Governance Framework is included at the end of this report as Appendix D.
5. For over two years, COVID-19 had a major impact both locally and nationally. The TCF Programme Management Team (PMT) has however been fully engaged in the delivery process and communicating effectively throughout this time. There are numerous 'virtual' meetings ongoing including BCP and DC Councillors Briefing sessions/workshops, bi-monthly CGB and Programme Steering Group (PSG) and Stakeholder meetings, along with regular communications, consultation, and other

¹ 2019/20 funding was awarded alongside DfT Award Letter 11th March 2020, in year spending was restricted to initial programme development and SOBC.

programme meetings. Since the start of 2022, as guidance has progressively been relaxed and removed, face-to-face meetings and engagement has now commenced where appropriate from Spring 2022.

6. Updates relating to Programme and Delivery are reported to the PMB and CGB on a quarterly basis. Delivery Teams are established for the corridors across the programme. Within that, a reporting structure is identified, along with the scope of works, lead responsibilities, consultation, construction, programme management and delivery, budget and resource requirements. A Procurement Strategy has been developed and in place.
7. A Risk Register highlighting the Top Ten Risks across the programme is presented to the PMB, mitigation is discussed where necessary, and reported back to the PMT for action. PMT hold bi-monthly workshops to assess the risks. The Top Ten Risks are reported to CGB meetings to fully appraise the board of the risks and the mitigation proposed.
8. Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) associated with the TCF programme are advertised following approval by SRO/CGB and any formal objections reported to the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Sustainability, as per current approval process. This enables the programme to progress at pace whilst still ensuring there is opportunity for open and public debate prior to any decisions being made.
9. Since March 2020, we have made significant progress, with plans for the entire programme in place, and sustainable travel improvements at several locations either complete or underway. Further details are contained in the Stakeholder Newsletter recently sent out, as shown in Appendix B, which demonstrates progress to date and into the future financial year.
10. Highlights of new sustainable infrastructure now in place and being used across south east Dorset include:
 - a. A 2.3km stretch of new walking and cycle paths, three new crossings and bus stop improvements on Wimborne Road West and Leigh Road from the Canford Bottom roundabout to the junction with Brook Road – [see video](#).
 - b. Walking and cycling improvements through Upper Gardens in Bournemouth, from the Square, along the south-west side of the gardens to the entrance on Princes of Wales Road – see video.
 - c. New and upgraded cycle paths and footpaths, crossings, wayfinding and lighting through Kings Park from Harewood Avenue to Ashley Road – [see video](#).
 - d. Cycle and walking improvements linking Rigler Road to Hinchliffe Road and Blandford Close via Holes Bay – [see video](#).
 - e. Major walking and cycling improvements on two junctions on Fernside Road and Garland Road in Poole – see video.
 - f. A new shared footway/cycleway and improved bus stops and junctions on Ringwood Road between Longham mini roundabouts and Church Road.
 - g. A series of bus, cycling and walking improvements in north Poole along Queen Anne Drive/Magna Road between Gravel Hill and Knighton Lane.

- h. A new cycle track along Whitelegg Way and walking, cycling and bus improvements around Redhill Roundabout and Wimborne Road slip road.
- 11. The TCF programme has also funded:
 - a. The expansion of the Beryl Bike rental service in Christchurch with 275 bikes now available to hire at 50 new locations and the launch of the service in the Dorset area with 122 new bikes available at 50+ locations across Wimborne, Colehill, West Parley, West Moors and Ferndown.
 - b. The installation of 20 new wayfinding totems across Poole town centre.
 - c. Around £212,000 worth of grants to 21 schools in the BCP Council area to fund new facilities to encourage active journeys to school – [see video](#).
- 12. Further details are contained in the [Stakeholder Newsletter](#) recently sent out, as shown in Appendix B, which demonstrates progress to date and into the future financial year.
- 13. However, a combination of the escalating global costs of construction materials and labour due to the pandemic, as well as rising fuel costs and inflation, have had a considerable impact on the SED TCF programme. In addition, changes to national design standards for cycling infrastructure that were introduced in July 2020, four months after the Transforming Cities Fund award, have raised the specification and quality of facilities required. Although welcome, they have significantly added to design and construction costs and have also resulted in longer construction periods due to the complexity of the schemes.
- 14. These unforeseen financial increases, which are outside of BCP Council and Dorset Council's control, mean the SED TCF budget is no longer sufficient to cover the full network of cycle, walking and bus infrastructure improvements originally planned.
- 15. Following a comprehensive review of the six planned sustainable travel routes, we have submitted revised plans to the Department for Transport recommending the improvements that can continue to be constructed and funded through south east Dorset's current TCF allocation and those that will need to be completed once further funding has been secured. We expect to agree the revised SED TCF programme, including an extension to the original March 2023 delivery timeframe, with central government within the next few weeks and will provide a more detailed programme update to members and stakeholders, when we will be in a position to confirm the planned next steps for each section of the network.
- 16. We are committed to our original ambition of creating a fully connected network of sustainable travel routes across south east Dorset and are actively working to secure additional funding to facilitate this.

Communications, Consultation, Stakeholder and Public Engagement

- 17. It is recognised that a key element of the TCF process from the outset is the branding, communications, consultation and engagement with stakeholders and the public. A Communications Plan, Strategy and Protocol are in place, approved by CGB. BCP Council are leading on proactive and operational communications and media activity in conjunction with Dorset Council. In line with DfT requirements, the TCF branding is at the forefront of all communications and consultation.
- 18. The TCF branding sits within the BCP Council Transforming Travel umbrella on the website and consultation platform and across all social media platforms. Bespoke

Transforming Travel social media channels have now been set up to enable more directed communications.

19. Further engagement and consultation have taken place over the last year, with face-to-face public engagement now possible. Briefings with the Portfolio Holder, followed by Ward Members are held, prior to engagement with the Bus Operators. Comms support including press releases, social media, letters to residents, paid for advertising and newsletters also support these events.
20. Construction has continued throughout 2021 and 2022, following the first scheme, Leigh Road in Dorset that commenced in January 2021, fully supported by a comprehensive comms programme. As detailed in the Stakeholder Newsletter, schemes either completed or still under construction are: Upper Gardens, Whitelegg Way, Kings Park, Queen Anne Drive/Magna Road, Fernside Road and Garland Road (quiet route), Wimborne Road (Dorset), Wimborne Road, Poole – Serpentine Road to the New Inn junction, Ringwood Road (Dorset), Longham minis and Rigler Road to Hinchcliffe Road and Blandford Close.
21. Trip End grants for schools enabled £212,000 of LTP contributions to be distributed between 22 schools and their facilities were successfully implemented during the summer of 2021. Follow on comms, BLOGS and videos for the Transforming Travel YouTube Channel were subsequently produced, involving teachers, parents and school children. Funding of around £115,000 for Businesses is currently going through the application and award process.
22. Other schemes delivered with comms support include Wayfinding and the expansion of the Beryl Bike Hire scheme to Dorset.

Summary of financial implications

23. The local authority is liable for the local contributions as detailed in the SOBC. This equates to an LTP Contribution of £6.1M (combined BCP and Dorset Council) phased over the life of the Programme, to deliver schemes locally that continue to promote walking, cycling and bus usage, complementing the TCF Programme. In addition, there are third party contributions that equate to just under £15M included in the SOBC.

Summary of legal implications

24. The Council's Constitution allows the Leader and Cabinet to delegate functions to the appropriate officers. Considering the timescales and the shared delivery with Dorset Council across the programme, the governance needs to be agile to enable delivery at pace. Delegation of functions to the CGB facilitates this and has been working well.

Summary of human resources implications

25. Based on existing levels of funding within the BCP Council area of the SE Dorset City Region, TCF has increased the capital investment by circa 3-4 times in coming years.
26. Trebling or quadrupling the amount of capital investment from TCF has led to a significant demand for resource. The Council has existing consultancy and contractor frameworks in place to assist with filling this resource gap. The TCF programme also requires additional corporate support time, ie. finance, consultation, comms, procurement & legal. Where necessary, additional resource has been

brought in to support these corporate support functions. All resources will contribute to capital assets and are therefore chargeable to the TCF Programme and were covered within the SOBC and subsequent award.

Summary of public health implications

27. The programme is designed to promote sustainable travel which should reduce harmful emissions, provide healthy choices, provide better connected communities, thereby improving health and wellbeing.
28. The programme should also improve road safety, thereby creating a safer environment for all.

Summary of equality implications

29. The proposals all promote sustainable travel and as such will likely enhance the lives of persons with protected characteristics.
30. Equalities screening commenced in January 2021 for the six sustainable travel routes. A summary will be specific to each individual route and provided at a later stage, including findings of the capturing evidence and full EIA report and Action Plan as applicable.
31. An overarching programme EqIA Screening Document was presented to the EIA Panel in December 2021 and received a positive amber rating. Additional information was then included in an appendix to further evidence the consultation and engagement aspects of the programme to date. Corridor section specific EqIAs are being developed to ensure consideration of protected characteristics during the design process. The Panel have approved the template/framework of these in principle to be continued throughout the programme.

Summary of risk assessment

32. Proposed schemes along the TCF corridors were developed in line with TCF objectives and the outputs of the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Travel Survey (October 2018 to January 2019). These schemes have since been further developed and consulted upon at a local level. Risk assessments are further incorporated and quantified within the required Outline and Full Business Cases for the corridors.
33. To ensure that local views are considered when developing the programme, consultation and engagement has been and will continue to be fully undertaken as part of the process of developing schemes from feasibility to detailed design. This will provide maximum flexibility for local views while keeping to the DfT guidance/expectation.
34. A robust communications strategy is in place to promote the programme.

Background papers

South East Dorset Transforming Cities Fund Strategic Outline Business Case – available via email on request

South East Dorset Transforming Cities Fund Local Assurance Framework – available via email on request

Appendices

1. Appendix A – Plan of TCF SE Dorset City Region
2. Appendix B – Stakeholder Newsletter
3. Appendix C – Proposed Cycle and Sustainable Corridors, indicating delivery to date
4. Appendix D – TCF Governance Framework