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West of England receives £5 million of funding for Sustainable Travel adding up to £11 million to be spent locally.

Nearly £5 million of Government funding has been allocated to the West of England councils that will mean over £11 million will be spent on encouraging more sustainable travel locally up to March 2013.

“This £5 million is just the start - by the time we add in the £6 million of local contributions from the councils, private business and voluntary and not-for-profit organisations, we will be spending just over £11 million making life easier for people to get to work. The aim is to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality and reduce the impact of congestion locally - particularly important during the commuter peak hours.” Explained Cllr Brian Allinson, Chair of the West of England Joint Transport Executive Committee “There is also the added benefits of improved health and fewer days off sick for ‘active travellers’.”

The money was granted to the councils to focus on people travelling to work on six key corridors that carry about 40% of travel to work trips (about 15% of all traffic movements in the West of England area). (see attached map)

In the West of England about 89% of people who live in the area also work in the area, and approximately 63% of them use a car to get to work. (See notes for ‘modal split figures’). About 57% of these car trips are less than 5 miles long. People travelling alone in cars to work account for about 60% of journeys to work.

“The government was keen that bids for funding were based on ideas that had already been shown to work,” explained Cllr Allinson.

“We are not reinventing the wheel - it is about doing more of what we are already doing, because it has been shown to work. People want reliable buses and they want to know when they are arriving – bus priority measures and real time information at bus stops or phone apps help this to happen. People want to have the confidence to cycle safely to work and know that when they arrive there is secure cycle parking and shower facilities – this fund will allow this to happen”.

The fund will also help companies to provide pool bicycles and low emission cars and will work with employers and employees on tailored measures for their businesses.

A business representative from the Local Enterprise Partnership Board will be working closely on the project, helping to maintain the strong links between the councils and the private sector as they work together to tackle congestion.

Background

This project is part of a larger, more comprehensive West of England wide ‘large project’ bid to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. Initial proposals

were submitted in early June and we are waiting to hear if this bid for a further £25 million (for spending up to March 2015) will be taken any further.

These joint bids to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund were developed as a result of the success of the two Joint Local Transport Plans the councils have worked on since 2004 which led to the successful bid to Government for funding for the Greater Bristol Bus Network Showcase routes, and the five joint bids for the Rapid Transit Network (three routes - Ashton Vale to Temple Meads, South Bristol Link and North Fringe to Hengrove) as well as packages of improvements in Weston-super-Mare and Bath.

Bids for funds from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund were asked to have a primary focus of supporting economic growth and reducing carbon. In addition packages had to address supplementary objectives of tackling problems of air quality, delivering improvements in public health, improving safety, and delivering wider social and economic benefits for communities.

Notes

- Modal split for work based commuting in the West of England (2004 – latest figures available)
 - Car 63%
 - Cycle 10.5%
 - Walk 10.5%
 - Bus 10%
 - Rail 6%
- Early indications suggest that bus passenger numbers on the recently launched A370 Showcase route have improved by about 12% over last year.
- The four West of England Councils are Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.

Six key corridors (see attached map – also available in jpg format)

Weston-super-Mare, Bristol
Portishead, Bristol
Midsomer Norton, Radstock, Bath
Bath, Keynsham, Bristol
Yate, North Fringe, Bristol
Cribbs Causeway, Aztec West, North Fringe, Bristol centre

The full LSTF bid (20 pages) with details of funding, partner organisations, objectives, and activities is available at www.travelplus.org.uk/LSTF

A summary of proposals is available at <http://www.travelplus.org.uk/media/218339/lstf%20summary%20of%20proposals.pdf>

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Issued by: Julia Dean, West of England Office; 0117 922 4580