

Report

Report to:	Clydesdale Area Committee
Date of Meeting:	1 May 2024
Report by:	Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

Subject:	Clydesdale Way
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1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to:

- ◆ provide an update on the Clydesdale Way Project

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the details of the Clydesdale Way project, proposed routes and current position of the project be noted.

3 Background

- 3.1. In 2021/2022, South Lanarkshire Council worked in partnership with Borders and Dumfries and Galloway Councils to develop a joint bid for Round Two of the UK Levelling Up Fund (LUF) targeting the Dumfriesshire, Clydesdale, and Tweeddale constituency. The joint 'Three Rivers Active Tourism Project' bid was targeted at promoting tourism, providing significant community benefits, improved culture and rural economies. The bid comprised three projects, one from each of the three local authorities.
- 3.2. South Lanarkshire's project has focused on our rural path and cycling network through the development of the Clydesdale Way to address the gaps in the regional paths network. The proposed route commences at the end of the Clyde Walkway at Bonnington Lynn, creating a western spur to Douglas and Eastern spur towards Biggar. From Wolfeclyde at Biggar, the route can travel towards John Buchan Way at Broughton in the Scottish Borders or continue south past Coulter, Abington, Crawford, Elvanfoot and Leadhills to join the Southern Upland Way in Wanlockhead in Dumfries and Galloway. A high-level map is attached at Appendix 1
- 3.3. Detailed path route information was developed through a feasibility commission carried out by Ironside Farrer in 2022, which produced RIBA Stage 2 Concept Drawings, budget costs and maps for the proposed routes.
- 3.4. The creation of the Clydesdale Way promotes numerous benefits, including:-
 - ◆ creating connected all user path network(s) to deliver economic, social and environmental benefits across South Lanarkshire's settlements including links to local and regional visitor attractions

- ◆ addressing local needs and addressing the major strategic regional gaps and connections to established long-distance path routes and associated networks across South of Scotland
- ◆ addressing the need for connectivity within disadvantaged and deprived communities, creating active travel and recreational leisure choices in areas of poor public transport and low car ownership
- ◆ enhancing connectivity, addressing connections and safeguarding rights of way, and connections to 2 World Heritage sites and local areas of high environmental quality
- ◆ securing improved awareness and education about local routes and long-distance path connections and value of local environmental assets and biodiversity through signage/interpretation

3.5. The other local authorities' projects focussed on the refurbishment of the following key heritage assets on the proposed routes:-

- ◆ **The Chambers Institution (Scottish Borders):** converting an A-listed Council building in Peebles to accommodate an integrated museum, library, art gallery, and flexible event space
- ◆ **Annan Harbour (Dumfries and Galloway):** refurbishing Colette's Building, a vacant warehouse into a community hub; including public realm improvements to the surrounding harbourside, and construction of a new footbridge

3.6. The joint 'Three Rivers Active Tourism Project' bid was co-ordinated by Stantec and was submitted in July 2022. The Outline Business Case and Concept Design to RIBA stage 2 for Clydesdale Way, developed by Ironside Farrar, were submitted as part of the bid.

4. Funding

4.1. In January 2023, South Lanarkshire Council (SLC) was informed that the Round 2 bid was unsuccessful. The UK Government decided not to run a new competition for LUF Round 3 and has instead drawn on bids submitted in Round 2 which were unsuccessful but had been assessed as 'high quality and ready to deliver'. Consequently, on 20 November 2023, the UK Government advised the Three Rivers Active Tourism Project had been provisionally awarded £22,809,416. The three councils are contributing £2,534,380 in match funding bringing the total cost to £25,343,796.

4.2. The LUF grant is broken down as follows:-

- ◆ **Clydesdale Way:** LUF grant provisionally awarded £6,795,000.
- ◆ **The Chambers Institution:** LUF grant provisionally awarded £4,195,800.
- ◆ **Annan Harbour:** LUF grant provisionally awarded £13,131,796.

4.3. The total project cost for Clydesdale Way is £7,550,000, the Council has identified the £755,000 match funding as required by LUF.

4.4. SLC has completed the UK Government's validation process and the formal offer of grant is currently anticipated April 2024.

5. Procurement

5.1. The tender to appoint a consultancy team to manage and deliver the Clydesdale Way Project was issued on 13 March 2024, with a closing date of 19 April 2024, via a Mini Competition from the Scotland Excel Engineering and Technical Consultancy Framework Lot 9.

- 5.2. The scope for the commission is to appoint a consultancy team to manage and deliver all professional services of the Project through RIBA Stages 3 to 6, including:-
- ◆ preparation of a fully compliant Full Business Case in terms of the UK Government Green Book for the Project
 - ◆ review and comment upon the Stage 2 information package undertaking the role of Lead Designer
 - ◆ management and development of all workplan stages, including all design packages using the previous Stage 2 designs as a basis for progression
 - ◆ preparation and assistance with the tender process, including identification of priority packages in terms of ownership, preparation of tender documents etc., incorporating proposals for Community Benefits
 - ◆ management of consultation relating to Landowner Agreements and stakeholders

6. Timescales

- 6.1. LUF criteria specifies that grant funding should be spent by March 2026.
- 6.2. The current programme indicates the remaining £755,000 Council match funding will be spent, and the overall project completed by September 2026.
- 6.3. A detailed programme of activity will be developed in conjunction with the successful contractor.

7. Next Steps

- 7.1. As part of the tender process, officers will carry out the assessment of bids to appoint the Consultant to manage, design and deliver the project.
- 7.2. An internal project team, which cover various disciplines across Council Resources e.g. External Funding Team, Countryside and Greenspace Team, Legal, Planning, Estates, Roads etc has been set up and will continue to meet on a regular basis to progress the project.
- 7.3. SLC project leads will continue to meet regularly with Dumfries and Galloway and Scottish Borders Councils to co-ordinate the works, press and communication and future grant claims.

8. Employee Implications

- 8.1. There are no employee implications associated with this report.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1. £755,000 match funding committed to secure LUF funding.
- 9.2. LUF spend by 31 March 2026 is dependent on landowner consents being concluded.

10. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 10.1. Projects will be taken forward in line with the council's sustainability objectives.

11. Other Implications

- 11.1 A significant number of landowners consents are required to carry work on these areas of land. A number of alternative routes have been identified as mitigation and to help ensure continuity of pathways.

11.2 Legal

Burness Paul have been appointed to carry out the Council's legal work associated with the project, including:-

- ◆ checking titles for the routes
- ◆ developing Landowner Agreements, based upon a standard form of agreement
- ◆ processing and completion of Landowner Agreements

Two sections of the paths are located on other Local Authorities, Scottish Borders at John Buchan Way and Dumfries and Galloway at Southern Upland Way and will involve approvals of these authorities.

11.3 Estates

Where work involves existing core paths, delegated authority to instruct the works is required. The Consultant will prepare Delegated Authority pro-formas for each agreement to the project manager for acceptance by the Council's Estates Team to instruct the appointed Legal Team to conclude agreement.

11.4 Planning

Where works involve the construction of new paths which require Public Paths creation orders, delegated authority is required. The Consultant will prepare drafted Delegated Authority pro-forma for each agreement to the Council's Project Manager, who will liaise with the Legal Team to conclude agreement.

12. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

12.1. An impact assessment has been completed for this project.

12.2. Online consultation sessions were held in December 2022 with representatives of relevant Community Councils in the Clydesdale area and the Open Access Forum along with Ironside Farrar, South Lanarkshire Council Project Manager, Access Officers and External Funding Officers. The routes were discussed in detail and proposals considered in the design. Further consultation will be carried out on final routes.

12.3. Landowners were contacted via letter in September 2022 and issued with a summary of the project. The landowners will be contacted again in due course to discuss the routes and details of potential works.

12.4. In June 2022, letters of support were secured from Sustrans, Healthy Valleys, Visit Lanarkshire, Visit Scotland, South Lanarkshire Open Access Forum, Southern Upland Way Liaison Group.

David Booth

Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

17 April 2024

Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes

Values

- ◆ Focused on people and their needs
- ◆ Working with and respecting others
- ◆ Accountable, effective, efficient and transparent
- ◆ Ambitious, self-aware and improving

- ◆ Fair, open and sustainable

Priorities

- ◆ We will work towards a sustainable future in sustainable places

Outcomes

- ◆ Good quality, suitable and sustainable places to live
- ◆ Caring, connected, sustainable communities
- ◆ People live the healthiest lives possible

Previous References

- ◆ None

List of Background Papers

- ◆ None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:

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