

## **Report to the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee**

**18 November 2020**

### **Emergency Active Travel Fund Cycle Lane - A270 Upper Shoreham Road HI 11 (20/21) – Focus for Scrutiny**

**Report by Director of Law and Assurance**

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#### **Summary**

A proposal (HI11 (20/21)) was published for a decision by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure on 3 November 2020 in relation to five Emergency Active Travel Fund (EATF) Cycle Lanes. The Cabinet Member is being asked to agree to remove five temporary cycle schemes, including one in Shoreham. A request to call-in the Shoreham scheme decision for scrutiny has been accepted by the Monitoring Officer. The remaining four schemes are unaffected by this request. The Committee is therefore asked to scrutinise the proposal for the A270 Upper Shoreham Road temporary cycle lane set out as part of the decision report attached at Annex 1.

#### **The Focus for Scrutiny**

Key lines of enquiry for the Committee to consider include:

- (1) Whether the scheme been given enough time to operate in order to make an informed decision;
- (2) What consideration has been given to how the scheme could be improved;
- (3) How the impact of removal of the scheme has been assessed, particularly in terms of the safety of all road users (including cyclists) and also in terms of air quality and carbon footprint.
- (4) How data and engagement information has been collected and considered to inform this decision, given that the scheme is still being implemented.
- (5) What consideration has been given to how consultation and communication could be improved in the future, ensuring that a range opinions are gathered at different stages of such high profile schemes (given that views are likely to change over time)
- (6) Lessons learned for how the County Council will achieve its objective to be carbon neutral by 2030 and be a leader in this field in West Sussex, given that changes to our modes of transport are fundamental to its delivery.

The Chairman will summarise the debate and ask the Committee to agree its conclusions to be reported to the Cabinet Member.

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## **1 Background and context**

- 1.1 A call-in request has been accepted for the decision in relation to the Emergency Active Travel Fund Scheme in Shoreham. The request was made by Councillor Kevin Boram, supported by Councillors Debbie Kennard, Ann Bridges, George Barton.
- 1.2 The reasons for the call-in request were:
  - a) The government's aim of the scheme stated that "We recognise this moment for what it is: a once in a generation opportunity to deliver a lasting transformative change in how we make short journeys in our towns and cities." It is further noted that the schemes were to be maintained for a period of up to 18 months in order to collect meaningful data on their impact. The decision to remove has not considered this aim nor has there been an opportunity to collect data over a reasonable period of time to enable a fully informed decision to be made. Indeed, the Upper Shoreham Road scheme was still being implemented after the Cabinet Member's decision.
  - b) The aim of the cycle routes is to change long-held habits. We fail to see how the effectiveness of the government's aim can be measured in such circumstances.
  - c) We consider there are a significant number of issues which should be considered by the call-in process which will assist the County Council in delivering its Climate Change and air quality air objectives.
  - d) The decision was made prior to the government's recent announcement of a second lock down. It is clear from the government's intention that these schemes could last for up to 18 months so that they could be in operation until after the pandemic and our communities return to new normal - an event yet to be achieved.
- 1.3 The call-in request was considered with reference to the factors set out in Standing Order 8.32, the pre-conditions for the request set out in Standing Order 8.29-31 having been met. The call-in request was accepted as there has been no previous scrutiny of the proposals and the call-in request provides legitimate grounds for consideration prior to the proposal being determined. The matter has important implications for the area and the Council's policies on climate change and sustainable transport, and is therefore an appropriate issue for scrutiny. It is suggested that other information over and above that referred to in the decision report, and relevant to the options available to the Cabinet Member, should be taken into account. There are no factors to suggest that delaying the decision to accommodate a hearing would be contrary to the interests of the Council.

## **2 Details**

- 2.1 The background and context to this item for scrutiny are set out in the attached decision report, including resource and risk implications and all factors taken into account.

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**Appendices**

Annex 1 – Emergency Active Travel Fund Cycle Lanes – HI 11 (20/21)

**Background papers**

None