

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE – 1 AUGUST 2000

PUBLIC TRANSPORT FUND 2001-2002

Report By Director of Development Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:-

- (a) advise the Committee that the Scottish Executive has announced the procedures for local authorities and the Strathclyde Passenger Transport Authority (SPTA) to apply to the Public Transport Fund as part of the capital allocation arrangements for projects commencing in 2001-2002; and
- (b) seek the Committees approval for a project to form the basis of a bid for an allocation from the Public Transport Fund.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The Scottish Transport White Paper announced that a Public Transport Fund would be created to assist local authorities in providing value for many enhancements to the public transport network. Bids for 2001-2002 have to be set in the context of the Interim Local Transport Strategy, which is under development, and the schemes must contribute towards the strategy objectives.
- 2.2** Eligible projects are limited to those which have the primary aim of encouraging the use of public transport, reducing road traffic volumes, improving the local environment, promoting social inclusion and improving air quality. Cycling and walking projects are eligible as stand alone proposals, providing they meet the de minimis limit of £200,000 per project.
- 2.3** The bid for funding for projects in 2001-2002 must be submitted to the Scottish Executive by 7 August 2000.
- 2.4** East Ayrshire Council was successful in 1999 in its bid for an additional capital allocation of £590,000 from the Public Transport Fund to upgrade the Kilmarnock and Cumnock Bus Stations. The bid included for the provision of cycle lockers at both bus stations and signal controlled crossings near Kilmarnock Bus Station to encourage the use of bicycles.

3. TRANSPORTATION PROPOSALS

3.1 The Roads and Transportation Division is currently preparing a town centre action plan for Kilmarnock. This comprises five main elements:-

(a) Public Transport Interchanges

Work to upgrade Kilmarnock Bus Station is programmed to commence in the autumn of this year. Kilmarnock Railway Station is being refurbished as a part of Railtrack's Station Regeneration Programme. These schemes are consistent with the Council's transportation aims to encourage use of public transport.

(b) Parking

The public is currently being consulted on a proposed parking strategy for the town centre.

(c) Safety

An analysis of road accidents has been carried out and a programme of measures has been approved to tackle the principal accident locations. Particular emphasis has been given to pedestrian safety.

(d) Pedestrian and Cycle Routes

An assessment of pedestrian and cycle activity in the town centre has been carried out. Draft proposals have been developed to encourage cycling (to reduce the dependency on the private car for shorter trips) and enhance pedestrian safety (many of these measures have been included in the approved road safety budget)

(e) Traffic Circulation

An assessment of the traffic circulation system will commence in the autumn to determine whether or not changes are possible to improve traffic flows, particularly for buses and essential service vehicles.

3.2 The work on developing pedestrian and cycle routes is sufficiently advanced to form the basis of this years Public Transport Fund Bid.

3.3 Walking and cycling are important elements of the draft transportation strategy set out in the Councils Interim Local Transport Strategy. These modes provide sustainable means of transport which offer health, environmental and economic benefits. Walking and cycling are suitable for most of the short local journeys

which make up approximately two-thirds of the trips in Kilmarnock and they can be used in combination with public transport for longer journeys.

The proposals contained in the Public Transport Fund Bid are intended to increase the levels of cycling and walking by providing:-

- (a) improved walking and cycling facilities to the main public transport interchanges and other major trip generators; and
- (b) enhanced safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

One of the aims of the proposed on street parking strategy for Kilmarnock is to discourage long-stay commuter parking in the town centre. A demand management measure, such as this will, complement the proposals for walking and cycling and further increase the attractiveness of all sustainable transport modes.

- 3.4** Figure 1 shows the proposed cycle network and indicates the type of path i.e. off-road; on road cycle lanes; quiet streets; and shared use of paths (pedestrians and bicycles). The project will include the provision of additional traffic signals with bicycle phases (toucan crossings), signing, road markings, coloured road surfacing and where appropriate widening of existing footways to accommodate shared pedestrian and cycle use.
- 3.5** The pedestrian schemes are targeted at improving road safety on pedestrian routes where there is a history of vehicle-pedestrian conflicts.
- 3.6** The proposals also include for additional secure bicycle parking to supplement those already available at the railway station and those to be provided at the bus station. Suitable sites will be identified in the town centre and in the Glencairn area in the course of the detailed design, if the bid is successful.
- 3.7** Developers of sites in the vicinity of the network will be required to form pedestrian and cycle connections and provide appropriate cycle parking facilities.

4. POLICY OBJECTIVES

- 4.1** The bid is in accordance with the policies set out in the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan and the East Ayrshire Council Local Plan: Consultative Draft. The proposals also conform to the approved aims and the objectives set out in the East Ayrshire Council Interim Transport Strategy: Consultative Draft.
- 4.2** The proposals include:-
 - ◆ 6km on-road cycle lanes
 - ◆ 2km remote footpaths/cycleways
 - ◆ 2km shared use pedestrian/cycle paths adjacent to the road.

- ◆ Secure cycle storage in the town centre in the Glencairn area.

In addition to the segregated paths, approximately 4km of quiet roads will be used in the cycle networks.

4.3 The objectives of the cycleways are to:

- (a) link the main residential areas in Kilmarnock to the bus station, the railway station, existing and future employment opportunities, retail areas, leisure facilities and educational establishments;
- (b) reduce car dependency and encourage cycling as a mode of transport;
- (c) provide essential links to future out-of town recreational routes i.e. the Sustrans route between Kilmarnock and the National Cycle Network at Irvine; the A77 cycle route which will be constructed as part of the M77 proposals; the Irvine Valley and the remainder of the East Ayrshire Strategic Cycle Routes as set out in the Interim Local transport Strategy.
- (d) facilitate future safer routes to school initiatives (proposals for safer routes to school projects will be the subject of a future report);
- (e) promote a healthier lifestyle by providing the means for safer cycling as either a leisure activity or as a means of transport; and
- (f) encourage the use of the bicycle rather than the private car, particularly for short journeys in the towns, as a means of improving environmental conditions and reducing future congestion.

4.4 The objectives of the pedestrian improvements are to:

- (a) improve pedestrian safety;
- (b) provide good pedestrian links to the town centre and other generators of pedestrian activity; and
- (c) Enhance accessibility for vulnerable groups and all other pedestrians.

4.5 All of the measure will contribute to the Councils Social Strategy and Social Inclusion Policies by providing good links to public transport interchanges and job and educational opportunities, particularly in those areas where car ownership is low.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Nil

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 To total costs of the pedestrian and cycling package is estimated to be approximately £700,000, of which East Ayrshire Council would meet £150,000 from approved budgets for pedestrian improvements. It is proposed that the bid for funding shall be phased over two financial years i.e. 2001-2002 and 2002-2003.

7. RECOMMENDATION

7.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-

- (a) notes that the Scottish Executive has announced the procedures for the next round of applications to the Public Transport Fund.
- (b) agrees to the submission of a bid for an additional capital allocation for cycling and walking routes in Kilmarnock.

Stephen Chorley
Director of Development Services

KO/YK
18 July 2000

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

For further information please contact Keith Orton on 01563 555714

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AGENDA