

3 February 2021

## Council seeks views on new proposals to boost cycling and walking

Cheshire East Council is seeking people's views on a second phase of 'active travel' schemes to boost cycling and walking – following the award of additional government funding.

The proposals, which are out for public consultation from today, aim to help deliver the council's priorities of making our towns safer, healthier and more welcoming. This is all the more important as we recover from the pandemic.

The council wants to hear people's views on proposals for five new active travel projects across Cheshire East towns. The schemes are a second tranche to encourage more people to cycle and walk, help tackle obesity and improve access to our town centres, areas for employment and schools.

The council secured £588,000 of Department for Transport funding in the second phase of active travel grants. This grant will be used, possibly with other match funding, to build schemes that will provide key parts of our longer-term plans for joined-up walking and cycling networks.

This consultation follows on from £155,000 of first-phase funding, last August, which led to eight emergency active travel projects across seven Cheshire East towns.

The choice of schemes will be informed by the public consultation response and the designs will also be refined to reflect local feedback. Construction of the selected projects will start in summer 2021. Unlike the first set of emergency schemes, it is intended that these measures will be permanent.

The new proposals, which are subject to consultation, include design options for the following locations in the borough:

- Manchester Road, in **Tytherington**;
- Vernon Way, West Street and Market Street, **Crewe**;
- Black Lane and Hurdsfield Road, **Macclesfield**;
- Antrobus Street, West Street and Mill Street, **Congleton**; and
- Manchester Road, Chancel Lane, Cliff Road and Styal Road, in **Wilmslow/Handforth**.

There will also be further consultation on changes to the tranche one experimental scheme in Sandbach.

Councillor Laura Crane, Cheshire East Council cabinet member for highways and waste, said: “This is fantastic news and I want to congratulate our officers for working swiftly and effectively to both secure this government funding and develop a second phase of active travel scheme proposals to promote cycling and walking.

“People’s travel behaviour has changed during the lockdown – and this council is determined to lock in and build on the benefits of more people walking and cycling so that our town centres are safer, healthier and more welcoming to shoppers and visitors.

“I would emphasise that all of these proposals are subject to consultation. We will decide which schemes to deliver when we understand the views of local residents and road-users. We will continue to work with our town and parish councils, local communities and stakeholders to develop and refine proposals before anything is built.

“Our aim is to create schemes that are right for each community and developed in partnership with each local area and local people – which is why the public consultation and feedback is so important.”

Recent surveys found that, across England, 65 per cent of people supported reallocating road space to walking and cycling in their local area and nearly eight out of 10 people support measures to reduce road traffic in their neighbourhood.

Councillor Suzie Akers Smith, Cheshire East Council’s walking and cycling champion, said: “These are exciting proposals and I would urge people to share their views via the consultation. We want to encourage people to take up daily active travel, such as cycling, walking or scooting – which is good for your health, good for the environment and good for revitalising the heart of our towns and villages.

“Creating a safe environment, by proposals such as these, will encourage people to ditch their cars for shorter journeys and walk and cycle more. It also helps make our town centres safer and more attractive places to visit, spend time and spend money.

“Ditching the car really helps to forge greener habits, reduce congestion, improve air quality and help fight climate change.”

The **consultation runs until 3 March 2021**. To find out more and have your say, visit: <https://cheshireeastactivetravel.commonplace.is/>