

Active Travel Fund, Tranche 2 – Thurrock Council Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

Earlier this year the Department of Transport (DfT) announced its plans for a new funding stream – The Emergency Active Travel Fund. Worth £225m, the fund would be allocated to Local Authorities across the England who could provide a reprioritisation of road space within parts of their local transport systems as an outcome to the Coronavirus epidemic.

This money would be made available for Local Authorities to bid for in two rounds referred to as Tranches. To receive the funding, local authorities must provide increased space for cyclists and pedestrians on roads and pavements, due to the now reduced capacity on the public transport system as a result of new social distancing guidelines coming in to place.

Fast-tracked guidance was published in May 2020, which came into effect immediately and requested local councils to think about providing a range of temporary initiatives changing the space available on roads and pavements for the new increasing number of pedestrians and cyclists now using them.

Thurrock Council was awarded £288,000 in Tranche 1 of the fund. The Council has primarily invested this money to make walking and cycling safer and easier around four transport hubs within the borough, with improved crossing, additional walking and cycling infrastructure, and speed restrictions around railway stations.

The Council has now been allocated a further £690,000 under Tranche 2, but the fund is now known as the Active Travel Fund. Councils have been asked to deliver additional walking and cycling measures which are permanent, but still reallocated road space. To enable this fund to be granted to Councils, all local authorities must publish a strategy which will engage with key stakeholders in respect of any proposed schemes. The Council must undertake this engagement and report back to the Department prior to installing any schemes, as well as supply a monitoring report in the 12 months which follow. Schemes are likely to be delivered into and beyond the middle of 2021.

Indicative scheme list

Schemes are proposed in the following locations, however engagement with stakeholders will help determine the final design and nature of the scheme:

Ref	Location	Indicative Proposal
A	A128 Brentwood Road, Orsett Cock Roundabout	New signalised crossing across the southern arm of the A128 Orsett Cock roundabout
B	London Road, Stanford le Hope	Shared path between A1013 Rookery Corner and Stanford le Hope Railway Station
C	Purfleet Road, Aveley	Shared path from A1306 to Aveley Community Hub
D	Branksome Avenue, Stanford le Hope	Measures along length road to create space for cyclists and reduced speeds for vehicles
E	Corringham Road, Stanford le Hope	A new cycle route linking town centre with the Sorrells roundabout via Billet Lane

F	Orsett Village	Experimental priority of vehicles through village to prevent rat-running of traffic and potential enhancement to crossing on A1013 to provide safe access for pedestrians and cyclists into the village
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Engagement approach

To engage with identified stakeholders, the Council will use outreach via three methods- mail and leaflet distribution, digital channels, and presentational displays. Collectively, these methods will enable the Council to inform the public of scheme proposals, and provide ways for stakeholders as to how they can comment and provide suggestions and opinions.

Leaflet and mail – Relevant to each scheme, a determination will be made to distribute physical media to businesses and households within a set radius of the scheme. This will therefore ensure those who are most directly impacted by location will be informed that the Council are seeking their views on potential schemes. This media, likely leaflet distribution, will also provide the necessary information as to how stakeholders can engage with the Council on the respective local and other schemes. It is expected stakeholders within no greater distance of 1km radius of the scheme will be informed, but in some examples, such as scheme A – A128 Brentwood Road, this will impact stakeholders and communities beyond this immediate area, and therefore additional outreach may be implemented.

Digital channels – The Council has a number of digital channels through which it can promote new schemes, and also enable consultation. The Thurrock Council social media channels are very active, and have significant outreach with the local community, via Facebook and Twitter. These can be used to point interested parties towards relevant media pages. The Council’s website would be designated as the central source for hosting the relevant information of schemes for the public to view. This would be located in the Transport section of the website, with a dedicated landing page. Thurrock Council also has a top of the range consultation and engagement portal, powered by Bang the Table, where stakeholders will be able to engage and leave feedback and comments regarding schemes. The Council currently has a consultation supporting walking and cycling, where stakeholders can leave details about new infrastructure which is required to help increase the uptake of walking and cycling throughout the borough – <https://consult.thurrock.gov.uk/makewalkingcyclingbetter>. Web links to pages holding information about the schemes will be provided via the social media posts, and also given on the physical media. An additional source the Council can tap into is its range of Real Time Bus Information Displays placed across the borough, which can be used to promote scheme engagement. The Council has control over these sources to display the information. Additionally, the Council will seek to see if online webinars can be used so that stakeholders can engage directly with the Council and hear first-hand of the benefits and reasoning behind schemes.

Presentational displays – Lastly, the Council will consider the merit of displays of schemes in prominent locations within the relevant areas across the borough. Primarily, the Council would utilise its network of libraries and community hubs to present displays of schemes, and provide forms and web links for those viewing to offer their comments. Where safe and feasible, the Council could seek to have persons present to help answer any questions. Locations most relevant would be Aveley Community Hub (Scheme C), Chadwell St Mary Centre/Chadwell Library (Scheme A), Blackshots Library (Scheme A & F), Corringham Library (Scheme A, B, D, E). Other locations, where appropriate will be considered.

Identified stakeholders

Thurrock Council will seek to engage with the following names stakeholders to support the development of the proposed schemes:

Members of Parliament – Jackie Doyle Price – Thurrock; and Stephen Metcalf – South Basildon and East Thurrock;

Neighbouring local authorities – Essex County Council; Basildon District Council; Brentwood Borough Council; Castle Point District Council; The London Borough of Havering.

Key service providers –Ensign Buses, TfL Buses, First Bus Group, Nibbs buses, Thurrock based mail and parcel logistics firms – Amazon, Royal Mail, UPS,

Large employment organisations – Amazon, Lakeside Shopping Centre (formally into Lakeside), DP World, Port of Tilbury, CRo Ports Purfleet, Basildon Hospital, Orsett Hospital, and other large employers local to schemes;

Charities and third sector organisations – Ngage, Thurrock Community Forums (relevant to schemes), Gateway Cycling, Thurrock Cycle Campaign, Ramblers and Walking for Health, Local Community Hubs, Job Centre Plus, Local Schools, The Safer Essex Roads Partnership, South Essex Active Travel/ForwardMotion.

Ward councillors – All Members are to be made aware of the stakeholder engagement and links to the webpages of the schemes to pass general comment. Councillors whose wards host schemes will be informed and briefed specifically about individual schemes as shown in the table:

Ward	Councillor 1	Councillor 2	Councillor 3	Relevant Scheme
Orsett	Barry Johnston	Susan Little		A, F
Stanford le Hope West	Shane Hebb	Terry Piccolo		B, E
Aveley and Uplands	Luke Spillman	David Van Day	Colin Churchman	C
The Homesteads	Gary Collins	James Halden	Gary Byrne	D, E

Timescales

Thurrock Council is seeking to publish this stakeholder engagement strategy in mid-December, and commence the engagement process from December and into the New Year. It is proposed engagement will be completed prior to the end of February with schemes finalised and outcomes reported to the Department for Transport in March, following the completion of constitutional processes within Thurrock Council. Stakeholders who engaged and wish to be informed will then hear about the outcomes of the engagement process and the finalised nature of schemes. At this stage, the Council will seek to commence implementation of schemes.

Feedback

To provide initial feedback to this Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, or in regards to proposed schemes, or the Active Travel Fund within Thurrock, interested parties and stakeholders can contact the council via email at transportdevelopment@thurrock.gov.uk or via phone 01375 652 006.