

Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 09 September 2026
Subject:	Approval for accepting the Department for Transport grant for the development of the 15112 Bury to Bolton Active Travel Corridor Scheme (Spenfold Lane Bridleway).	
Report of	Cabinet Member for Environment, Climate Change and Operations	

Summary

1. This report seeks formal approval to accept a grant supplied by the Department for Transport ("DfT") and administered by Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (Company number 01797726) ("WWCT") to deliver the 15112 Bury to Bolton Active Travel Corridor Scheme.
2. The scheme will improve the existing off-highway route between Ainsworth Road and Bolton Road, providing a safe alternative to the A58 corridor. The improvements will close a gap in the borough's off-highway active travel network, improving connections between key residential areas and contribute to the accessible continuity of the off-highway link between Bury town centre and Bolton. Additionally, the scheme ties in with the improvements to the National Cycle Network (NCN) which is a UK wide network of signed paths and routes for walking, wheeling, cycling and exploring the outdoors.
3. The scheme includes widening the existing footway and enhancing the surfacing, drainage and lighting provision, creating a safer, more accessible route that can be used by residents year-round. This enhances the local public realm and provides options for residents who are unable to use the existing route due to its current condition. The scheme is integral to Bury's local transport strategy by providing residents with accessible opportunities to engage in active travel. This increased participation in active travel contributes positively to improving health and wellbeing of local residents.
4. The total value of the grant to cover the schemes delivery is £553,000. This is fully funded through the grant provided by the DfT and administered by WWCT. The scheme is delineated into two sections: Phase 1 - 16009 Bellway Homes and Phase 2 - 15697 Hardmans Fold. Both phases will be constructed simultaneously as a singular package of work.
5. Both schemes have received business case approval from DfT based on analysis using the Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit (AMAT) alongside

information gathered by WWCT Research & Monitoring Unit. Phase 1 achieved a BCR value of 3.04 and Phase 2 a BCR value of 2.83. According to Active Travel England any scheme achieving a score above 2 is considered high value for money. ([Active Travel England, 2023](#))

6. Approval of the Sub-Grant agreement will enable works to commence in October 2026 with completion scheduled for February 2027, ensuring compliance with funding conditions. Due to the source of the funding, there is a stipulation for all claims to be finalised prior to March 2027.

Recommendation(s)

7. Approve Bury Metropolitan Borough Council entering into the Sub-Grant agreement with Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (Company number 01797726) and subsequently the Department for Transport for the delivery of the 15112 Bury to Bolton Active Travel Corridor Scheme.
8. Authorise Legal to finalise and seal all the necessary contract documents to access the funding.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

9. The Sub-Grant Agreement is required to enable the Council to accept and draw down the approved DfT funding for delivery of the schemes.
10. Failure to enter into the above agreement in a timely manner may jeopardise project delivery, risking funding withdrawal and impacting the Council's reputation with the Department for Transport.

Alternative options considered and rejected

11. .
12. Not proceeding with the schemes: This option was rejected as it would result in the loss of DfT funding and missed opportunities to improve local active travel infrastructure.

Report Author and Contact Details:

Name: Thomas Bland

Position: Assistant Project Engineer (Major Projects)

Department: Place Directorate

Background

13. 15112 Bury to Bolton Active Travel Corridor Scheme focuses on enhancing local connectivity and supporting Bury's transport strategy through widening the existing footway and upgrading the route with a improved sealed surface and enhanced drainage. The scheme features lighting provisions to improve safety for patrons using the route alongside the re classification of the route as a bridleway.
14. This scheme was developed to tie in with the recently improved Daisyfield Greenway ramp and improves the existing off-highway routing from Bury town centre to Bradley Fold/Bolton providing a safe, accessible and continuous alternative to the A58 corridor for local community members travelling actively.
15. 15112 Bury to Bolton Active Travel Corridor Scheme forms part of wider aspirations to enable delivery of the NCN 601 an orbital active travel route around Greater Manchester. Principally focussing on strengthening the connection between Bury and Bolton, currently both towns are situated on the NCN but there is no link between them.
16. These schemes have been developed in partnership with TfGM, DfT and ATE, they form part of Bury's Local Transport Strategy, Greater Manchester's Bee Active Network and the NCN which aim to improve health, reduce emissions, and encourage active travel
17. DfT has confirmed business case approval and requires the Council to enter into a Sub^[OBJ]Grant Agreement setting out the terms and conditions relating to funding, programme delivery, monitoring, reporting and scheme completion. Approval of the agreement is therefore required before funding can be released and construction works progressed.

Public Engagement

18. Engagement with affected landowners has been undertaken as part of the scheme's development, addressing matters relating to access and Japanese Knotweed treatment. Discussions with affected landowners have been productive and positive. Engagement will continue as the project progresses.
19. Public engagement is due to be undertaken following Cabinet approval for the scheme. This will feature an in-person event held at a suitable local space and will be advertised through all available

communication channels. Any relevant and achievable comments arising from the engagement sessions will be incorporated into the project's delivery. Throughout the delivery of the scheme the Council will work closely with local communities, residents and stakeholders, providing updates and opportunities for engagement as the project progresses.

Social Value Considerations

20. The successful contractor will be required to deliver a comprehensive package of social value outcomes aligned with the Council's Let's Do It Strategy and the Greater Manchester Social Value Framework. These commitments will be embedded throughout the delivery of the 15112 Bury to Bolton Active Travel Corridor Schemes.

Key areas of focus include:

- Local employment and apprenticeship opportunities for Bury residents
 - Engagement with local schools, colleges, and NEETs through work placements and site visits
 - Volunteering and support for community groups, charities, and small-scale local improvements
 - Carbon reduction initiatives including electric vehicles, solar-powered facilities, and low-carbon materials
 - Social value delivery monitored using the National TOMs framework and reported monthly to the Engineering Team.
21. These commitments will help ensure the schemes bring lasting benefits to the local area beyond the physical infrastructure improvements, contributing directly to Bury's priorities around inclusion, sustainability, and economic growth.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

22. These schemes directly support the priorities outlined in Bury's Let's Do It Strategy, including:
 - Local Neighbourhoods: Enhancing access to safe, active travel infrastructure fosters healthier, more independent, and cohesive communities.
 - Delivering Together: Collaboration with DfT, WWCT, community stakeholders, and contractors demonstrates a commitment to co-design and shared accountability.

- **Strength-Based Approach:** Developing local assets and connectivity to amplify community strengths while advancing carbon neutrality goals.
- **Economic Growth and Inclusion:** Improved connectivity boosts local commerce, attracts investment, and supports inclusive growth within the borough.
- **Climate Agenda:** Promoting walking and cycling directly aligns with Bury's target of carbon neutrality by 2038.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

23. A full equality impact assessment is appended to this report. The analysis has identified impacts which are wholly positive with this activity improving access and experience of use for a number of characteristics and circumstances

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

24. These schemes will reduce vehicle dependency, promote sustainable travel, and contribute to Bury's target of carbon neutrality by 2038.
25. Biodiversity impacts have been assessed and mitigated during the design phase.

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Failure to enter into the Sub-Grant Agreement in a timely manner may prevent access to approved funding.	Approval and execution of the Sub-Grant Agreement will secure the funding arrangements with DfT

Procurement Implications:

26. The total grant award of £553,000 is fully funded by the Department for Transport via Walk Wheel Cycle Trust.
27. The funding will be used to deliver all elements of the Spenfold Lane Bridleway scheme, including construction works, site establishment and preliminaries, drainage improvements, surfacing works, traffic management, design support, project management, supervision, environmental mitigation measures and appropriate contingency

allowances. There is no requirement for Council match funding and no impact on the Council's revenue budget.

Legal Implications:

28. There is no express requirement within the Council's Operational Decision and Cabinet Process guidance for Cabinet approval solely for the acceptance of grant funding. The requirement for Cabinet approval is linked to whether the decision constitutes a Key Decision, namely where the value exceeds £500,000 or the decision is otherwise considered to have a significant impact. The guidance further confirms that non-key decisions may be taken by Chief Officers in accordance with the Officer Scheme of Delegation, Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules, provided the decision is within an approved budget and does not amend existing policy or raise new policy issues. Accordingly, whilst Cabinet may elect to consider and approve the acceptance of grant funding where it considers it appropriate to do so, Cabinet approval is not considered to be a constitutional requirement where the decision falls within the relevant officer delegations and does not meet the Key Decision criteria. Therefore, Cabinet approval is permissible but not mandatory where the constitutional thresholds are not met.
29. Provided the decision-maker has the appropriate delegated authority, sufficient budget provision is available, and the grant funding and associated contractual commitments are accepted in accordance with the Council's governance framework, there are no legal impediments to the Council accepting the funding. Any funding agreement with TfGM and the resulting contract documents should be reviewed by Legal and executed in accordance with the Council's constitutional and contractual requirements.

Financial Implications:

30. The scheme is to be fully grant funded and as such should have no implications for the council revenue budget.
 31. There is no requirement to match fund the grant award to deliver the scheme.
 32. Provisions are in place to ensure the schemes remain within the funding envelope through regular monitoring and mitigations including reducing scope will be applied should they be needed due to costs increases once in delivery.
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Appendices:

Appendix A – Combined General Arrangement Drawings

Background papers:

[Guidance note for local authorities to support completion of the active travel fund 4 proforma - GOV.UK](#)

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

Term	Meaning
WWCT	Walk Wheel Cycle Trust
DfT	Department for Transport
ATE	Active Travel England
TfGM	Transport for Greater Manchester
AMAT	Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit
NCN	National Cycle Network