



**Item: 10**

**Policy and Resources Committee: 27 November 2024.**

**Active Travel.**

**Report by Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.**

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## **1. Overview**

- 1.1. With effect from financial year 2024/25, the way active travel is supported and funded by the Scottish Government has changed. More funding now comes directly to the Council and is referred to as Tier 1 – Active Travel Funding with the opportunity to apply for additional funding from Transport Scotland that is referred to as Tier 2 – Active Travel Transformation Funding.
- 1.2. Sustrans' role within active travel has now changed to one of support and capacity building; looking to unlock future projects where officer resource is needed. We are still supported within the Council by a fully funded Sustrans Senior Project Officer.
- 1.3. For HiTrans, our Regional Transport Partner, their role now focuses on behaviour change. A new post was established and recruited into this year for a dedicated Behaviour Change Officer for Orkney. This post is partly funded by HiTrans and partly funded by the Council's Sustainable Travel Fund.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. It is recommended that members of the Committee:
  - i. Approve the addition of the Active Travel capital infrastructure projects, detailed in Appendix 1 to this report, to the capital programme for financial year 2024/25 onwards, at a total cost of £405,000, to be fully funded from Tier 1 and Tier 2 Active Travel funding awarded to the Council for financial year 2024/25.
  - ii. Agree that the Planning service revenue budgets for 2024/25 and 2025/26 be increased by £65,000 and £45,000 respectively to allow the Active Travel development works, detailed in Appendix 1 to this report, to progress, to be funded by a contribution from the Covid Recovery Fund, established in December 2021, specifically in relation to Footpath, Core Path and Cycleway Improvements.

### 3. The Project List

- 3.1. There are seven projects on the list for financial year 2024/25 and two further projects for 2025/26. The selection of the infrastructure projects was based on the limited capacity that we have within the Council to aid delivery, locations with Council landownership and where there had been community consultation/formal requests for the infrastructure. It should be noted that a risk to the infrastructure projects is the capacity for contractors within Orkney to take on these works.
- 3.2. There are two plans and studies noted that when completed will assist in the delivery of other infrastructure projects by providing evidence, community consultation and early concept designs. These are elements that are a requirement of the Tier 2 – Active Travel Infrastructure Fund.
- 3.3. The Weyland Bay Coastal Path, Kirkwall is part of the circular path for our main settlement that was an action from the What’s Next for Kirkwall – Local Place Plan. The cost estimate is £285,000 for the design and construction of this path. It is proposed that this will be fully funded through external funding (Tier 1 and 2). A condition of the Tier 2 – Active Travel Infrastructure Fund is that this project must be completed by the end of this financial year. This is currently on schedule.
- 3.4. Shapinsay School – changes to the footpath and car park area is an action from the Shapinsay School Travel Plan which will look to move an improved footpath away from moving vehicles. The School Travel Plan process involves consultation with the Parent Council and the school children as well as other community bodies and Council teams; where appropriate. This is to be fully funded through the Council’s Tier 1 funding from Transport Scotland and it is proposed that it will be delivered this financial year.
- 3.5. Two projects involve the provision of street lighting to make existing footpaths more accessible in the hours of darkness. One is in Stromness on the pedestrian steps that link the Co-op supermarket to the Back Road and the other is in Pierowall Village, Westray, providing more light to visitors of Kalisgarth and the Youth Club. Both have been requested by the relevant Community Councils.
- 3.6. For the next two financial years, we are proposing to financially support the development of school travel plans for the remaining schools. These plans are relevant evidence for Tier 2 funding bids and legitimise community concerns. In financial year 2023/24, School Travel Plans were completed for Shapinsay Community School, Stronsay Junior High School, Eday Community School, Westray Junior High School and Stromness Primary School. Completed School

Travel Plans contain a list of actions that look to ensure pupils, parents/carers and staff can travel where appropriate by means of active travel.

- 3.7. From the Tier 1 funding we are proposing to support work we are completing with Sustrans looking at the movement and mobility of people coming to Kirkwall and moving around Kirkwall. How do they complete these journeys at present. With this data we can then look to establish projects to support sustainable transport journeys such as active travel. This work will also consider the arrival of people from the islands via ferry. Additionally with Sustrans we are completing work in Dounby on this matter and next financial year we are proposing to complete similar movement and mobility work within Stromness.

## **4. The Funds**

- 4.1. This financial year, the Council received £200,000 in grant from Transport Scotland for Active Travel – Tier 1. This fund was formerly known as Walking, Cycling and Safer Routes. These funds were received on 15 July 2024 as part of the General Capital Grant and must be spent by 31 March 2025.
- 4.2. In November 2023, the Council submitted a funding application to Transport Scotland for the Active Travel Transformation Fund for £200,000 towards the design and construction of the Weyland Bay Footpath, Kirkwall. In October 2024, the Council was informed that their bid for Active Travel – Tier 2 had been successful. The Council accepted the grant award on 12 November 2024, with the funding requiring to be claimed from the Scottish Government by 31 March 2025.
- 4.3. In December 2021, a Council Covid Recovery Fund was set up for Footpath, Core Path and Cycleway Improvements. At present there is £400,000 remaining in this fund. The proposal is to use external funding in the first instance and use the Covid Recovery Fund as match funding, or where there are limited funding opportunities.

### **For Further Information please contact:**

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## Implications of Report

- 1. Financial:** Section 4 above lists the sources of funding, while Section 3 and Appendix 1 provide a breakdown of the project spending plans for the current financial year, with two of the development projects likely to be completed in 2025/26. The planned Active Travel projects and development works will require £115,000 of the £400,000 set aside as part of the COVID Recovery funding for Footpath, Core Path and Cycleway Improvements.

Approval of the report recommendation will result in an increase in 2024/25 capital programme by £405,000 and an increase in revenue budgets for 2024/25 and 2025/26 by £65,000 and £45,000 respectively.

- 2. Legal:** There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations contained in this report.
- 3. Corporate Governance:** Not applicable.
- 4. Human Resources:** None.
- 5. Equalities:** None.
- 6. Island Communities Impact:** This work has been assessed as being unlikely to have an effect on other communities (including other island communities) in Orkney, therefore a full Island Communities Impact Assessment has not been undertaken.

### 7. Links to Council Plan

The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:

- Growing our economy.
- Strengthening our Communities.
- Developing our Infrastructure.
- Transforming our Council.

### 8. Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan

The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:

- Cost of Living.
- Sustainable Development.
- Local Equality.

- 9. Environmental and Climate Risk:** None.
- 10. Risk:** None.
- 11. Procurement:** None.
- 12. Health and Safety:** None.
- 13. Property and Assets:** None.
- 14. Information Technology:** None.
- 15. Cost of Living:** None.

**List of Background Papers**

None.

**Appendix**

Appendix 1 – Active Travel Projects and Funds.

**Appendix 1**  
**Active Travel Project and Funds**

<b>Project Title.</b>	<b>Project Description.</b>	<b>Community Requested.</b>	<b>Project Type.</b>	<b>Total Cost.</b>	<b>Tier 2.</b>	<b>Tier 1.</b>	<b>OIC - COVID Recovery Fund.</b>
Weyland Bay Coastal Route.	A project from the Kirkwall Local Plans that looks to provide for a Kirkwall circular path. It was in for the Active Travel Transformation Fund but we have not had positive news on gaining this fund. Design required.	What's next for Kirkwall - Local Place Plan.	Design & Build.	£285,000	£200,000	£85,000	
Shapinsay School.	An outcome of their School Travel Plan, changes to the car parking to move the footpath so that pedestrians do not have to navigate moving cars. As well as benefitting the Community School, it will benefit the doctors surgery.	Parent Council are involved in the drafting of the School Travel Plan.	Design & Build.	£60,000		£60,000	
Pierowall Village - Street lighting.	To provide lighting for a section of existing footpath in Pierowall Village. This will assist residents and visitors to the youth club, carehome to make active travel journeys in the autumn/winter months.	Requested from the Community Council.	Design & Build.	£40,000		£40,000	
Stromness - Street lighting.	To light a footpath and steps that links the Co-op to Back Road in Stromness. Lighting will assist in shoppers and staff travelling to work in the autumn and winter months on foot.	Community Council request.	Design & Build.	£20,000		£15,000	£5,000
School Travel Plans 2024/25.	Over a 3 year period we aim to redraft and review all school travel plans. Having a completed school travel plan assists with evidencing funding bids. Five schools completed in 2023/24.	N/A.	Plans.	£10,000			£10,000
School Travel Plans 2025/26.	Over a 3 year period we aim to redraft and review all school travel plans. Having a completed school travel plan assists with evidencing funding bids. Five schools completed in 2023/24.	N/A.	Plans.	£10,000			£10,000
Mobility and Movement Studies 2024/25.	OIC are presently working with Sustrans on some Capacity Building Projects that will inform the review of the Local Development Plan, are outcomes of relevant Local Place Plans and will provide evidence to support changes to more sustainable travel modes such as active travel. This work is for Kirkwall and Dounby and will include audits of car parking, existing active travel infrastructure and the movement of people to and from and around these settlements; and what mode of transport they are taking. We are awaiting more information on costs.	Linked to the 2 Local Place Plans including the West Of Kirkwall Green Wedge Project.	Studies.	£55,000			£55,000

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Mobility and Movement Studies 2025/26.	OIC are presently working with Sustrans on some Capacity Building Projects that will inform the review of the Local Development Plan, are outcomes of relevant Local Place Plans and will provide evidence to support changes to more sustainable travel modes such as active travel. This work is for Stromness and will include audits of car parking, existing active travel infrastructure and the movement of people to and from and around these settlements; and what mode of transport they are taking. We are awaiting more information on costs.	Linked to 1 Local Place Plan including Ferry Road, Stromness.	Studies.	£35,000			£35,000
<b>Total.</b>				<b>£515,000</b>	<b>£200,000</b>	<b>£200,000</b>	<b>£115,000</b>

## Capital Infrastructure Projects

Project Title.	Project Description.	Community Requested.	Project Type.	Total Cost.	Tier 2.	Tier 1.	OIC - COVID Recovery Fund.
Weyland Bay Coastal Route.	A project from the Kirkwall Local Plans that looks to provide for a Kirkwall circular path. It was in for the Active Travel Transformation Fund but we have not had positive news on gaining this fund. Design required.	What's next for Kirkwall - Local Place Plan.	Design & Build.	£285,000	£200,000	£85,000	
Shapinsay School.	An outcome of their School Travel Plan, changes to the car parking to move the footpath so that pedestrians do not have to navigate moving cars. As well as benefitting the Community School, it will benefit the doctors surgery.	Parent Council are involved in the drafting of the School Travel Plan.	Design & Build.	£60,000		£60,000	
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<b>Total.</b>				<b>£405,000</b>	<b>£200,000</b>	<b>£200,000</b>	<b>£5,000</b>



## Revenue Development Costs

Project Title.	Project Description.	Community Requested.	Project Type.	Total Cost.	Tier 2.	Tier 1.	OIC - COVID Recovery Fund.
School Travel Plans 2024/25.	Over a 3 year period we aim to redraft and review all school travel plans. Having a completed school travel plan assists with evidencing funding bids. Five schools completed in 2023/24.	N/A.	Plans.	£10,000			£10,000
School Travel Plans 2025/26.	Over a 3 year period we aim to redraft and review all school travel plans. Having a completed school travel plan assists with evidencing funding bids. Five schools completed in 2023/24.	N/A.	Plans.	£10,000			£10,000
Mobility and Movement Studies 2024/25.	OIC are presently working with Sustrans on some Capacity Building Projects that will inform the review of the Local Development Plan, are outcomes of relevant Local Place Plans and will provide evidence to support changes to more sustainable travel modes such as active travel. This work is for Kirkwall and Dounby and will include audits of car parking, existing active travel infrastructure and the movement of people to and from and around these settlements; and what mode of transport they are taking. We are awaiting more information on costs.	Linked to the 2 Local Place Plans including the West Of Kirkwall Green Wedge Project.	Studies.	£55,000			£55,000
Mobility and Movement Studies 2025/26.	OIC are presently working with Sustrans on some Capacity Building Projects that will inform the review of the Local Development Plan, are outcomes of relevant Local Place Plans and will provide evidence to support changes to more sustainable travel modes such as active travel. This work is for Stromness and will include audits of car parking, existing active travel infrastructure and the movement of people to and from and around these settlements; and what mode of transport they are taking. We are awaiting more information on costs.	Linked to 1 Local Place Plan including Ferry Road, Stromness.	Studies.	£35,000			£35,000
<b>Total.</b>				<b>£110,000</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£110,000</b>