

**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

**Subject: SUSTRANS COMMUNITY LINKS FUNDING APPLICATIONS**  
**Meeting: EXECUTIVE**  
**Date: 18 MARCH 2014**  
**Author: DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 In response to an invitation from the cycling charity Sustrans for applications to an enhanced Community Links funding stream, with additional funds from Scottish Government, a bid has been submitted for funding for a number of improvements to the path network of the Falkirk Council area. There are two bid categories: projects up to £1,000,000; and projects of over £1,000,000. Application documents were only available online from mid January 2014 with an application deadline of 14 February 2014. It was not possible to put the proposal to bid to the Executive for approval within this timescale.
- 1.2 Following consultation with the Environment portfolio holder Councillor Dr Craig R Martin, the applications were submitted by the deadline. Officers have submitted one bid under the “projects over £1,000,000” heading and 8 under the other funding category (projects of a value up to £1,000,000). This report seeks permission to continue the bid process and approval to seek match funding, including applications to a number of external funding bodies. Where the tables below identify contributions from Falkirk Council, these have already been reserved in the Capital or Revenue programmes, subject to the Executive agreeing to continue with these bids and subject to suitable related funding emerging from Sustran or other sources. Approval is also sought for land acquisition.
- 1.3 The largest bid, for the Denny - Falkirk Cycleway, would cost up to £6,165,166. In accordance with modern practice, this includes significant sums to counter “optimism bias” and it is hoped that it would cost considerably less than this. Assuming that contributions of £250,000 could be obtained from Falkirk Environment Trust (FET), SportScotland and the Council (as shown in the table below), the outstanding gap would be up to £2,732,583. There are reasonable prospects of obtaining this from some combination of:
- Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) (who expect to hear soon about their bid for significant EU funding);
  - SNH's own Access and Recreation budget
  - Transport Scotland (who are bidding for EU funds);
  - EU funds through revised LEADER and SRDP programmes;
  - Cycling, Walking, Safer Streets (CWSS) grant from Scottish Government;
  - more than one bid to FET; and
  - an in kind developer contribution from a nearby land owner.
- 1.4 The Denny - Falkirk Cycleway is an ambitious bid but the funding risks are not as bad as they may appear initially. The first element of the bid, for 2014/15, would allow the project to be designed in detail and costed more thoroughly before a

final decision to proceed is required. It would also be possible to construct much of the route over time and use a substandard route under the M876, pending eventual funding for the motorway bridge.

- 1.5 Most of the land required for these projects is already owned by the Council or Transport Scotland, or is under their control. Some additional land or access arrangements will be required. Irrespective of the outcome of the bids to Sustrans, it is proposed to continue with the acquisition of this land, so that these projects can proceed sooner or later, provided the Chief Finance Officer is satisfied that adequate funds are available.
- 1.6 Sustrans expects to announce its decisions in April 2014.

## 2. PROPOSED BIDS TO SUSTRANS

### 2.1 BIDS OVER £1,000,000 - DENNY - FALKIRK CYCLEWAY

SCHEME	TOTAL COST	SOUGHT FROM SUSTRANS	SOURCES OF MATCH FUNDING	
<b>Denny – Falkirk cycleway – design 2014/15, implementation 2015/16</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• deliver a dedicated, off road shared use path link from Denny to the Falkirk Wheel, using a disused railway in Council ownership</li> <li>• crossing the M876 motorway and the Denny Road via a bespoke shared use bridge</li> <li>• Connects to the Falkirk Wheel, NCN 754 (Forth and Clyde Canal) and the John Muir Way</li> <li>• Very high levels of support locally and from partners</li> </ul>	£6,165,166	£3,082,583	Falkirk Council	£100,000 – in kind contribution spread over two years (officer time)
			SportScotland	Proposed £100,000 in 2014/15 and £100,000 in 2015/16
			Falkirk Environment Trust	Up to £50,000 application via partner group
			Other funders – see para 1.3	£2,732,583
<b>TOTAL</b>	6,165,166	3,082,583		

## 2.2 BIDS UNDER £1,000,000:

SCHEME	TOTAL COST	SOUGHT FROM Sustrans	SOURCES OF MATCH FUNDING	
<b>Bo'ness to Blackness Phase 1</b> <i>(Blackness to Shore Wood)</i> <b>2014/15</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completes a missing link in the John Muir Way</li> <li>• safe off-road route between Bo'ness &amp; Blackness</li> <li>• will become part of National Cycle Network (NCN) route 76</li> <li>• support from Blackness Area Community Council</li> </ul>	£639,000	£307,000	Falkirk Council	£100,000 - from 2014/15 capital budget allocation for cycling schemes
			Scottish Natural Heritage	£100,000 – secured
			SportScotland	£100,000 – secured
			Falkirk Environment Trust	£32,000 – secured
<b>Bo'ness to Blackness Phase 2</b> <i>(Shore Wood to Carriden)</i> <b>2015/2016</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upgrades a section of John Muir Way</li> <li>• safe off-road route between Bo'ness &amp; Blackness</li> <li>• will become part of National Cycle Network (NCN) route 76</li> </ul>	£372,668	£186,334	Falkirk Council	£55,000– from 2015/16 capital budget allocation for Countryside Access
			Scottish Natural Heritage	£31,334 – sought Funding application August 2014
			SportScotland	£100,000 – funding application in July 2014

SCHEME	TOTAL COST	SOUGHT FROM Sustrans	SOURCES OF MATCH FUNDING	
<b>Carronshore Bridge, Carronshore 2015/2016</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• completes a missing link in the Helix path network</li> <li>• direct off-road connection from Carronshore to Helix Park area</li> <li>• will require planning consent</li> <li>• strong community support through Communities Along the Carron Association and originally identified through community consultation as part of the development of the Helix project</li> </ul>	£350,000	£175,000	Falkirk Council	£75,000 – from 2015/16 capital budget allocation for cycling and walking schemes
			Communities Along the Carron Association	£45,000 – future funding application to LEADER
			Falkirk Environment Trust	£30,000 – future funding application
			Central Scotland Green Network	£25,000 – future funding application
<b>Carron to Helix Path Link, Falkirk 2014/2015</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improves the main western access route into the Helix path network</li> <li>• community support from Communities Along the Carron Association</li> </ul>	£599,625	£299,625	Falkirk Council	£100,000 – secured from 2014/15 capital budget allocation for cycling schemes
			Scottish Natural Heritage	£100,000 – funding application, Aug 2014
			SportScotland	£100,000 – funding application, July 2014

SCHEME	TOTAL COST	SOUGHT FROM SUSTRANS	SOURCES OF MATCH FUNDING	
<b>Little Kerse, Grangemouth 2015/2016</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• completes a missing link in the Polmont and Grangemouth path network</li> <li>• creates a new off-road connection from Grangemouth to Polmont Woods and the Antonine Wall</li> <li>• support from Grangemouth community</li> </ul>	£103,500	£51,750	Falkirk Council	£25,875 –from 2015/16 capital budget allocation for countryside access
			SportScotland	£25,875 – funding application, July 2014
<b>John Muir Way – community connections 2014/2015</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creates 2 new and improved pedestrian and cycle paths</li> <li>• connects Polmont, Hallglen, Glen Village and Lionthorn with the John Muir Way, NCN 754 and wider core paths network</li> </ul> support from Bespoke Community Development Company and residents of Lionthorn and Glen Village for an off-road path to the Callendar Estate cycle trails, John Muir Way and wider path network	£105,707	£52,800	Falkirk Council	£12,907 –from 2014/15 revenue budget
			Scottish Natural Heritage	£10,000 – funding application, August 14
			SportScotland	£15,000 – funding application, July 14
			Falkirk Environment Trust	£15,000 – future funding application
<b>Maddiston to Blackbraes Community Link 2015/2016</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides a high quality path connection to the Maddiston-Blackbraes Core Path and the wider path network</li> <li>• support from Maddiston Community Council</li> </ul>	£46,448	£23,224	S.75 Developer Contribution	£23,224 – secured
<b>Maddiston to Standburn Community Link 2015/2016</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides a high quality path connection between Maddiston and Standburn</li> <li>• support from Maddiston Community Council</li> </ul>	£85,154	£42,575	S.75 Developer Contribution	£27,579 – secured
			Falkirk Environment Trust	£15,000 – future funding application
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£2,302,102</b>	<b>£1,138,308</b>		

### 3. POLICY, LEGAL, FINANCIAL AND PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 **Policy** - The projects listed above are in accordance with a number of Council policies. The relevant policies include: Falkirk Council Local Plan (2010), Local Transport Strategy (2006), Falkirk Council Core Paths Plan (2010).

3.2 **Legal Implications** - There may be land issues arising from the continuing development of individual projects. The proposed Carron Bridge may require resolution of land issues; and access arrangements will need to be made for implementation of the Falkirk to Denny proposals.

#### 3.3 **Financial Implications:**

##### **Bids over £1,000,000: Denny - Falkirk cycleway**

Sustrans Bid	£3,082,583
Falkirk Council officer time contribution (over 2 financial years):	£100,000
Total match funding sought from other sources:	£2,982,583
Total cost:	<b>£6,165,166</b>

##### **Bids under £1,000,000: 8 bids**

Sustrans bid:	£1,138,308
Falkirk Council contribution (over 2 financial years):	£368,782
S.75 developer contribution:	£50,803
Total match funding obtained or sought from other sources:	£744,209
Total cost:	<b>£2,302,102</b>

3.4 **Personnel Implications** – none.

### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 4.1 **It is recommended:**

- a) that the Executive approve bids to the Sustrans Community Links funding stream and, following notification of successful applications, authorises officers to seek match funding from appropriate sources;
- b) that, if any of the bids to Sustrans are unsuccessful, officers be authorised to continue with these projects, as approved resources allow, including seeking match funding;
- c) that, subject to the Chief Finance Officer being satisfied that funds for acquisition are available, the Director of Development Services and the Chief Governance Officer be authorised to enter into negotiations and thereafter conclude a bargain for the acquisition of land or rights of access necessary for the projects listed in the report (irrespective of success in the current round of bidding), with each of the transactions being at a purchase price considered satisfactory to the Director of Development Services; and

- d) that the Executive approve, in principle, the promotion of Compulsory Purchase Orders under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 or the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, as appropriate, subject to a further report to the Executive on the outcome of negotiations.

.....

**Director of Development Services**

**Date: 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2014**

Contact Officer: Christopher Cox Tel: 504723  
File Ref.: TP0414

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. Sustrans Community Links Guide

Background papers are available on request from Christopher Cox  
Tel: 01324 504723