

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET MEETING

10 September 2013

Report of the Acting Strategic Director – Environmental Services

**PEDAL PEAK DISTRICT – GRANTS TO SUPPORT CYCLING IN
NATIONAL PARKS (JOBS, ECONOMY AND TRANSPORT)**

(1) **Purpose of the Report** To seek the approval of Cabinet to the acceptance of Government grant for a project to encourage cycling in and around the Peak District National Park, to confirm the County Council's financial contribution and to approve project management arrangements.

(2) **Information and Analysis** On 30 January 2013, the Government announced £42 million of investment in cycling which would comprise two elements; an urban element and one for rural areas covered by a national park. This was followed on 15 February 2013 by detailed guidance on the scope of the fund for the national parks element, the assessment criteria and the application process. The objectives behind this were to improve accessibility to national parks, enhance the sustainable visitor economy and help to deliver health benefits. Bids were to be submitted no later than 30 April 2013 by either a national park authority or a local authority. There was also a requirement for at least 30% of project costs to be met from local sources.

Cycling within the Peak District National Park has been boosted through earlier grant funding supporting the improvement of the Monsal Trail, opening up former rail tunnels and providing a high-quality link between Bakewell and Blackwell Mill in Wye Dale. This was the infrastructure element of a broader project entitled "Pedal Peak". The project has resulted in very encouraging outcomes for the local economy, for example, the creation of 20 full time equivalent jobs at Hassop. In total, there are now 15 cycle hire businesses in the National Park. The aspiration to build upon these benefits by providing connections to the south to Matlock, and to the north to Buxton, is shared by the Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA), High Peak Borough Council and Derbyshire Dales District Council. Together with links south from Buxton connecting to the High Peak and Tissington Trails this could, over time, be developed into a complete circuit, which has become known as the "White Peak Loop".

Public

There are, though, a number of other potential cycling infrastructure schemes in and around the Peak District National Park. Following the launch of the grant fund, the PDNPA coordinated a significant amount of liaison with local highway authorities and other interested parties over projects which might form complementary or alternative bids. The outcome of this exercise was a project entitled “Pedal Peak Phase II – Moving Up a Gear”, comprising:

- Additional sections of the White Peak Loop between Matlock and Bakewell, and south of Buxton.
- Measures to assist the management of additional cyclists alongside vehicular traffic in the Wye Dale area.
- Provision of segregated cycling lanes within the highway boundary between Hathersage and Hope, the Hope Valley Link, connecting to the conceptual “Little John Route” linking Sheffield and Manchester.
- The Staffordshire Moorlands Link, providing connections into the National Park from the Stoke-on-Trent area.
- The Little Don Link in Barnsley, connecting to the Trans-Pennine Trail.
- A grant fund open to local communities to support cycling measures in the towns and villages connected to the trails network.

This package of schemes was submitted to Government on 30 April 2013, seeking grant funding of £5 million against the total estimated cost of £7.5 million. On 12 August 2013, it was announced that the Government had approved the grant application in full. This offers an opportunity to make a substantial change to the role played by cycling in the area, benefiting healthy and sustainable travel and the boosting visitor economy, and it is recommended that Cabinet approves the acceptance of the grant and the addition of the project to highways and transport capital programmes. Cabinet will wish to note that the availability of funding has no influence on the process to be followed, which will involve planning applications, land assembly and wide consultation with land owners, local communities and other stakeholders.

The County Council’s contribution to the scheme costs for the Derbyshire elements of the project would need to be met from within approved highways and transport capital programmes. In approving the submission of a bid during April 2013, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport approved a local contribution of up to £1.5 million to be met from the Local Transport Plan 2010-11 budgets. The minimum County Council contribution required against the final submitted bid would be £1.18 million, itemised in bold type in the overall table of funding below:

Public

Scheme Details				
Scheme	Authority	Estimated Cost £000s	Grant Required £000s	Match Funding Available £000s
White Peak Loop	Derbyshire County Council (DCC)	£2,300	£1,510	£790
Wyedale Safety Enhancements (White Peak Loop)	DCC / Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA)	£200	£180	£20
Little Don Link	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council / Sheffield County Council	£1,710	£1,100	£610
Staffordshire Moorlands Link	Staffordshire County Council	£2,500	£1,750	£750
Hope Valley Link (Little John Route)	DCC	£600	£230	£370
Peak District Cycle Fund	PDNPA	£200	£140	£60
Sundries				
Scheme	Authority	Estimated Cost £000s	Grant Required £000s	Match Funding Available £000s
Project Management	DCC/PDNPA	£50	£50	None
Promotional Work	PDNPA	£40	£40	None
Monitoring and Evaluation	PDNPA	£60	£45	£15
Totals		£7,510	£5,000	£2,615

At this stage, it is recommended that Cabinet reaffirms a County Council budget of £1.5 million, which would accommodate the minimum contribution of £1.18 million and allow for contingencies.

With several different authorities involved in delivery of the Pedal Peak Phase II project there will be a need for joint management arrangements, and early discussions with partners are underway over these. One authority must, though, act as accountable body for the receipt and distribution of grant, and it is recommended that the County Council, having submitted the original bid, takes this role. There is, within the funding profile above, a budget of £50,000 for project management which will support this work. Delivery of the

Public

Derbyshire elements of the project will also, of course, require dedicated resources and it is proposed that a project officer be appointed, funded from within the project's own capital budget as part of design and preparation costs. It is anticipated that the grant funding will be drawn down within the 2013-14 and 2014-15 financial years but that completion of the project with local contributions will be during 2015-16.

It was an important part of the funding bid that the projects proposed for immediate delivery fell within a clearly defined strategic context. Both the County Council and the PDNPA already have both infrastructure plans and strong liaison arrangements for cycling. However, there is no doubt that these could be brought together, alongside relevant work and objectives from the other highway and transport authorities in and around the National Park, into a defined, shared plan. The broad aspiration around which this may coalesce is making the Peak District the United Kingdom's top destination for leisure cycling. This broad concept has begun to emerge from discussions between the PDNPA and a wide range of stakeholders, notably at a well-attended 'cycle summit' held in Great Longstone in February 2013. Turning aspiration into reality would involve a long-term plan covering a wide range of activity and with a clear delivery programme. Before committing resources to this the County Council and other highway and transport authorities will wish to consider them in the context of their own ongoing service planning. However, liaison arrangements similar to those previously operated for the South Pennines Integrated Transport Strategy may be appropriate. These would comprise:

- A shared statement of objectives (with 'policy' status for each participating organisation) and outline programme for delivery.
- Formalised liaison arrangements including an officer working group and, if agreed to be useful, a Member forum.
- Agreed monitoring arrangements including published updates.

This plan for cycling would certainly not be restricted to the delivery of infrastructure, and would need to cover activity such as:

- A cycling festival now proposed as an annual (autumn) event
- Links between cycling, public transport and public health promotion
- Marketing and information work
- Maximising benefits from other events such as the 2014 Tour de France (for which a County Council officer working group has already been established)

The Pedal Peak Phase II bid made reference to the intention to adopt this approach to the co-ordination of work on cycling in and around the Peak District National Park. A further report will be submitted to Cabinet in due course, to agree the County Council's level of involvement.

Public

(3) **Financial Considerations** A County Council contribution of up to £1.5 million to the proposed Pedal Peak Phase II project can be met from 2010-11 highways and transport capital programmes.

(4) **Property Considerations** There are no property considerations associated with this report.

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health and transport considerations.

(5) **Key Decision** No.

(6) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(7) **Background Papers** Report to Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport 16 April 2013 (Minute No 61/13 refers). The Pedal Peak Phase II bid can be accessed through the County Council website:

http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/transport_roads/transport_plans/transport_funding_bids/pedal_peaks_phase_2/default.asp

Officer contact details – Jim Seymour, extension 38557.

(8) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That Cabinet:

- 8.1 Approves the acceptance of grant for the Pedal Peak Phase II project and its addition to the highways and transport capital programme.
- 8.2 Agrees to the County Council acting as accountable body for the administration of the grant.
- 8.3 Notes that a County Council budget of up to £1.5 million has been set aside for the proposed Derbyshire projects from the Local Transport Plan 2010-2011.
- 8.4 Notes the intention to set up a new joint liaison and reporting arrangements for cycling in and around the Peak District.

Mike Ashworth
Acting Strategic Director – Environmental Services