

Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee

BRIEFING NOTE – No.05/14

Date: 10 July 2014

Briefing paper to: All Members of the Regeneration, Community and Culture
Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Purpose:

To provide details of the funding elements of the various capital projects contained in the Medway Cycle Action Plan and address concerns raised in respect of the safety of cycle paths in Dock Road Chatham, Maidstone Road, Rochester and Maidstone Road Chatham and Wood Street, Gillingham.

1. Introduction:

- 1.1 Following members considering the provisional Cycling Action Plan for Medway, the purpose of this briefing note is to:
- Provide details of the funding elements of the various capital projects contained in the action plan.
 - Address concerns raised in respect of the safety of cycle paths in Dock Road Chatham, Maidstone Road, Rochester and Maidstone Road Chatham and Wood Street, Gillingham.

2. Funding

- 2.1 Both revenue and capital funding are provided to encourage cycling in Medway. Revenue expenditure for *Bikeability* cycle training for 2013/14 amounted to £88,192 of which £56,000 was funded from a government *Bikeability* grant.
- 2.2 Capital projects in the action plan are funded from a combination of:
- Grant funding from adhoc bidding opportunities;
 - S106 contributions from development;
 - Local Transport Plan (LTP) Integrated Transport block grant from government. The grant for 2014/15 amounted to £2.216m. The value of this grant will be significantly reduced in future years, as it is being top-sliced nationally to part fund the Local Growth Fund pot.
- 2.3 During 2013/14, £105,000 was secured from the Department for Transport's Cycle Safety fund towards signal-controlled crossings on Dock

Road and Wood Street, Gillingham. This fund was administered by Sustrans, who are familiar with the issues and barriers on Medway's cycle network.

2.4 The LTP Integrated Transport block allocation is used for a broad range of capital schemes covering traffic management, road safety, public transport, walking and cycling. The Member Project Advisory Board considered the allocation of these funds on 11 November 2013.

2.5 £188,000 or 8.5% of the LTP Integrated Transport block grant has been allocated to cycling capital projects in 2014/15. This is for a number of projects at various stages of design and build, and includes new and improvements to existing facilities that provide both utility and recreation purpose.

2.6 It is anticipated that the following schemes will either be designed and/or constructed using the 2014/15 Integrated Transport block allocation:

- Circular recreational route linking Capstone Farm Country Park and Riverside Country Park, including links to Rainham, Luton, Hempstead and Twydall.
- Recreational route at Ranscombe Farm
- New links that provide utility purpose at:
 - Maidstone Road, Rochester – to link town centre with Rochester Maths / Girls Grammar schools;
 - A2 London Road/High Street, Strood – links to Strood Sports Centre, Strood town centre and national cycle route 1 at Canal Road;
 - A226 Gravesend Road between Strood Fire Station and A2.

The actual cost of each route is still to be determined and will emerge as the year-on-year programme goes forward for design and construction.

3. Collisions involving cyclists

3.1 At the Overview and Scrutiny meeting there were a number of locations where members expressed safety concerns for cyclists. Accident statistics at these locations are detailed below.

- Maidstone Road, Chatham - There is a shared off carriageway cycle facility on Maidstone Road, Chatham, between the roundabout junction with Walderslade Woods and City Way. No injury collisions involving cyclists have been recorded within the last three years for this stretch.
- Maidstone Road, Rochester - There is a length of off carriageway shared cycleway/footway on the east side between the junctions Southfields and Rochester Avenue. During the last three years there have been two collisions recorded involving cyclists within the area in

question. The two collisions occurred on carriageway involving conflict between cyclists and cars.

- Wood Street. Part of the installation of new puffin crossings in Wood Street and Dock Road has included a connecting section of a shared footway/cycleway, this has replaced a short section of on-carriageway cycle lane. There have been no collisions involving cyclists recorded during the last three years.
- Prince Arthur and Medway Road - There is an off carriageway shared cycleway/footway on the north-western side of Prince Arthur Road and Medway Road. This runs from the junction with Wood Street to just past the junction with Mill Road. One collision involving a cyclist has been recorded on carriageway at this location.
- Dock Road link from The Brook to Maritime Way - There is a mix of shared surfaces, separate off carriageway facilities, and on carriageway cycle lanes. In total there were 6 collisions involving cyclists on this route, which are detailed in the table below:

Location along Dock Road link	Number of cyclist casualties	Details
In vicinity of Riverside car park access	2	On carriageway
Wood Street roundabout	1	Cyclist entered from Wood Street then lost control. No other vehicle involved
Dock Road entrance to Wood Street roundabout from the north	1	A cyclist was being allowed to cross the road when a vehicle moved off and collided with the cyclist
Dock Road between the Wood Street roundabout and the Western Avenue roundabout	1	Involved a bus clipping the side of a cyclist whilst overtaking.
Roundabout junction between Maritime Way and Dock Road	1	A vehicle entering from Maritime Way struck a cyclist on the roundabout.

- 3.2 A design is already underway for the Rochester, Maidstone Road cycle route as far as the junction with Valley View Road (beyond the Grammar Schools) and Chatham, Maidstone Road is part of the Cycle Action Plan.

- 3.3 The Wood Street, Gillingham cycle route has been designed and consulted upon and commenced on site at the end of the last financial year. This will close a gap in the cycle network between existing facilities on Dock Road and Prince Arthur Road.
- 3.4 Dock Road stands out as a focus for accidents involving cyclists, with the primary locations being in the vicinity of Riverside 1 and Wood St roundabout. There are some known constraints on the off road cycle route along the Dock Road route, in particular between Riverside 1 and St Mary's Church. The former is planned to be demolished which may present the opportunity for the widening of part of this section. Signal controlled crossings have recently been installed in close proximity to the Wood Street roundabout, which removes a barrier to pedestrians and cyclists and improves road safety. However, further improvements to the cycle route along Dock Road need to be investigated and this will be incorporated in the final Cycle Action Plan.

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