


Agenda Item No:	6	
Committee:	Cabinet	
Date:	17th November 2020	
Report Title:	Fenland Cycle Schemes and Cycling, Walking & Mobility Strategy	

Cover sheet:

1 Purpose / Summary

To identify and work up approved list of cycling schemes ready to put forward for funding and develop a Cycling, Walking & Mobility Strategy to lever further funding.

2 Key issues

- Funding for cycling and cycling interventions in Fenland has been very limited to date. As a result we do not have the wider strategy or schemes with completed feasibility study work to hook funding.
- Many schemes identified in the Transport Investment Plan are now quite old and would require wider consultation before being put forward.
- Fenland does not currently have a cycling and walking strategy, and this is limiting our potential to bid for or secure funding from 3rd party sources. Robust plans for cycling and walking in Fenland are urgently needed.
- Mobility aids such as electric scooters are becoming more prevalent across Fenland. Work is needed to understand how the use of these vehicles can be supported within infrastructure plans and projects.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that 6 schemes* within this paper are approved as preferred schemes with 3 priority schemes to be worked up and costed straight way. The cost for this initial work is expected to be £3,000.
- 3.2 It is recommended that the delivery of the Fenland Cycling, Walking and Mobility Strategy be approved to take place as soon as possible at a cost of £25,835.
- 3.3 The Hereward Community Rail Partnership has agreed to contribute £7.5k. Therefore a further £18,335 is required from FDC to develop the strategy.
- 3.4 The total amount of FDC funding recommended for approval is therefore £21,335 (£18,335 + £3,000).

* NCN Scheme 3 and Member Scheme 7 both relate to the same section of the NCN 63 and have therefore been counted as one scheme.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference	
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Seaton - Portfolio Holder for Social Mobility and Heritage
Report Originator(s)	Belinda Pedler (Senior Transport Officer) Wendy Otter (Transport Development Manager)
Contact Officer(s)	Belinda Pedler (Senior Transport Officer) Tel: 07738 260787 Email: bpedler@fenland.gov.uk Wendy Otter (Transport Development Manager) Email: wotter@fenland.gov.uk
Background Paper(s)	N/A

4 Background / introduction

- 4.1 There is currently around £2 billion funding earmarked by Central Government for improving cycling and walking across the country. The initial tranches of this funding have been released very quickly through the Emergency Active Travel Funding (EATF). As a result, Fenland has received some temporary cycle racks and new speed warning signs for schools in March from Tranche 1 and have a further 3 schemes under consideration for Tranche 2. These are:
- Improvements to the Freedom Bridge roundabout (A1101/B198) and surrounding area for pedestrians and cyclists (Wisbech).
 - Town wide cycle improvements to improve connections between the town centre and residential areas as well as access to schools (Whittlesey).
 - Provision of secure Cycle Lockers to encourage multimodal journeys at Horsefair Bus Interchange (Wisbech).
- 4.2 Further funding is expected to come forward imminently and this has highlighted the need to identify and approve further cycling interventions that can fully exploit this rare opportunity.

5 Considerations

- 5.1 Proposal
- 5.2 To enable Fenland to take advantage of the commitment to delivering walking and cycling improvements and to strengthen our potential to secure funding we are recommending a two-part approach.

Part 1- Identify and develop an approved list of cycle schemes suitable for immediate funding

- 5.3 Funding for cycling and cycling interventions in Fenland has been very limited to date. As a result, we do not have the wider strategy or schemes with completed feasibility study work to hook funding. There are however a wide range of cycling schemes included in the Transport Investment Plan †(TIP). These schemes have councillor and public support through the Market Town Transport Strategies, although many of them are now quite old. It is therefore suggested that these schemes should only go forward after wider consultation. The exception to this being improvements to National Cycle Network Routes, as a national supported scheme. These are:
1. TIP Scheme 376 – March NCN Route 63 between Whitemoor Prison and Twenty Foot Road
 2. TIP Scheme 377 – March NCN Route 63 between Twenty Foot Road and Long Drove
 3. TIP Scheme 422 – Whittlesey NCN Route 63 between Whittlesey, Eastrea and Coates
- 5.4 A number of new and existing schemes were recently identified and supported by Members to be put forward for Tranche 2 of the Emergency Active Travel Fund. Many of these schemes were unsuccessful in Tranche 2 due to the funds strict criteria; however, they are strong candidates for future opportunities.

† <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/tip-list-fenland.pdf>

- 5.5 The following list has been identified as preferred schemes from the unsuccessful Emergency Active Travel Fund proposals:
4. A141 March between Mill Hill and Peas Hill roundabout – A cycle way and footpath along the A141
 5. A141 Chatteris - Install a cycle way and footpath linking Doddington Road to Tesco site (Jacks). This is also TIP Scheme 911
 6. Chatteris to Somersham – A cycle way and footpath along the old railway bed. This is also TIP scheme 449
 7. NCN 63 Whittlesey to/from Eastrea – Improve the signage and surfacing of the NCN 63 cycle path from New Road to Wype Road to make it accessible for commuting. –This is also TIP scheme 422 (see item 3. above)
- 5.6 NCN 63 - The NCN Scheme 3 and Member Scheme 7 both relate to the Whittlesey, Eastrea and Coates section of the NCN 63 and should therefore be counted as one scheme. The NCN 63 also connects Whittlesey to Peterborough and is used for commuting, therefore this scheme will consider the whole route between Peterborough and Coates.
- 5.7 Once a full scheme list is approved, FDC officer time and support from CCC colleagues will be needed to work up high level costs for some of the schemes. A small budget for this will be required to cover this cost and the time needed to complete this and submit any subsequent funding bids. An estimated cost for this is £3,000.

Part 2- Develop a Fenland Cycling, Walking & Mobility Improvement Strategy

- 5.8 FDC has been very successful in securing substantial 3rd party funding where we have a strategy in place. Two recent examples being the Leisure Strategy where we have Sport England funding and the Railway Development Strategy where we have CPCA and S106 funding. Further details can be found in Appendix 1.
- 5.9 Fenland does not currently have a walking and cycling strategy, and this is limiting our potential to bid for or secure funding from 3rd party sources. Robust plans for cycling and walking in Fenland are urgently needed.
- 5.10 The March Area Transport Study (Phase 1 – 2017-2020) has identified walking and cycling options for March as this included a Walking and Cycling Strategy for the town. Funding to develop the schemes recommended in this strategy is now being sought from the CPCA, thus enabling many improvements to be taken forward. These proposals need to form part of any Fenland Cycling, Walking & Mobility Strategy.
- 5.11 Accessibility for all abilities is an important consideration for any transport strategy. Mobility aids such as electric scooters are an essential transport method for residents with reduced mobility. Fenland has a high proportion of older residents which is resulting in an increasing demand for these types of vehicles. This strategy will also consider the how the use of these mobility aids can be supported within infrastructure plans and projects.
- 5.12 This project will deliver a Fenland Cycling, Walking & Mobility Strategy with a specific focus on developing proposals for Chatteris, Whittlesey and Wisbech. All proposals would be informed and supported by local residents and network users. It will also identify required interventions to create a fully connected cycle route network within each town.
- 5.13 It will take around 30 weeks to deliver the study work needed to produce this strategy and require a total budget of £25,835. Full details can be viewed in Appendix 2 &3.
- 5.14 This work includes aims to improve connectivity to the Fenland Railway Stations which aligns closely with the National Community Rail Strategy. Therefore, the Hereward

Community Rail Partnership (CRP) has agreed to contribute £7.5k towards the cost of developing this strategy.

6 Conclusions

6.1 Conclusions & Recommendations

6.2 Fenland needs to identify proposals and develop a strategy in order to achieve a fair share of the funding now available for cycling improvements. We also need to strengthen our position for future opportunities. To enable funding bids to be taken forward while a cycling strategy is being developed, it is recommended that the 6 schemes identified in this paper be approved as preferred schemes. With this list it is also recommended that the 3 schemes below be nominated as priority projects. These projects have recently recommended by Members and are listed in the TIP. These schemes are:

TIP Scheme 422 – Whittlesey NCN Route 63 between Peterborough, Whittlesey, Eastrea and Coates.

TIP Scheme 911–Chatteris A141. Install a cycle way and footpath linking Doddington Road to Tesco site (Jacks).

TIP Scheme 449 – Chatteris to Somersham. A cycle way and footpath along the old railway bed.

6.3 It is recommended that all 6 schemes[‡] within this paper are approved as preferred schemes with 3 priority schemes to be worked up and costed straight way. The cost for this initial work is expected to be £3,000.

6.4 It is recommended that the delivery of the Fenland Cycling, Walking & Mobility Strategy be approved to take place as soon as possible at a cost of £25,835[§].

6.5 The Hereward Community Rail Partnership has agreed to contribute £7.5k towards the development of the Strategy. It is recommended that the remaining £18,335 is provided by FDC.

6.6 The total amount of FDC funding recommended for approval is therefore £21,335 (£18,335 + £3,000).

[‡] NCN Scheme 3 and Member Scheme 7 both relate to the same section of the NCN 63 and have therefore been counted as one scheme.

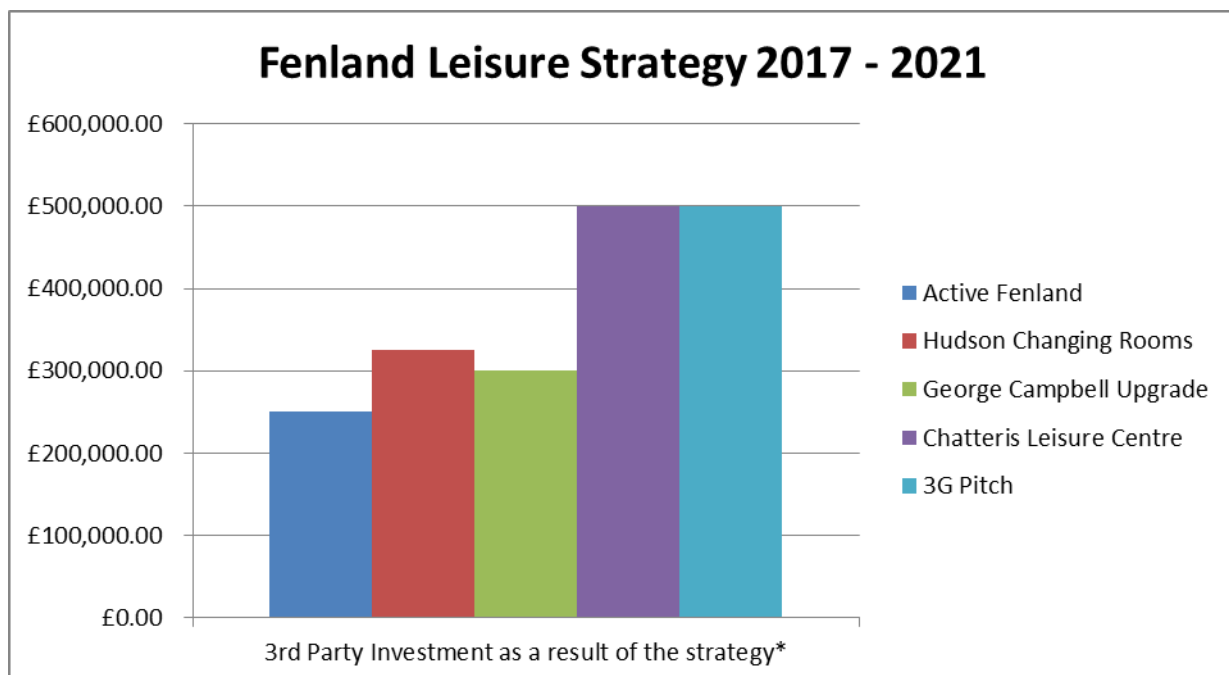
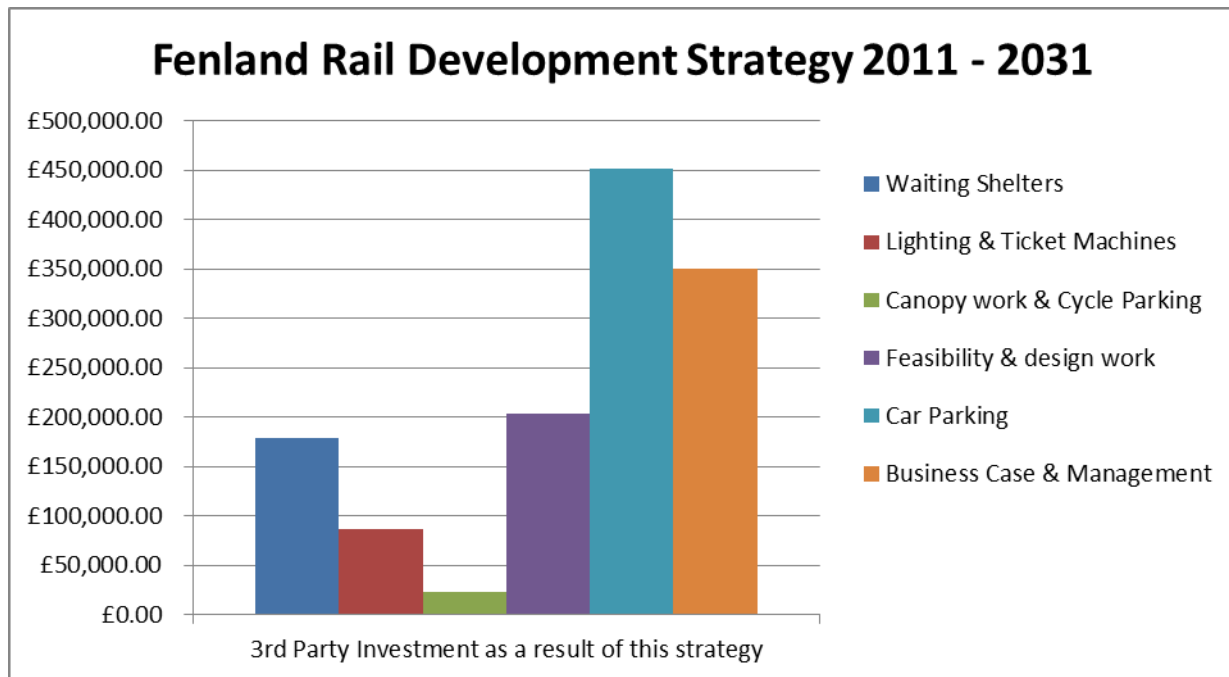
[§] £7.5K of this sum will be provided by the Hereward Community Rail Partnership (CRP).

Appendix 1: Fenland Strategies and 3rd Party Funding

Fenland District Council already has similar strategies in place for Rail Development, Leisure Provision and Health Equality.

Using these well informed and detailed strategies Fenland District Council has been able to draw in significant 3rd Party Funding for improvements over a number of years.

The tables below show two examples how much external investment FDC's existing strategies have achieved to date (all figures are approximate)-



**This includes investment through the previous strategy (pre 2017)*

Appendix 2: Fenland Cycling, Walking & Mobility Improvement Strategy Brief

Scope/Aim of the Project –

To produce a high-level Fenland Cycling Walking & Mobility Improvement Strategy.

Fenland does not currently have such a strategy, and this is limiting our potential to bid for or secure funding from 3rd party sources. The strategy will ensure that we have robust plans for cycling and walking in Fenland and can be used to develop scheme proposals in more detail.

This strategy will provide the following:

- Set out high level interventions needed to create a consistent and connected network of cycling and walking routes within each Fenland town to link residential areas with places of education and employment.
- Identify and suggest potential solutions to wider barriers to walking and cycling reported by local residents.
- Identify and suggest potential solutions that support the use of mobility aids such as electric scooters within infrastructure plans and projects.
- Provide a baseline position and indicative costs to support/source funding to complete feasibility study work, develop detailed designs and implement walking cycling and mobility improvements.

The focus of this project is to develop a strategy to identify solutions and interventions which achieve the following:

- Empowers, enables and encourages residents to commute to work, school or college on foot or by bicycle.
- Supports the use of mobility aids such as electric scooters to improve access key locations.
- Improves key walking and cycling corridors to places of education and to Fenland Railway Stations.
- Improves and connects existing footpath and cycle routes.
- Includes and considers the community's views on walking and cycling locally.
- Delivers community focussed and well supported proposals for walking and cycling improvements.

Background –

Funding for walking and cycling projects in Fenland has mostly been extremely limited. The Market Town Transport Strategies have suggested projects and delivered some improvements but there is no comprehensive approach in place

The March Area Transport Study (Phase 1 – 2017-2020) has identified cycling options for March as this included a Walking and Cycling Strategy for the town. This strategy has recommended numerous cycling schemes for which feasibility study work and scheme delivery funding is now being sought from the CPCA. The March strategy and recommended schemes within it will be included in the wider Fenland Cycling and Walking Strategy

Similar studies for Chatteris, Whittlesey and Wisbech would identify suitable scheme packages for these areas too. This would allow Fenland to develop a truly 'green restart' programme for

cycling, walking and mobility and also ensure local residents and communities are fully on board and in support of any resulting interventions.

Methodology –

The project will be managed by a designated Project Officer who will report to the Fenland Transport and Access Group (TAG). Members of the group already include representatives from Sustrans and Wisbech Town Council. Representatives from Chatteris and Whittlesey Town Council will be also invited to join the group in order to steer this project.

Key walking and cycling routes in Chatteris, Whittlesey and Wisbech will be identified through a desktop exercise and informed by public consultation. Key routes will focus on linking highly populated residential areas with safe, direct walking/cycling routes to places of education and employment. This will include access to transport hubs such as rail or bus stations for longer distance multimodal journeys.

An initial online consultation will be delivered to confirm support for the identified routes and gather baseline data for walking and cycling uptake. This will also be an opportunity to identify additional barriers for walking and cycling to places of education and employment. This includes access to cycling equipment, cycling confidence, safe cycle storage and multi modal journey opportunities. Mobility aid users will be identified through consultation and the opinions and experiences of both users and non-users will be gathered to inform accessibility recommendations.

Part of the consultation process will be to engage directly with local walking and cycling and mobility groups regarding the study.

An audit of the key routes in Chatteris, Whittlesey and Wisbech will be undertaken to identify gaps in the current provision and requirements for new or additional footpaths and cycle ways. The primary focus will be aimed at existing routes and pathway connectivity. Potential solutions and interventions will be recommended using advice from FDC Engineers and CCC Highways.

A second online consultation will be used to share the results of the audit and scope opinion and support for the draft strategy and its recommendations.

A final strategy will be drafted based on the study work and consultation, and the existing March Walking and Cycling Strategy, for FDC Cabinet approval. This will include, where possible, high level costs for recommended schemes and feasibility study work within the strategy and highlight important links with existing FDC Strategies such as the Rail Development Strategy, Leisure Strategy and Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Programme –

Once funding has been secured it is expected that it would take approximately 30 weeks to deliver this project. Please see appendix 3 which contains a high-level summary of the project programme

Project Cost –

The Project is expected to cost £25,835. Please see appendix 3 for a summary breakdown of the project costs. The main item being staff costs. It is proposed to use a member of FDC transport staff to be the Project Officer.

Appendix 3: High Level Project Programme & Cost summary

A brief summary of project programme for the Fenland Cycling & Walking Strategy project is detailed below-

Task no.	Project Item	Tasks	*Timescales
1	Finalise full scope & project programme	Project planning Timeline development Develop & finalise the scope Clarify the network area	January 2021
2	Assessment and audit work	Initial desktop and map assessment Site visits Discussions/site visits with engineers	January - March 2021
3	Initial engagement & first public consultation	Plan and organise meetings and online consultation Advertising/publicity Attending and holding meetings Minutes and Reporting	February 2021
4	Development of strategy/network proposals	Draft initial strategy document Drafting of actions and proposals Discussions with LHA and Engineers Provisional cost information	April 2021
5	Results consultation (online)	Develop public consultation approach Organise online consultation Consultation promotion – including face to face (where possible) **Avoiding Purdah (April) Produce report of consultation	May 2021
6	Final strategy development	Review consultation report Revise the report where necessary	June 2021
7	Approval and adoption	Produce Committee Report Deliver Cllr Briefings	July 2021
8	Project Management	Reporting & updating funder Internal reporting Budget and finance reporting including claims Cllr/CMT queries	January – July 2021
9	Steering Grp meetings (TAG)– Officers/Cllrs	Organising meetings and admin support Attendance at meetings Completion of actions from meetings	January – July 2021

* Timescales are indicative and based on approval and confirmation of funding to enable a 4th January 2021 start date.

Project cost breakdown

Officer Project time – 385.5hrs (52 days) at £50 per hour.	£19,275
Technical/Engineering support – Assume 44.5hrs (6 days) at £80 per hour.	£3,560
CCC Highways (& Skanska) support (audit and design) –	£1,000
Other costs (meeting facilities, design costs, etc) & contingency	£2,000
Total project cost	£25,835
(Hereward Community Rail Partnership contribution*	£7,500)
Total FDC funding required	£18,335

*The Hereward Community Rail Partnership has contributed £7,500 towards the overall cost of the project.