



Report of Director of City Development

Report to Executive Board

Date: 23 June 2021

Subject: Transforming Cities Fund – Leeds City Centre Cycling Improvements

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Are specific electoral wards affected? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| If yes, name(s) of ward(s): Beeston & Holbeck, Hunslet & Riverside, Little London & Woodhouse. | |
| Has consultation been carried out? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Will the decision be open for call-in? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: | |
| Appendix number: | |

Summary

1. Main issues

- Leeds City Council has an ambition to deliver a safe and coherent network of cycling and walking infrastructure across the city, to help encourage sustainable active travel in line with the priorities of the Best Council Plan 2020-2025
- The Transforming Cities Fund offers local authorities the opportunity to deliver modern accessible transport infrastructure which allows people to make active travel choices and to reduce the dependence on the private car.
- As part of Leeds City Council's successful TCF bid a package of 6 projects has been developed to provide cycling and walking infrastructure around the city centre to link many of its recent high quality projects together to form an accessible and coherent network to facilitate active travel around the city
- These projects will encourage safe and sustainable travel in line with the ambitions and priorities of the city and remove barriers to cycling as a choice for short and medium length journeys
- Executive Board is asked to consider and endorse the proposed projects and approve the detailed design and construction, the cost of which will be met entirely from the Transforming Cities Fund.

2. Best Council Plan Implications (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

- The proposals detailed in this report create safe and sustainable infrastructure for cycling and active travel and help deliver a coherent network linking many of the cycling and walking projects which have previously been delivered.
- As such the proposals contribute to the aims of 6 of the Best City Priorities of the Best Council Plan 2020-2025 including:
 - Sustainable Infrastructure
 - Health & Wellbeing
 - Inclusive Growth
 - Child-Friendly City
 - Age-Friendly Leeds
 - Safe, Strong Communities

3. Resource Implications

- The total value of the proposals in this report is £7.06M, to be fully funded from the Transforming Cities Fund.
- The TCF funding covers all project development costs including detailed design, supervision, construction and monitoring.
- The projects will be delivered by Leeds City Council's Traffic Engineering service as part of their annual programmes of works.

Recommendations

- a) Note the successful delivery of cycle infrastructure across Leeds as part of Leeds City Council's ambition to encourage active sustainable transport and address the Climate Emergency; and
- b) Approve the principle and general layout of the six Transforming Cities Fund - Leeds City Centre Cycling projects as detailed in this report; and
- c) Note that the costs of £7.06M to design and deliver the 6 projects detailed in this report will be entirely funded from the Transforming Cities Fund

And to note:

- d) Construction of these projects is expected to start in early summer 2021 for completion in spring 2023; and
- e) That the Chief Officer (Highways & Transportation) will be responsible for implementation and will receive further reports as necessary to facilitate these proposals and will give authority to spend for the individual projects

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the design and delivery of a package of 6 schemes to provide safe segregated facilities for cycling and walking around the city centre. These projects link existing cycle routes together to form a coherent network, facilitating active travel choices and reducing dependency on the private car for short and medium length journeys.
- 1.2 The total value of this package is £7.06M and is fully funded from the Transforming Cities Fund administered by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

2. Background information

2.1 Cycling in Leeds

- 2.1.1 Leeds City Council has a long standing ambition to increase and improve safe cycling infrastructure across the city. This includes an ambition to have 500 kilometres of cycle tracks and lanes which can be accessed by all users.
- 2.1.2 This ambition contributes to a number of established aims, including reducing carbon emissions, increasing sustainable transport use, improving access to jobs for all and encouraging active healthy lifestyles.
- 2.1.3 In recent years Leeds City Council has successfully delivered a number of major projects to create new cycling and walking infrastructure to support this ambition through a number of programmes. This includes:
 - CityConnect 1, a segregated cycle superhighway linking Leeds and Bradford and extending to Seacroft
 - CityConnect 2, a segregated cycle superhighway crossing the city centre
 - CityConnect 3, a package of 3 cycle superhighways creating links from Beeston, Holbeck and Middleton and also connecting the northern part of the city centre to existing cycle routes
 - Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme, providing segregated cycle routes in conjunction with bus infrastructure improvements on routes linking to Hunslet, Stourton and further links in the city centre
 - East Leeds Orbital Route, segregated cycling routes around the north-eastern part of the outer ring road and along the line of the new road.
- 2.1.4 These individual projects offer specific opportunities for cycling and active travel along the identified corridors but also form major parts of the future network of high quality safe cycling infrastructure which is now starting to take shape. Future projects delivered through these and other programmes are expected to contribute to this wider ambition and to build on and develop the work undertaken to date.
- 2.1.5 Active travel including cycling and walking offers a number of benefits to both the individual and to the wider community. Government recommendations are that all adults should be active on a daily basis, and should engage in at least 2.5 hours of moderate physical activity per week to maintain health.
- 2.1.6 Active travel has also been shown to improve the mental health of the individual with daily physical activity reducing the risk of depression and dementia by 20-30%
- 2.1.7 In 2019 Leeds City Council declared a Climate Emergency, which resulted in an increased focus on its efforts to reduce carbon emissions as part of future highway

projects. Cycling and other active travel modes can make a major contribution to this work by replacing private cars for short to medium length journeys.

2.1.8 High quality cycling infrastructure creates opportunities for road users to make these short to medium length journeys by bicycle instead of car, and to do so with a good level of confidence that their journey will be safe, direct and comfortable. This is a major element of the modal shift that supports the reduction in carbon emissions and will achieve the goals set out in the Climate Emergency declaration.

2.2 Transforming Cities Fund

2.2.1 The Transforming Cities Fund is a national funding opportunity and aims to improve productivity and spread prosperity through investment in public and sustainable transport in some of the largest English City Regions.

2.2.2 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority, on behalf of the Leeds City Region, submitted proposals to the Department for Transport for a package of improvements designed to deliver a transport network which is “more accessible, affordable and attractive”. Its proposals aim to create “realistic alternative(s) to the car and the choice to make journeys that are sustainable, healthier, and that ultimately enable our towns and city centres to be re-shaped with people at their heart.” On 11th March 2020 central Government announced that Leeds City Region had successfully secured £317 million to deliver this package of transformational projects.

2.2.3 Two projects relating to Leeds City Station were included within the TCF bid:

- Leeds City station including New Station Street and forecourt works, Bishopgate Street works including steps/lifts, bus and taxi interchange, an 800 space cycle storage and hub, and upgrading the Dark Arches to improve the environment for pedestrians and cyclists. This project is currently being developed.
- Expanding the Leeds City centre cycle network, by in-filling gaps in the network, including, but not exclusively those adjacent to the City rail station. This project, known as City Centre Cycling (CCC) is the subject of this report.

These two projects are being developed separately to ensure flexibility of delivery and that appropriate specialist resource has been assigned to each.

2.2.4 The second project includes £7.06M for cycling infrastructure improvements in and around Leeds City Centre, designed to facilitate and further encourage active travel to, from and through the city centre, and forms the basis for the proposals outlined in this report.

2.2.5 The CCC project was approved at outline business case by WYCA in 2020. The project team have now moved this forward to full business case which was submitted in January 2021 and is expected to reach MD sign off in April 2021.

2.2.6 The TCF programme has very tight delivery timescales (TCF guidance states the fund will run between April 2021 and March 2023) which has led to a rapid development of the CCC proposals in order to maximise use of this delivery window.

3. **Main issues**

3.1 As noted above the TCF Cycling Connections package is valued at £7.06m, and comprises 6 individual projects. These are detailed on the plan shown in Appendix A.

3.2 These projects consist of:

i) **Holbeck Gateway**

- A route linking through Holbeck into the western part of the city centre at Whitehall Road. This project adds to existing work on this corridor and links it into a coherent route. It provides access to and from Holbeck and forms a network with the recently delivered CityConnect 2 and CityConnect 3 projects in the city centre and in south Leeds.

This route supports other initiatives in the area including the Healthy Streets project in the Receptions, and offers safe and easy access to employment and other opportunities in the city centre.ii) **Western Gateway**

- This project ties together a number of existing routes leading into the West Street gyratory to enable easy and safe access from one to the other. This includes CityConnect 1 from west Leeds, CityConnect 2 on Wellington Street and the A65 Quality Bus Corridor which includes cycle provision.
- The project will allow safe transition from one route to the other, allowing cyclists and others to use routes that better match their travel needs and to have confidence that their entire journey is safe and without impediment.

iii) **Eastern Gateway**

- This project complements the existing work delivered on St Peter's Street from the CityConnect 2 project and the Regent Street project, and offers links to the current LPTIP works on Vicar Lane and beyond. It will allow an east-west route to be fully delivered in the northern part of the city centre.

iv) **Crown Point Bridge**

- The Crown Point Bridge scheme will provide a safe segregated route across the river, serving the south eastern part of the city centre.
- The scheme will link with the CityConnect 2 work on St Peter's Street to provide both a link into the city centre and also a north south route through the city centre linking to other projects at Sheepscar interchange.
- The project ties in to the LPTIP works on Hunslet Road and also links to and complements the Crown Point Road works being developed as part of the City Park project to create active travel options to and from this area.
- The route passes or runs to Leeds City College, Leeds College of Building and Ruth Gorse Academy, enabling active travel for students

v) **Southern Gateway**

- This scheme will create a major route into and out of the city centre from the south, linking a number of existing routes to and from Leeds Rail Station and City Square.
- The project includes a segregated route on Neville Street across Victoria Bridge connecting the the CityConnect 3 project at Meadow Lane and from there to the LPTIP project on Meadow Lane which crosses Leeds Bridge. It also links to the Hunslet Road LPTIP project referenced above
- This scheme develops cycling provision into the South Bank area and supports future interventions in this area.

vi) **Dewsbury Road Connector**

- This project links the existing cycle infrastructure on Dewsbury Road into the Southern Gateway detailed above and to Hunslet Road and the Crown Point Bridge Street previously mentioned.
- It delivers a missing part of the network in the southern part of the city centre and complements the current CityConnect 3 project to deliver a safe segregated route into the city centre from Beeston and Holbeck areas.

- 3.3 As detailed these 6 projects provide segregated cycle infrastructure linking existing routes or routes which are currently being delivered, to deliver a coherent and connected network around the city centre. The plan shown in Appendix A illustrates how the identified schemes link the existing and proposed routes together.
- 3.4 The project designs have been developed to reflect Leeds City Council's experience in delivering segregated cycle infrastructure through the CityConnect and LPTIP programmes, and also reflect the advances in national guidance and best practice which have recently been published in the Department for Transport's Local Transport Note 1/20.
- 3.5 LTN 1/20 places an onus on designers to demonstrate that they have prioritised the needs of cyclists and pedestrians by completing Cycling Level of Service (CLoS) assessments. These assessments have been included in the FBC submission to WYCA to ensure confidence that the high quality design of these projects will result in increased active travel along these routes.
- 3.6 Delivery of these projects will start in summer 2021 on a phased approach, with all schemes being completed in spring 2023 in line with the TCF funding requirements. Extensive discussions are ongoing regarding the phasing of these schemes to reflect other city centre commitments and to minimise the disruption to road users and other stakeholders wherever possible.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 A public consultation for this project was undertaken by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority through their Your Voice platform in January/February 2021. A summary is appended (Appendix C) to this report, and headline findings were:
- A majority of users considered that at least part of the cycling experience in these locations was poor or very poor
 - A majority of respondents agreed that the proposals in this report would improve cycling around the city centre
 - A minority of respondents considered that the proposals would not encourage them to cycle more
- 4.1.2 Ward members and major stakeholders have been briefed and will continue to receive updates and further communications throughout the development and delivery of the project.

- 4.1.3 Direct consultation will take place with affected frontagers as the projects move towards delivery. This approach has worked well on previous projects and ensures that residents, businesses and others have direct sight of the specifics of each scheme to ensure that their comments can be reflected in the final project.
- 4.1.4 User groups have been consulted during development of the schemes and will continue to be involved as the detailed designs are finalised. This includes Leeds City Council's Cycle Forum and WYCA's TCF Quality Board.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

4.2.1 An EDCI screening was completed for this project and is included in Appendix B.

4.2.2 Key findings are:

- Safe cycling facilities, and associated improvements to the adjacent footways, open up opportunities to people with disabilities, older people and young people.
- Segregated facilities reduce conflict between pedestrians and cyclists, which in turn has a positive impact on older people and people with disabilities.
- Safe cycling facilities allow older and younger people, as well as those with mobility impairments, travel more freely and with confidence that they can do so without conflict from motor traffic and other road users.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

Best Council Plan

4.3.1 The proposals detailed in this report contribute to the cross cutting Best City priorities of the Best Council Plan 2020-2025 including:

- Sustainable Infrastructure
 - Improving transport connections, safety, reliability and affordability.
 - Improving air quality, reducing pollution and noise.
- Health & Wellbeing
 - Reducing health inequalities and improving the health of the poorest the fastest.
 - Supporting healthy, physically active lifestyles.
- Inclusive Growth
 - Supporting growth and investment, helping everyone benefit from the economy to their full potential.
- Child-Friendly City
 - Enhancing the city now and for future generations
- Age-Friendly Leeds
 - Developing accessible and affordable transport options which help older people get around

- Providing opportunities for older people to be healthy, active, included and respected
- Safe, Strong Communities
 - Being responsive to local needs, building thriving, resilient communities.

4.3.2 A number of the KPIs in the Best Council Plan are supported by this project, including those focussed on sustainable transport, health and physical activity and road safety.

Climate Emergency

4.3.3 These projects make a major contribution towards Leeds City Council's response to the Climate Emergency. Cycling is a key alternative to the use of the private car for short and medium term journeys, and the provision of safe cycling infrastructure has been proven to increase cycle journeys on those routes.

4.3.4 Transport is a major source of CO₂ emissions that contribute to climate change. Private cars emit around 130g of CO₂ per km in the UK, and travel around 8500 miles per year on average (13,600km). This represents an average annual emission of 1.8 tonnes of CO₂ per car.

4.3.5 The proposals contained in this report contribute to the Leeds target of 50% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030 by improving facilities for cycling close to the city centre, facilitating linkages to further develop the cycle network, and to encourage these transport choices as an alternative to short (and longer) car journeys.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

4.4.1 The TCF City Centre Cycling project is entirely funded through the Transforming Cities Fund.

4.4.2 An outline business case has been approved for the project, and a full business case was approved in principle by WYCA on 24th March, subject to tendered costs remaining within the funding envelope.

4.4.3 The TCF City Centre Cycling project is valued at £7.06M, and will be delivered using Leeds City Council's framework contracts which have been competitively awarded.

4.4.4 The detailed design and project management of the schemes delivery rests with Leeds City Council and will be carried out by the Traffic Engineering section, with the funding provided by the Combined Authority through the TCF package. The Chief Officer (Highways & Transportation) will be responsible for the overall implementation of the project.

4.4.5 Recent projects, including the CityConnect 3 works on Clay Pit Lane and other routes have demonstrated that the design and delivery method outlined here will ensure a high quality project with sufficient flexibility to ensure that the project reflects both user needs but also the needs of residents and businesses who are on or are adjacent to these routes.

4.4.6 Construction of the projects is expected to start in late spring 2021, with completion expected in spring 2023.

4.4.7 Maintenance of the new infrastructure will be undertaken as part of Leeds City Council's ongoing annual maintenance programmes as all new infrastructure will form part of the adopted public highway. Winter maintenance will be carried out as per the established practices for previous cycleways and will utilise existing equipment; costs for this work will be borne from the current winter maintenance revenue budgets.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

4.5.1 The package of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) to support the project will be presented for approval to the Chief Officer (Highways & Transportation) subsequent to the approval of this report.

4.5.2 Advertisement of these TROs will take place in accordance with statutory procedures and objections will be properly considered for each element of this scheme as per the normal reporting process.

4.5.3 All proposed works are within the adopted highway and consequently can be delivered under the powers of Leeds City Council as the highway authority for Leeds.

4.5.4 This report is eligible for Call-In.

4.6 Risk management

4.6.1 The proposals outlined in this report offer significant improvements to cycling and walking provision around the city centre, working towards Leeds' ambition for a comprehensive and coherent cycle network. Approving these proposals will allow the benefits to air quality, health and road safety detailed above to be realised.

4.6.2 The project estimate includes funding for risk and contingency and the project team will continually review the project against the funding envelope to control costs.

4.6.3 A detail risk register is being developed as part of the Full Business Case and will be updated throughout the life of the project. The works will be delivered through a framework contract utilising early contractor involvement to identify any potential risk areas and therefore minimise risk during the delivery phase.

4.6.4 Extensive consultation and engagement has taken place to develop support for the project and this is considered to minimise reputational risk to the project from negative publicity.

5 Conclusions

5.1 The Transforming Cities Fund offers an opportunity to provide several high quality segregated cycling projects, with associated pedestrian improvements, which make a major contribution towards Leeds City Council's ambition to deliver a comprehensive cycle network across the city. The projects detailed in this report help complete and connect the network around the city centre to allow cyclists to make journeys into and around the city centre with confidence in the safety and continuity of routes.

5.2 Delivery of this project creates modern infrastructure for sustainable travel, allowing residents to choose alternative travel choices away from the private car. This helps Leeds achieve the goals of the Climate Emergency and Best Council Plan, and

helps residents and others to lead active healthy lifestyles and to access employment and other opportunities without relying on the private car.

6 Recommendations

6.1 The Executive Board is requested to:

- i) Note the successful delivery of cycle infrastructure across Leeds as part of Leeds City Council's ambition to encourage active sustainable transport and address the Climate Emergency; and
- ii) Approve the principle and general layout of the six Transforming Cities Fund - Leeds City Centre Cycling projects as detailed in this report; and
- ii) Note that the costs of £7.06M to design and deliver the 6 projects detailed in this report will be entirely funded from the Transforming Cities Fund

And to note:

- iv) Construction of these projects is expected to start in early summer 2021 for completion in spring 2023; and
- v) That the Chief Officer (Highways & Transportation) will be responsible for implementation and will receive further reports as necessary to facilitate these proposals and will give authority to spend for the individual projects

7 Background documents¹

7.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.