

4c Sustrans Community Links Funding

o Purpose of Report

To advise members of the successful bids to the Sustrans Community Links funding programme.

o Background

Sustrans Scotland's Community Links Programme provides match funding of up to 50% of project costs to Local Authorities, Statutory Bodies, Educational Institutions and from 2015 Community Groups, to create and develop a cycling infrastructure for everyday journeys.

Since its development in 2010 it has funded over 400 projects across Scotland. The programme is funded through Transport Scotland's Sustainable Transport Team.

The programme has provided capital funding for the implementation of cycling schemes over a one year period. However in 2014, funding was also available for two year projects, Aberdeenshire council successfully bid for project funding across two financial years.

The current allocated funding is for the financial year 2015/2016.

o Community Links Funding 2015/16

The Nestrans area submitted 11 projects for this round of funding:

Aberdeenshire Council

- Ellon Academy Cycle Routes Project
- Huntly Bridge Restoration Project

Aberdeen City Council

- Third Don Crossing Cycle Facilities
- Ellon Road Cycle Links Phase 2
- Riverside Cycle way - Bridge of Dee to Robert Gordon University
- A947 to Formartine and Buchan Way
- Parkway Cycle Path Phase 1
- A96 Park and Choose and Dyce Drive Link Road Cycling Facilities

Formartine & Buchan partnership (in conjunction with Aberdeenshire Council).

- Ythan Trail – Haddo to Methlick link

Huntly Development Trust

- Pirries Mill Bridge – Feasibility Study
- Greenmires to Huntly Town Centre Feasibility Study.

As part of the submissions process, Aberdeen City Council were asked to present the 3rd Don Crossing project to an expert panel comprising of representatives from Sustrans, Transport Scotland, Cycling Scotland and Paths for All.

Nestrans attended the presentation along with officers from Aberdeen City Council.

The Nestrans Cycling Development Officer also attended a Community Links Steering group meeting in Edinburgh to discuss all the projects submitted to this year's Community Links.

In April, Sustrans announced funding totaling £1.5million for the region; this includes an award of £270,000, to Aberdeenshire Council as part of the two year funding programme applied for in 2014.

Breakdown of Total Awards received:

Aberdeen City Council - £996,668.00

All 6 projects awarded in full.

Aberdeenshire Council - £250,000 + £270,000 (Awarded 2014)

Awarded Ellon Academy in full,

Partial award towards the Huntly Bridge restoration project

5 Integrated Travel Towns Project & Peterhead. (Awarded 2014)

Both the Huntly Development Trust projects and the Ythan Trail project were unsuccessful in obtaining Community Links funding. However work will continue between partners and Sustrans support can be provided for future applications to the scheme by these groups.

o Report conclusions

Sustrans has made £1.5million in match funding available for cycling infrastructure in the Nestrans area, with 8 of the 11 projects submitted receiving funding for work in 2015/16. This will be matched by funding from Nestrans and the Councils, which has already been allocated and committed.

The Nestrans Cycling Development Officer has worked closely with the Community Links and the wider Sustrans team to foster a better understanding of the Nestrans region. This work has resulted in the Cycling Development Officer representing Nestrans at a number of Community Links meetings including the steering group for the Community Links projects.

If the current upward trend of Community Links funding is to be replicated in future years, then there is a need for long term and sustained capital investment by Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Nestrans in the regional cycling

network as well as the continued commitment to best practice in the design and implementation of cycle schemes in the Nestrans area.

o **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board:

- a) Note the contents of this report.

KM/2 June 2015