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**LINKS TO SCHOOL PROGRAMME – RELEASE OF CAPITAL FUNDS**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member(s) - Councillor Nick Wallis,  
Highways and Transport Portfolio**

**Responsible Director(s) - John Buxton, Director of Development and Environment**

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**Purpose of Report**

1. To seek approval for the release of £105,000 of external funding in order to fund three links of the cycle network.

**Information and Analysis**

***Background***

2. The Department for Transport has provided a national fund, managed by Sustrans the Sustainable Transport Charity, to support a National Cycle Network Links to Schools Programme. The aim is to provide links from the National Cycle Network to schools to increase the opportunity for school children, staff and parents to cycle to school.
3. Darlington identified 3 schemes that met the criteria as follows:
  - (a) *Cemetery Lane/Carmel Road cycle route* – an upgrade of the existing path to a sealed surface and a Puffin crossing on Carmel Road North. This would improve cycle links to Abbey Infants, Abbey Junior and Hummersknott Secondary schools. Total estimated cost £70,000.
  - (b) *Red Hall/Skerne cycle route* – this will provide a new sealed surface cycle link to Red Hall school. Total estimated cost £40,000.
  - (c) *Hurworth Neasham cycle route* – a footway/cycleway between the two villages to improve access to the three schools in Hurworth. Total estimated cost £102,000. (Min C37/July 2004 refers.)
4. These routes have been identified through ongoing travel planning work with the schools, the Cycle Working Group and the Darlington Cycle Forum. The Hurworth Neasham scheme has already been approved by Cabinet (July Cabinet, minute no. C37).
5. The schemes are to be funded from the Local Transport Plan capital allocation and match funding secured from Sustrans. The Local Transport Plan funding of £107,000 was released by Cabinet in March 2004. (Minute C220(5).)

6. Formal offer letters confirming external funding have been received for all three schemes, totalling £105,000. The schemes must be implemented by March 2005.
7. A separate Cabinet report details the land purchase issues surrounding the purchase of land for the Hurworth Neasham cycle route. (Hurworth Neasham Footway – Compulsory Purchase Order).

### **Outcome of Consultation**

8. Consultation in principle has been carried out with the Cycle Working Group, Darlington Cycle Forum and relevant schools. The schemes conform to the ethos of the approved and agreed Local Transport Plan and the details will be discussed with local people at the design stage.

### **Legal Implications**

9. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

### **Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

10. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

### **Council Policy Framework**

11. The issues contained within this report do not represent change to Council policy or the Council's policy framework

### **Decision Deadline**

12. For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does represent an urgent matter, since the funding is only available until 31 March 2005.

### **Recommendation**

13. It is recommended that Cabinet approve the release of the £105,000 of external funding towards the total expenditure of £212,000 for the cycle routes identified in the report.

### **Reasons**

14. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-
  - (a) To deliver key links in Darlington's cycle network and improve access to schools.

- (b) To enable the Council to maximise the amount of external funding available to the Borough.

**John Buxton**  
**Director of Development and Environment**

**Background Papers**

Original bid documents for Sustrans.

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