

Title: ATF4E – Tyne Bridge Sustainable Access - Newcastle
Report of: Tobyn Hughes, Director of Transport
Portfolio: Transport

Report Summary

The purpose of the report is to request approval to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) for the following scheme which has received its final assurance statement as a result of a successful submission to our Design Review Panel (DRP):

- Tyne Bridge Sustainable Access Scheme: Newcastle City Council's Active Travel Fund (ATF) 4E sub-scheme

The value of this scheme is below £150,000; approval is therefore sought from the Chief Executive.

Recommendations

The Chief Executive is recommended to:

- Approve the entry into a grant funding agreement for the following Tyne Bridge Sustainable Access sub-scheme:
 - Active Travel Fund (ATF) 4E – Newcastle City Council sub-scheme – total funding £143,653.55

A. Context

Active Travel Fund 4E	
Funding Source	Active Travel England
Delivery Areas	Newcastle City Council
Start Date	28th February 2024 (award of ATF4E)
Financial End Date	31 st March 2026
Practical Completion data (date by which all outputs will be achieved)	31 st March 2026
Total Value	£143,653.55
Total Remaining Value	£86,492.84 (Gateshead Council's remaining allocation)
Budget Implications	The requested grant for the scheme will be met within the overall ATF4E 'Tyne Bridge Sustainable Access' budget. Should the scheme set out in this report be granted approval to enter into a GFA then £86,492.84 remains. The remaining grant will be allocated to Gateshead sub schemes that have yet to come forward.

1. Background

1.1 For ATF4E funding, the region was required to submit a bid to ATE, with ATE confirming the schemes to be delivered through the funding award, including individual allocations to schemes. The bid was formed through engagement and agreement with Heads of Transport of constituent local authorities. Following this, the former Joint Transport Committee (JTC) on each occasion were asked to approve the details of the funding bid and give permission to Transport North East to submit on behalf of the region. Following award of funding, the JTC was informed of the successful bid through a finance update paper, and updates on expenditure within the tranches were also presented to JTC. In total the region was awarded £5,095,298 ATF4E funding from ATE.

1.2 At the July 2024 meeting of the North East CA Cabinet, Members re-confirmed the decisions previously made by JTC and delegated authority to the Chief Executive to enter into the relevant decisions in agreement with Monitoring Officer and the Director of Finance and Investment and in consultation with the Mayor and the relevant Cabinet Member.

1.3 The total funding allocated for the 'Tyne Bridge Sustainable Access' scheme was £295,580.23. This scheme is formed of 6 sub schemes split between Newcastle City Council and Gateshead Council. It was formed in response to the planned restoration of the bridge and the reduced vehicle capacity due to the lane removal to allow the restoration work to take place. The rationale for the ATF4E scheme was for both local authorities to provide active travel solutions that might support modal shift from private vehicle to active travel and mitigate the impact of the reduced lanes. So far £65,433.86 has been allocated to Gateshead Council for their Lambton Street sub-scheme.

1.4 Following the award of funding, ATE require that final scheme designs are considered through North East Combined Authority's (North East CA's) design review panel (DRP). The output of this is a design review report. This scheme has successfully been through the region's DRP process. An assurance statement has been prepared by the scheme promoter, alongside a monitoring and evaluation plan. These documents have been developed in the absence of a requirement of a full business case for each scheme, to ensure compliance with the grant determination letter for each funding award. These documents will also be appended to the GFA.

1.5 A GFA is required to passport this funding from the region to the scheme promoter, following successful completion of the required assurance documents, and following the completion of the design review process.

1.6 As mentioned above, this paper requests the approval to enter into a grant funding agreement for the following Newcastle City Council sub schemes:

- Tyne Bridge Sustainable Access - Newcastle City Council sub scheme.
 - Tyne Bridge Slip (Extension of the existing Pilgrim Street cycle track to the Tyne Bridge) – with a total ATF4E funding allocation of £120,000
 - Swing Bridge Bus Gate (Change to the existing bus gate (adjacent to the Swing Bridge) TRO to allow cycles to legally pass through it) – with a total ATF4E allocation of £3,465
 - Secure cycle storage - with a total ATF4E allocation of £20,188.55

1.6 It is also anticipated that the remaining ATF4E – Tyne Bridge Sustainable Access budget, which is earmarked for Gateshead Council sub schemes, will come forward for approval before the end of the 2025/26 financial year.

2. The Investment Proposal

2.1 Outputs and Outcomes

The outputs and expected outcomes are below:

Output	25/26	Total
Approximately 50m of new segregated cycling facility.	50m	£120,000
Bus gates and other priority measures that also enable active travel (miles of road improved).	1	£3, 465.00

Amount of secure cycle parking facilities	3	£20,188.55
TOTAL (£)		£143,653.55

2.2 Timetable for Implementation

Historically, there has been flexibility with ATE with the timescales of ATF expenditure. However, ATF4E was granted on the expectation that scheme construction and expenditure would be completed by March 2026. North East CA regularly update ATE on the progress of scheme development and construction, and a change control process is in place should there be a request for an alteration in the timescales for scheme delivery. For this scheme seeking approval, the anticipated milestones are:

Tyne Bridge Sustainable Access - Newcastle City Council sub-schemes

Milestone	Forecast Date
Grant Funding Agreements	July 25
Delivery Commences	Aug 25
Delivery Completion	Mar 26

2.3 Appraisal

For ATF funded schemes, scheme promoters are required to provide an assurance statement for each scheme which sets out details of the scheme, including: cost, outputs, consultation details and value for money. As well as this process, as noted above, the designs for each scheme are required to be considered through the design review process. A formal Design Review Panel is due to be established in 2025, in line with the Deeper Devolution Deal. For the scheme being considered in this report, an assurance statement has been produced, and a design review has also been completed to ensure compliance with design standards.

B. Impact on North East Combined Authority Objectives

ATF and its programme of activity supports the strategic aspirations of the North East CA as set out in the corporate plan which was approved at November's Cabinet. The benefits that will be realised through the delivery of the ATF programme and the schemes outlined within the report include: improving the attractiveness of active travel, environmental benefits including a reduction in carbon delivered through reduced emissions, improving the quality of place and environment, improved health and wellbeing through increased physical activity, providing an enhanced and safe network, giving people more choice about how they can best make their journey as well as improving accessibility by ensuring that the needs of all users are considered

C. Key risks

The key risk associated with this report is the ability of scheme promoters to defray ATF4E expenditure within the ATF4E programme timescales, as required by ATE (March 2026). Approval and agreement of the proposals outlined within this report aid in the delivery of the interventions within the required timescales.

D. Financial and other resources implications

The current estimated financial profile of the scheme seeking approval is included below:

Scheme Name	25/26	Total
Tyne Bridge Sustainable Access	£143,653.55	£143,653.55

E. Legal implications

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comments to add.

F. Equalities implications

The North East CA follows the Public Sector Equality duty and this report has due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010. Each scheme funded by ATF is required to be designed in line with Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20), which was created with inclusive design as a key feature.

G. Consultation and engagement

ATF4E has been consulted on and considered through Heads of Transport of the North East CA's seven constituent authorities. Schemes included within the programme are subject to local approval, consultation and onwards approval. Scheme promoters are responsible for undertaking consultation pertaining to each individual scheme over the course of scheme development. This consultation has been completed for the two schemes requesting approval through this report.

H. Appendices

None

I. Background papers

First referenced to Cabinet in November 2024, due to ATE embargo

<https://www.northeastca.gov.uk/downloads/3249/cabinet-agenda-pack-26-november-2024-pdf-.pdf>

J. Contact officers

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K. Glossary

ATE – Active Travel England

ATF – Active Travel Fund

DRP – Design Review Panel

GFA – Grant funding agreement

JTC – Joint Transport Committee

North East CA – North East Combined Authority

L. Sign-off

1) Cabinet Member: Yes	2) Director/Head of Service: Yes	3) Director of Finance and Investment: Yes	4) Monitoring Officer: Yes
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