

Report to:	Strategy and Resources Committee	Date:	6 July 2020
Report title:	Safer, Active, Greener Streets		
Report from:	Simon Latham, Interim Strategic Director, Environment, Housing and Regeneration Directorate		
Ward/Areas affected:	Borough Wide		
Chair of Committee:	Councillor Ruth Dombey Leader of the Council; Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee		
Lead Member:	Councillor Manuel Abellan Deputy Leader; Chair of the Environment and Neighbourhood Committee		
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Corporate Plan Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being Active • Keeping People Safe 		
Open/Exempt:	Open		
Signed:		Date:	26 June 2020

1. Summary

- 1.1 The Council is ambitious to create safer, more active and greener streets for all our residents and visitors and to achieve net zero carbon emissions. COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the way we use our streets in responding to the public health crisis. This report outlines how the Council can further improve our public realm and further develop our commitment to environmental sustainability as our 'Streetspace' is enhanced following the impact of COVID-19. At a time when there are understandable limitations placed on the use of public transport, the Council has an important role to play in improving social inclusion, to make sure people who don't have a car have a safe travel choice. Cycling and walking are healthy alternatives and although for some people they may be short term, they should be realistic options for short, local journeys, and the 'Streetspace' programme aims to promote them. In the longer term Sutton Council will continue to promote public transport as an alternative to reliance

- 1.2 Some schemes to aid social distancing and improve and encourage walking and cycling have already been installed using temporary materials in Sutton town centre and at some other locations in the borough, including outside 5 schools. This report discusses further work that is planned, subject to funding.
- 1.3 Bids to Transport for London (TfL), totalling over £3.8 million and Department for Transport (DfT), for £100,000, explaining how our 'Streetspace' proposals have been developed are outlined. This includes where they are based on earlier Local Implementation Plan (LIP) work, such as last year's Liveable Neighbourhoods bid which was encouraged by Will Norman, London's Cycling and Walking Commissioner.
- 1.4 Streetspace is the new TfL strategy and they have put in place a £45 million London Streetspace Plan (LSP) funding pot for walking and cycling improvements to ensure social distancing and lock in improvements for active travel across the capital which covers the first half of 2020-21 up until September.
- 1.5 It is important to note that all of TfL's other funding streams, such as the LIP programme, Cycleways projects, Principal Road Maintenance and the Bus Priority programme, as set out in the report to the Environment and Neighbourhood Committee at the 11 March 2020 meeting are paused. This new fund is currently the only TfL funding accessible to boroughs in 2020/21.
- 1.6 All the schemes discussed in this report that are either delivered already, or proposed, will help address the impact of COVID-19, whilst at the same time supporting Sutton's sustainable policy aims and ambitions to combat climate change and create greener neighbourhoods. The proposals will help provide safe travel options for non-car owners who are advised not to use public transport.
- 1.7 At the time of finalising this report (25th June 2020), the Council has received notification from TfL that it will be providing some £368,000 for 10 of the proposed scheme in the Council's bids, with seven receiving partial funding and three supported in full (including two low traffic neighbourhood schemes). The single biggest allocation to date at time of writing was for the School Streets programme (£96,000). This is a key priority for the Council as it reflects its commitment to the borough's children who are entitled to as safe and green a journey to school, enjoying walking or cycling or scooting, as the Council and our primary school partners can provide.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the bids already submitted as per Appendix A and the funding announced by Transport for London at the time of finalisation of this report.
- 2.2 To note progress to date on delivery of the programme.
- 2.3 To endorse the approach to engagement on the programme henceforth.

- 2.4 To delegate authority to the Interim Strategic Director, Environment, Housing and Regeneration, in consultation with the Chair of the Environment and Neighbourhood Committee, following engagement with ward councillors, to implement all other elements of the programme for which funding is secured, subject to the necessary statutory processes.
- 2.5 To endorse submission of further bids following consultation with the Chair of the Environment and Neighbourhood Committee and engagement with relevant ward councillors to either DfT or TfL in line with the principles of this programme, should further funding opportunities arise later in the financial year.

3. Background

- 3.1 Sutton has a long tradition of promoting environmentally friendly modes of transport including walking and cycling. The council is currently delivering new strategic cycle routes through St Helier to help link up Sutton with Merton, has started to install new secure cycle parking hanger units, has been trialling dockless ebikes and is working extensively with many schools on their travel plans and safe routes for children. For many years, the council has delivered a comprehensive programme of cycle training with schools as well undertaking adult cycle training and has engaged with large employers to promote sustainable travel. There has also been close liaison with the Police to deliver a programme of cycle security coding as part of regular 'Dr Bike' events.
- 3.2 The borough adopted a new Environment Strategy in March 2019, with ambitions to reduce carbon emissions, as well as a vision to become London's most sustainable borough. The measures set out will help support the delivery of that vision and the associated action plans as well as helping residents to travel safely and healthily as the borough emerges from lockdown with continued constraints on public transport.
- 3.3 The LSP identifies a key issue as being the need to focus on strategic movement to prioritise walking and cycling. This will be achieved by providing space for active travel, good air quality and safe roads, and by facilitating more walking and cycling to local high streets and town centres. The borough's current Local Implementation Plan (LIP3) has these same themes at the core of LIP Outcomes 1 to 4, which are that the streets will be healthy and people will travel more actively; streets will be safe and secure; streets will be used more efficiently and have less traffic on them and that the streets will be green and clean.
- 3.4 LIP3 encapsulates the objectives of the Council's current Sustainable Transport Strategy (STS), which was updated in 2015, and specific reference is made to the need to reduce car use and the reliance on it; enabling smarter travel choices such as walking and cycling and improving the safety of those users; and looking to reduce the harmful effects of motor traffic on the environment.
- 3.5 Sutton promotes active travel with schools, providing bikeability training (subject to funding) and supporting schools with TfL's sustainable travel: active, responsible and safe (STARS) programme - 28 Sutton schools have travel plans. Our school streets programme, for which we have secured LBS capital investment, has been accelerated in recent months to help schools

achieve safe social distancing. So far we have introduced emergency closures at five school sites in Sutton. We also provide adult cycle training, bike maintenance courses and Dr Bike repairs, road safety education, corporate car club contract, dockless ebikes, bike parking including hangars for estates and ensure planning conditions provide sustainable transport benefits.

- 3.6 As well as promoting active travel, Sutton is working to help residents and businesses to switch to electric vehicles by introducing rapid and fast charging points as well as slower charging from lamp columns using a combination of LBS capital and government office of low emission vehicles (OLEV) funding via go ultra low cities (GULCS).

4. Issues

- 4.1 The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting lockdown has had a massive impact across Sutton in terms of its effects on the community of the borough and the economy. It has also resulted in cleaner air and quieter streets, transforming the environment. Across the UK, and indeed in Sutton, it is thought that many people have discovered, or rediscovered, cycling and walking.
- 4.2 As restrictions are reduced it is important to consider measures which protect public health and allow ongoing social distancing, as well as to encourage active travel transport choices, such as walking and cycling, and address any potential road danger given the anticipated ongoing reduced capacity of public transport for many months Anecdotally, with less cars on the streets, traffic speeds have increased.
- 4.3 Plans to introduce a number of Streetspace-type traffic management measures have already been developed, picking up on suggestions and proposals from local interest groups, councillors and the wider community. These will have a positive impact for Sutton residents and will aid the green recovery from COVID-19. Key elements of these interventions include:
- Wider footways - to make social distancing easier
 - Pop up cycle facilities - to create more space on the road for cyclists whilst maintaining social distancing
 - Completing proposed cycle routes
 - Reducing speed limits, with more 20mph zones to encourage safe and active travel
 - Introducing pedestrian and cycle zones by restricting motor vehicle access at certain times
 - Creating low traffic or traffic free neighbourhoods
 - Providing additional cycle parking facilities.
- 4.4 To tackle the issues as effectively as possible, the interventions need to be quick to commission, design and implement using the materials that we and our contractors can get hold of rapidly and as cost effectively as possible. They must be safe for all road users and should not unfairly impede anyone, including those with limited mobility. And they should be maintainable by the teams we have available. Finally, where practicable, they should support other key workstreams of our environmental strategy, including addressing the climate

emergency, support our ambitions to be a sustainable borough and promote liveable and low traffic neighbourhoods.

- 4.5 TfL informed boroughs in early May that funding through the usual Local Implementation Programme (LIP) for 2020-21 would not be forthcoming due to the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on TfL. Unfortunately, this included funding for Sutton's Liveable Neighbourhoods bid, which was submitted to TfL in November 2019, as well as core workstreams that were reported to the Environment & Neighbourhood committee in March 2020. However, a £45 million funding pot for delivery of the LSP programme in the 6 months to September 2020 has been set up and boroughs have been invited to make bids to this fund to deliver projects that align with Streetspace objectives. DfT have also invited boroughs to submit bids for an extra £100,000 of grant funding with similar objectives.
- 4.6 A series of bids have been developed to both improve the Streetspace in Sutton and help residents to social distance safely. Bids have been submitted which make up a funding bid of over £3.8 million in total to TfL (plus £100,000 to DfT). The specific details of the bids is set out at Appendix A. Each of these bids support the overall objectives of our environmental strategy, help address climate change and promote green neighbourhoods, as well as meeting the criteria set out by TfL.
- 4.7 The individual schemes are largely based on previously-planned LIP, Cycleway or Liveable Neighbourhood proposals, refined to ensure they are deliverable against the new Streetspace agenda and within the timescales permitted by TfL and DfT. Cycleway and Liveable Neighbourhood proposals have been the subject of a range of engagement activities including public consultation events, engagement with ward councillors and attending Local Committees. Generally supportive feedback helped make these Sutton's most important and ambitious bids. The council also revisited our liaison with LB Merton regarding the Cycleways scheme, to ensure the proposals remained in line with the original objectives. Some of these are new proposals that have been developed in light of the LSP guidance, and following submission of suggestions from councillors, residents and local groups, including Get Sutton Cycling.
- 4.8 The timing of the TfL bid process has required us to act quickly and responsively to apply for funding. This has not enabled the usual level of ward member engagement in the process. There was a clear imperative that in order to deliver the LSP in Sutton, bids had to be submitted as soon as practicable, in order to give the borough the best opportunity of securing funding. TfL initially indicated that bids would be accepted up to late June. However they awarded funds to boroughs that had submitted their bids quickly, with £6.3 million being allocated on 5 June alone.
- 4.9 On 18th June, TfL awarded Sutton £57,000 for measures in Sutton town centre and beneath the railway bridge in Worcester Park; at the time of finalising this report, a further allocation of £368,000 for 10 further schemes was announced. It is assumed that the £100,000 DfT funding will be awarded as the bid in Appendix A was submitted before the deadline. Implementation of all of the schemes will be discussed with all councillors, with the implementation subject to confirmation from TfL about which are approved for funding. Appropriate statutory consultation will also be undertaken. Monitoring of schemes already implemented is being undertaken with

changes being made in light of experience and feedback, and this will be carried through into the delivery and monitoring of all our successful bid schemes. All schemes (excluding cycle parking) will be short-term in nature and will require a suitable legal and consultative process if they are to be made permanent. Since these schemes are to be implemented on a short-term, temporary basis and rapidly, any consultation with the public will be after implementation of the schemes and will inform whether or not the schemes are to be made permanent in due course.

- 4.10 Sutton is focusing chiefly on the benefits our approach can bring now, although it is recognised that any temporary infrastructure that proves to be successful might, through public consultation, be retained in some form in the longer term. This will help deliver lasting change, supporting our development of healthy streets and helping to address congestion, air pollution, social inequalities and the global climate emergency. Measures will help support the new Sutton Sustainable Transport Strategy which will be, post-adoption, the strategy that underpins all of the proposed measures.
- 4.11 The Streetspace guidance identifies that given the urgency of the crisis, TfL are looking to work with Boroughs on implementing measures as quickly as possible. However they highlight the need to ensure that we monitor progress of temporary interventions and keep changes under review. The location of the measures introduced will determine the level of monitoring required to allow for an ongoing review of not only the effectiveness of the measures, but to stay aware of any changing traffic patterns on the network. It is important to note that significant town and district centres in Sutton are on the TfL road network, which Sutton cannot control, but the council continues to seek to work closely and collaboratively with TfL. An example of this was to seek changes to a scheme in Cheam Village following feedback from residents and businesses and one of the ward councillors.
- 4.12 The situation beyond the end of September is currently unclear, although it is hoped that there will be further funding agreed between government and TfL so that the LSP can continue, and that there will be further funding from DfT. It is anticipated that a further report to update on progress will be brought to a future committee meeting later in the year.
- 4.13 Aside from issues with specific sites, which are summarised in the Appendices, all sites will require assessment from an equalities perspective and need to consider issues such as continued access for street cleansing etc, and on-going management of temporary traffic management.

5. Options Considered

- 5.1 Based on the guidance discussed above officers have submitted bids totalling over £3.8 million to DfT and TfL, under the following headings - Strategic Cycle Route, Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, and Space at Town Centres - details of all of these bids are set out in Appendix A. There are also two plans shown the locations of the proposals, Appendix B which shows the location of all the proposed school street schemes and Appendix C which shows the location of all other schemes.

- 5.2 It should also be noted that commensurate with TfL announcing that LIP funding for 2020-21 was curtailed, boroughs were given the opportunity to submit a bid to recover 'sunk' costs to date. Officers submitted two bids, totalling £310,000 on 29th May and 12th June to cover additional costs that have been incurred.
- 5.3 The council received a wide range of enquiries and requests from councillors and residents and interested stakeholders such as Get Sutton Cycling. Where possible these requests were incorporated within the TfL/DfT bids detailed in this report, although certain sites did not meet the necessary criteria and thus were not included.
- 5.4 An alternative option would be to do nothing - in this scenario, continued investment in improvements to the borough's highway network would have been curtailed as other funding streams from TfL have been withdrawn. This would prevent Sutton from being able to deliver on its post-covid ambitious plans to create a 'green recovery' and would not enable the borough to play its part in delivering the Mayor's and central government's Streetspace agenda. This option is therefore not considered viable.

6. Impacts and Implications

Financial

- 6.1 The financial implications are set out in the body of the report. It is worth noting that no works will be undertaken until the funding has been approved. All bids have an element of staff funding, that will help in recovering costs for staff who are employed in delivery of the schemes.

Legal

- 6.2 This report is principally for information to report on progress for previously agreed works and funding proposals and as such does not present legal issues. The proposed delegations similarly do not give rise to legal concerns. The works to be undertaken to highways in due course as set out in the report are within the Council's powers in the Local Government Act 1972, the Highways Act 1980 and the Localism Act 2011.

7. Appendices and Background Documents

Appendix letter	Title
A	Summary table of bids
B	Location plan of proposed school streets
C	Location plan of all other proposals

Background documents
DfT bid submission Active Travel
TfL London Streetspace Plan (LSP) submissions for Strategic Cycling, Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, Space at Town Centres and other sites, School Streets, LIP related proposals, Cycleways North-South programme proposals, Cycle Parking.

Audit Trail		
Version	Final	26 June 2020
Consultation with other officers		
Finance	Yes	Al Mawji
Legal	Yes	George Chesman
Equality Impact Assessment required?	No	N/A