



Doncaster Council

Report

Date: 17/09/20

To Councillor Joe Blackham, Cabinet Member for Highways, Street Scene and Trading Services

ACCEPTANCE OF LOCAL HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE CHALLENGE FUND FUNDING

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Cllr Blackham	Various	Yes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. To accept the grant funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) to undertake the renewal and replacement of structurally deficient flagged footways with tarmac based on the challenge fund bid submitted to the DfT.

EXEMPT REPORT

2. No

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. It is recommended that the grant funding from the DfT be accepted and works carried out to refurbish some of the most structurally deficient footways. The limit and extent of the work to be based on condition assessment and agreed by Cllr J Blackham, portfolio holder for highways, street scene and trading services.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

4. This will help enhance the local environment and provide better and more even walking surfaces for young old and alike.

BACKGROUND

5. The opportunity arose in autumn 2019 to bid for money from the DfT challenge fund for specific highway maintenance projects up to £5m. The bid being supported and predicated on £0.5m supportive funding from Doncaster MBC Capital allocation. Doncaster had good supporting data from its footway condition surveys to bid for replacing failing concrete paving slab footways with flexible ones.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6. There are no options in connection with this report. The funding has been granted on a project specific basis.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

7. To maximize the benefit available for the citizens of Doncaster from the additional investment by the DfT.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

8.

	Outcomes	Implications
	<p>Doncaster Working: Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better access to good fulfilling work • Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish • Inward Investment 	<p>Will improve the environment and walking facilities for people when travelling to work or to businesses in the areas where the footways are refurbished.</p>
	<p>Doncaster Living: Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster • More people can live in a good quality, affordable home • Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport • Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean • Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage 	<p>The refurbishment of the footways will help to improve the aesthetic look in the local area; it will help to reduce the incidence of weed growth. Cleansing of the footways will be easier. Will be more user friendly for active travel with better walking surfaces.</p>
	<p>Doncaster Learning: Our vision is for</p>	<p>Will improve the walking facilities</p>

	<p>learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school • Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better • Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work 	<p>for parents and children when travelling to and from school in the areas where the footways are refurbished.</p>
	<p>Doncaster Caring: Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have the best start in life • Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust • Older people can live well and independently in their own homes 	<p>Will improve the walking facilities and reduce the risk of tripping for citizens of all ages when travelling out in the areas where the footways are refurbished.</p>
	<p>Connected Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, efficient and flexible workforce • Modern, accessible customer interactions • Operating within our resources and delivering value for money • A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents • Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths • Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance 	<p>The additional money from the DfT will enable us to undertake additional highway maintenance works, thereby reducing ongoing risks associated with flagged footways for the authority, users and others. There will be an improvement to the local environments meeting aspirations of residents. Supports both internal and external workforces in jobs to deliver the projects.</p>

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

9. There are minimal risks connected with the project, however the funding is minimal in terms of addressing the overall maintenance backlog. The extent of the works will be managed to remain within the funding available. Co-ordination with utilities will be undertaken as far as possible.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...ND..... Date...4/9/20.....]

10. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a general power of competence to do anything that individuals may generally do.

The grant will allow the Council to carry out to refurbish some of the most structurally deficient footways.

Replacement of structurally defective footways is part of the Council's obligations:

- The Council is the highway authority and therefore is responsible for those highways maintainable at public expense. The highway authority has a duty under section 41(1) of the Highways Act 1980 to maintain a highway maintainable at the public expense.
- A footway, meaning pavement or path running alongside a road used by pedestrians, forms part of the highway (Section 329 of the Highways Act 1980) and so the obligation includes maintenance of the footway as well.
- Maintenance means to "put or keep" and therefore can include replacement of the footways. The Grant will provide funds which the Council will put towards this replacement.

The Council can accept external funding in order to carry out these works. However the Grant Funding conditions (Annex B of the Specific Grant Determination) must be satisfied otherwise the grant can be suspended or repayment ordered:

- The Grant Funding conditions state that the money must be used in accordance with regulations made under s.11 Local Government Act 2003. This means the funds be used only to meet capital expenditure, or debts or other liabilities i.e. not used for every day expenses. The replacement of footways will constitute capital expenditure.
- The Grant Funding conditions require the Chief Executive and Chief Internal Auditor to sign the declaration referred to at Annex B no later than 30 September 2021 confirming that the conditions of the grant were complied with.

Where the Council secures external funding they must do so in accordance with the Financial Procedure Rules.

The appointment of any external contractors to carry out the works must be in compliance with the Councils contract procedure rules.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...AT..... Date...02/09/20.....]

11. £4.9m of grant funding has been allocated from the Department of Transport for footway refurbishment works and can only be used for capital works. In addition DMBC will allocate £0.5m from the LTP Maintenance block carried forward from 2019/20, and the combined scheme added to the Economy and Enterprise capital programme. The bid included specific

works that would be complete.

12. The grant funding is only available in 2020/21 and any balance will be returned to the DfT. The service is required to submit quarterly reporting information to the DfT, with a final return by 30/09/21 authorised by the Chief Executive and Chief Internal Auditor that the grant has been used in line with the grant conditions. Non compliance with the conditions risk part of or all of the grant being repaid.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials DK Date...25/8/20.....]

13. There are no direct HR Imps in relation to this report, but if in future staff are affected or additional specialist resources are required then further consultation will need to take place with HR.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...PW..... Date...26/8/20.....]

14. There are no technology implications in relation to this report.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials... CT.....Date ...25/8/20.....]

15. Public Health supports the recommendation to accept the grant funds to undertake the renewal and replacement of structurally deficient flagged footways with tarmac based on the challenge fund bid submitted to the DfT.

The recommended improvements link to the Get Doncaster Moving Walking Strategy, which includes an ambition to improve the quality of where people walk. As stated in the report, refurbishment of the footways will provide residents with safer and cleaner paths to walk to school, their place of work or shops, as well as social walking thus improving physical, social and mental wellbeing. Through better-conditioned footways, it becomes more attractive for residents to undertake shorter journeys by walking which can help reduce high levels of road traffic, which in turn will have a positive impact on air and noise pollution and reduce social isolation.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials PT..... Date 25/8/20.....]

16. There are no equality implications associated with this decision. The highway network is maintained on a priority needs basis taking account of condition, usage, risk and affordability, therefore all demographic groups are inherently considered.

CONSULTATION

17. The Portfolio Holder Cllr J Blackham was fully briefed prior to taking this decision.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

18. Local Highways Maintenance Challenge Fund Application Form.
DfT Challenge Fund Grant Letter Doncaster
DfT Challenge Fund grant payment CF T2B 29 projects Annexes A and B

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

DfT – Department for Transport

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