



**FOR PUBLICATION**

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**Thursday, 8 September 2022**

**Report of the Executive Director - Place**

**Safer Roads Fund Project - A5004 "Long Hill" Buxton to Whaley Bridge**  
(Cabinet Member for Highways, Assets and Transport)

**1. Divisions Affected**

1.1 Buxton West and Whaley Bridge.

**2. Key Decision**

2.1 This is a key decision because it is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or savings which are significant having regard to the budget for the service or function concerned, (this is currently defined as £500,000), and it is likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral areas in the County.

**3. Purpose**

3.1 To seek approval by Cabinet to progress this A5004 Safer Roads Fund (SRF) Major Project to the Consultation and Public Engagement process.

3.2 To inform Cabinet and confirm the £2.54 million award from the Department for Transport Safer Roads Fund Grant, which has been received for this A5004 "Long Hill" Project.

3.3 To inform Cabinet that the outcome of the Consultation, together with the final Scheme Design and Procurement Strategy, will be reported back to Cabinet for approval.

#### **4. Information and Analysis**

4.1 In its 2016 Autumn Statement, Government announced the creation of a £175m Safer Roads Fund to improve the safety of the 50 highest risk roads in England. Three of these roads are in Derbyshire:

A619 - Baslow to Bakewell (Thirteen Bends)

A5004 - Buxton to Whaley Bridge (Long Hill)

A5012 – Cromford to Newhaven (Via Gellia)

4.2 The County Council was required to work with the Department for Transport (DfT) to develop outline scheme proposals that delivered safety improvements and then to submit these proposals as bids. On 31 January 2017, Cabinet approved, in principle, to accept the grants for all three of the above projects (Minute No. 36/17 refers).

4.3 In June 2018, the DfT approved the Council's three bids and outline schemes and, in August 2018, provided outline details of the funding arrangements for the A5004 – Buxton to Whaley Bridge Project. At this time, DfT's intention was that grant funding for the project would be fully released for 2020-21 financial year.

4.4 In a Grant Award, March 2021 (deferred by DfT due to the Covid Pandemic), the Council received £2.54 million un-ringfenced grant for the A5004 Safer Roads Fund Project.

4.5 The A5004 route improvements will be implemented over a three-year period from receipt of Grant (although detailed programme for site installation of the various "Countermeasures" i.e. the detailed Works Solutions on site, cannot be confirmed with DfT until after the Public Consultation/Public Engagement phase). Subject to Consultation, Average Speed Cameras would seek to address inappropriate speed from the 30mph limit in Buxton to the 30mph limit in Whaley Bridge, helping to reduce the number and severity of collisions. Physical improvements identified below are proposed along the route to address general hazards and specific high-risk locations by:

- Reducing the tightness of the bend 7.1km - 7.4km north of Buxton.
- Remodelling of the junction with the A53 in Buxton.
- Applying central hatching road markings to reduce the visual width of the road and provide right turn harbourage within Buxton.

- Provide shoulder sealing creating a surfaced run-off area for vehicles.
- Installing shoulder rumble strips to increase awareness of the road edge.
- Clearing roadside hazards, such as removing overhanging vegetation, reforming side slopes and installing drainage/surface solutions to improve drainage and prevent highway detritus.
- Creating a safer pedestrian crossing facility and new footway connection at outskirts of Whaley Bridge (10km north of Buxton).
- Undertaking signing improvements along the route.
- Installing roadside safety barriers and bike guard on the outside of bends.
- Provision of cycle improvements along the route between Buxton and Whaley Bridge which would also improve connectivity for cyclists, to and from the A5004 and the wider County Cycle Network including the future aspiration for an off-road route between Buxton and Whaley Bridge. Design for this “Countermeasure” would be subject to feedback/local community and stakeholder comments coming out of the Public Engagement/ Consultation Process.
- Speed Management Review.

4.6 The above “Countermeasures”, coupled with education, training and publicity (ETP) information measures, will make the A5004 safer for all road users and would seek to reduce the number and severity of collisions.

4.7 The scheme will make comprehensive improvements to the safety of the A5004 using a range of methods to address identified risks to road users.

4.8 Now the bid and proposals for the A5004 scheme have been approved, officers are seeking approval to progress the project to Consultation Stage. It is intended that much of the Safety Improvement measures (i.e. the Countermeasures), would be designed in-house by the Council’s Highways Design Team, and that construction would be carried out by the Council’s Highways Construction Services (HCS). However, support may be required in both design and construction utilising existing frameworks, such as the Midlands Highway Alliance (MHA) frameworks for consultancy and construction services, and the Crown Commercial Services (CCS) for specialist contractors. A Procurement Business Case (in line with Protocol 2a of Financial Regulations) will be produced to support the use of external frameworks for this project.

- 4.9 Following the Public Consultation process, if the Average Speed Camera system proposals are progressed to procurement stage, the council would look to utilise the CCS Transport, Technology and Associated Services framework to appoint a specialist contractor for an Average Speed Camera System.
- 4.10 The Consultation will seek comments on the Preliminary Design of Safety Improvement Works (i.e. the “Countermeasures”), over the route corridor, and similarly seek comments on Speed Management System proposals along the route, and on the Education and Training Proposals regarding Road Safety.
- 4.11 Consultation on the Average Speed Camera System will include the rural section of the A5004 between Buxton and Whaley Bridge. Implementation of such a system would be subject to the outcomes of the Consultation Process.
- 4.12 The Consultation will feed into the final scheme design which will be reported back to Cabinet for approval.

## **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 The Public Consultation/Public Engagement process will follow the Council’s normal processes (i.e. Consultation on-line via Derbyshire County Council’s website access, where file links to preliminary design plans and information will be uploaded and will be visible to members of the public/the local community and stakeholders). The commencement and end dates for the consultation period will be made clear, and also the Public Consultation will be well advertised in advance via the Council’s Communications Division (Corporate Services and Transformation).
- 5.2 In addition to the standard Public Consultation Process, it is planned to hold two Public Consultation Exhibition events, (unless there are Public Health restrictions in place during the Consultation Period). At these Exhibitions, plans/information will be on display in a hall/venue in both Buxton and Whaley Bridge (on separate days). It is intended that the Public Consultation Exhibitions would take place over an afternoon/evening period at each venue. Similarly, the intention is that officers from the Council, and also technical specialists in Average Speed Camera Systems, would be in attendance to describe the proposals overall and provide information. Comments would be sought from attendees at these Public Exhibition events in the same way as comments are sought on the on-line Consultation. Attendees would be invited to provide comments within a generally 21 day period (but this

“end date” may be extended, subject to the 21 days being from the end date for the latter Public Exhibition Event).

## **6. Alternative Options Considered**

- 6.1 The need for a road safety scheme in this location has been identified by the number of road safety collisions and their severity. The Council could consider a ‘Do Nothing’ option, however, in this instance, it is likely the trends would continue until further road safety measures were introduced.
- 6.2 The vision for the Council’s highway network includes delivering a safe network for Derbyshire’s road users, failure to deliver this scheme would impact on the Council’s ability to deliver against this vision. Failure to deliver this ‘safer roads’ scheme could also affect future funding opportunities with the DfT and limit the Council’s access to those opportunities.

## **7. Implications**

- 7.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

## **8. Background Papers**

- 8.1 Cabinet Report 31 January 2017: Road Safety Fund (Minute No. 36/17 refers).
- 8.2 Safer Roads Fund DfT Approval letter A5004 & A5012 Grant Determination (2020/21): No. 31/5369.
- 8.3 Cabinet Report 11 October 2018: Safer Roads Fund: A619 Bakewell to Baslow – Acceptance of Grant from the Department for Transport (Minute No.249/18 refers).

## **9. Appendices**

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Implications.

## **10. Recommendations**

That Cabinet:

- a) Approves the progress of the A5004 Safer Roads Fund Major Project to the Consultation and Public Engagement process.

- b) Confirms receipt of and accept the Department for Transport Grant at the confirmed value of £2.54 million for the Safer Roads Fund A5004 “Long Hill” Buxton to Whaley bridge project, and that this Grant Value/Project Budget should be confirmed in the 2023-24 Capital Programme.
- c) Confirms that the outcome of the Consultation, together with the final Scheme Design and Procurement Strategy, will be reported back to Cabinet for approval.

## **11. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 11.1 It is a requirement of the Council’s Constitution to seek approval to carry out the Public Consultation.
- 11.2 In January 2017, Cabinet approved, in principle, to accept the grant award at £2.54 million. Recommendation b) simply confirms the value of the project budget in the Capital Programme/confirms Cabinet acceptance of the value of the full grant at £2.54 million. (As consequence of/following on from the Covid pandemic, there was a significant possibility that the DfT would reduce the grant, or not award).

## **12. Is it necessary to waive the call in period?**

- 12.1 No.

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## Implications

### Financial

- 1.1 The cost of preparing for and carrying out/analysing the Consultation and Public Engagement Processes (both on-line and via the Public Consultation Exhibitions), is estimated to be approximately £20,000. This is allowed for in the overall Project Budget, which is set at £2.54m. (i.e. the value of the full Grant received from DfT).
- 1.2 The overall Project Budget will cover all stages/processes required to deliver the Project, e.g. Project Management; Preliminary Design; Consultation and Public Engagement; Detail Design; Procurement of Delivery and Construction Contracts; potential Design and Site Delivery of a Speed Management System; Site Delivery of the Works Solutions [i.e. the “Countermeasure” works packages and ETP measures (as described in paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6)].
- 1.3 At this early stage in the Project, it is not anticipated that the Project will overspend, or cost more than the £2.54m budget. However, if there were any additional costs, i.e. above the level of the Grant funding, then these costs would be the Council’s responsibility to consider through the Capital Programme Board.

### Legal

- 2.1 The Consultation/Public Engagement Process seeks to present preliminary plan proposals for Works on site with the objective of improving Road Safety, and potentially reducing collisions on the A5004. The majority of these works are within highway land, and the Council therefore has powers under the Highways Act 1980, to carry out works, without needing to apply for Planning Permission. The A5004 for much of its length lies within the Peak District National Park. The Peak District National Park Authority will be afforded a pre-consultation on the preliminary designs being taken to consultation. The preliminary design plans are being prepared in accordance with Derbyshire County Council Place Department Environmental Design Guidance, for example regarding the siting of signs within the rural landscape, and these processes and pre-consultation should ensure that the preliminary design proposals are compliant with Peak District National Park’s Transport Policies. Similarly, pre-consultation will take place with Derbyshire County Council Conservation, Heritage and Design Team.

- 2.2 Some sections of the route will require modifications to existing Traffic Regulation Orders (e.g. new speed limits). These will be shown indicatively only on the overall Project Consultation Plans. The County Council, as the local traffic authority, has power under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to make necessary changes to Traffic Regulation Orders, and the individual legal Consultations on separate Traffic Regulation Orders will be carried out at detail design stage, following due process.

### **Human Resources**

- 3.1 There will be a use of resource in terms of officer time in preparing the plans and documents for the Consultation/Public Engagement Process. Derbyshire County Council Place Department, have a part time Project Manager working on the Project. During the Public Engagement Exhibitions, he will be in attendance to provide information regarding the Project, to Consultation attendees. Also in attendance at the Public Engagement Exhibitions, will be up to two officers from the Place Department Traffic & Safety/Highways Design/Road Safety Teams. This to support provision of information to consultees/members of the public. Highways Design Team staff have also been involved in preparation of preliminary design plans. Costs for these staffing levels have been included in the budget cost estimate of approximately £20,000 for the Consultation process.

### **Information Technology**

- 4.1 None.

### **Equalities Impact**

- 5.1 Equalities Impact Assessment will be carried out at commencement of the Design Stage.

### **Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

- 6.1 None.

### **Other (for example, Health and Safety, Environmental Sustainability, Property and Asset Management, Risk Management and Safeguarding)**

- 7.1 None.