

SPOKES

The Lothian Cycle Campaign

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PREDICTED ACTIVE TRAVEL INVESTMENT 2012/13

This document updates the information in my letter of December 2012 to members of the Scottish Parliament Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee. At that stage we had received some clarity over CWSS and over how the SAT budget line would be allocated.

We now have additionally how FTF is going to be allocated. I had guesstimated that £1m would go to active travel in 12/13, whereas the actual figure is £1.5m (specifically for cycling investment). This means that total active travel investment is likely to be cut to 0.70% of transport spending rather than the 0.67% previously calculated. Pretty small beer in the light of the SNP manifesto commitment! Also, the picture for 13/14 now looks worse than previously expected, with a further drop in total active travel investment very likely unless there are budget changes.

Dave du Feu, 18.1.12

ACTIVE TRAVEL FUNDING IN THE DRAFT BUDGET 2012/13 - UPDATE

Much of the uncertainty in how the draft budget affects cycling/walking investment has now been clarified - the position as we now understand it is explained in **appendix A**.

This document also comments on the letter of 15 December from the Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure and Capital Investment to the Committee's Convener. Our comments are in **appendix B**.

In summary, astonishingly, the outcome for total active travel from the draft budget now looks significantly worse than we predicted in our original budget submission to the Parliament when the draft budget was published. On CWSS, our prediction proved to be uncannily accurate, but sadly we were far too optimistic on how the SAT budget line would be allocated. FTF allocation is slightly better than expected for 12/13, but total 12/13 FTF is too low to make a big difference to the overall picture on active travel investment.

As a result, total active travel investment (i.e. cycling + walking) looks set to fall from the equivalent of 1.21% of transport spending in 10-11 and 1.03% in 11-12 to just 0.70% in 12-13; this against an SNP manifesto promise to raise the proportion of the transport budget invested in sustainable and active travel. Furthermore the 0.70% becomes a mere 0.59% if we exclude trunk road cycling projects which, although welcome, obviously contribute far less to government CAPS targets than does investment in urban cycle/walk.

What particularly outrages Spokes is that **these incredible cuts are at the same time as total transport spending is rising substantially** (due to £100m extra for trunk roads); and secondly that **the sums involved really are peanuts in that context**. See graphic: www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/2011/12/budget-msps-support-spokes. In this context of a significantly rising total transport budget it is wholly unreasonable for Ministers to blame active travel cuts on the UK government.

Sadly, the cuts are also set to devastate a growing and increasingly successful network of skills, project-planning, cooperation and local jobs in cycling development across Scotland; which will take time to re-instate if and when funding returns. The local-jobs impact can be seen plainly in the Sustrans evidence appendices.

On a relatively minor point, it is worth noting in passing that the £100m rise in trunk road spending is very largely due to the additional Forth Road Bridge, which includes no provision for walkers and cyclists - and therefore trunk road-related cycle spending is likely to fall as a proportion of total trunk road spending.

Appendix A – Estimated cycling/walking investment in 2012/13 (and beyond)

The bulk of cycle/walk investment from the budget currently comes from the **CWSS** and **SAT** lines, with future additions from the Future Transport Fund (**FTF**). We also add in **trunk road cycle projects**, though it is rather generous to do so since these are often tourism/leisure-related and thus unlikely to impact significantly on the government's cycle-use targets; it seems probable that trunk road cycle projects will retain roughly their current funding levels. No **other budget-related sources** (e.g. the Climate Challenge Fund) make a significant impact on total annual cycling investment.

On **CWSS**, the 2012/13 figures are in Annex O of the Local Government settlement. On top of the cut of around 17% from 10/11 to 11/12 there is to be a further cut of nearly 20% on the 11/12 figures. The total for Scotland is thus down £9.09 (10/11) ->£7.458 (11/12) ->£6.069 (12/13). Our 13-14 figure estimate is based on the planned further overall reduction in local authority capital funding.

On **SAT**, Annex A of Alex Neil's letter provides useful but shocking clarification. Funding for Sustainable and Active Travel, excluding Fastlink and Halbeath P&R, is cut by an incredible 62% from £13.1m in 11/12 to £5m in 12/13 and in later years to 14/15 inclusive. This £5m is to support a wide range of initiatives including Low Carbon Vehicles, Smarter Choices, Sustrans, etc. Our understanding is that in 11/12 some £9m, roughly 70% of the £13.1m, went to active travel (this includes Smarter Choices, not all of which is active travel). On that very optimistic basis, we could hope £3.5m of this year's £5m would go to active travel, down from ~£9m in 11/12. Sustrans funding, in particular, which comes from this money, will be cut from £7.67m in 10/11 and £5.384m in 11/12 to probably £1m/£2m at very best from this source, plus a similar amount from FTF (below).

FTF totals £3.25m in 12/13 and 7.75m in 13/14, and is to cover a wide range of headings, like SAT - including low carbon vehicles and freight facilities as well as active travel. It was announced by Keith Brown on 18.1.12 that £1.5m of this will go to cycling investment in 12-13, but that will be cut to £1.25m in 13-14 despite the total FTF fund being much more than doubled.

SUMMARY TABLE OF ACTUAL AND ESTIMATED ACTIVE TRAVEL FUNDING BASED ON DRAFT BUDGET, AND WITH ABOVE ASSUMPTIONS.

Note these figures include **walk, cycle and shared cycle-walk**, not just cycling investment.

| (£million) | 10-11 | 11-12 | 12-13 | 13-14 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| CWSS total | 9.0 | 7.5 | 6.1 | ~5.6 |
| Active travel from SAT* | ~11.5 | ~9.0 | ~3.5 | ~3.5 |
| Active travel from FTF | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.5 | 1.25 |
| Active travel total excl. trunk road# | 20.5 | 16.5 | 11.1 | 10.4 |
| Active travel total incl. trunk-road# | 22.5 | 18.5 | 13.1 | 12.4 |
| Total transport spending | 1855 | 1804 | 1887 | 1964 |
| Active-travel as % of total transport | 1.21 | 1.03 | 0.70 | 0.63 |

* Including Smarter Choices, which includes promotion of bus, eco-drive etc, not just active travel.

Roughly £2m trunk road funds goes to cycle tracks [see 1st para above]. We assume this remains; not specified in budget.

We freely accept that some elements in the table necessarily make assumptions, mainly explained in the text above. Our biggest remaining assumption is a generous one that active travel will receive £3.5m of the £5m SAT 'revenue funding.' Thus the drastic absolute and percentage overall cut is very clear. We emphasise the % figure, as the SNP manifesto commitment is in % rather than absolute terms.

Estimates for future years are less certain, but now have an increased level of clarity. On the basis of Annex A in Alex Neil's letter the **SAT** line will remain static; **FTF** cycling investment is to fall (above); and **CWSS** is almost certain to be cut again, in line with promised local authority capital cuts. **Thus a further cut in total active travel investment looks almost certain for 13-14 unless there is a major change in budgets.**

The final SR year, 14-15, is impossible to predict given the uncertainty over FTF allocation, but could see a modest partial recovery to perhaps 0.9% of total transport spending.

Appendix B - Letter of 15 December to ICI Committee Convener from Alex Neil MSP

We here discuss only the section of the letter which is relevant to active travel.

Whilst the Minister promises a full response later, the points he makes offer very little of substance, and no indication that he is concerned about the cuts being imposed on active travel.

In summary ...

Most of the Minister's figures refer to varied periods of multiple years, not to annual figures. They are therefore of little use in making any realistic assessment of annual investment, or in comparing different periods of time.

Despite this, it is clear from the letter that the main thrust of Appendix A above is valid. There is no sign that the Minister is taking seriously the CAPS target, the RPP proposals or your Committee's recommendations.

Comments on individual paragraphs ...

First para [and Annex A] Confirms the massive cut in active travel funding in the **SAT** budget line

Second para Confirms that **FTF** will have a wide range of responsibilities (some very costly) including freight facilities, hybrid buses, LCVs, etc and thus active travel may be lucky if it receives say 1/3 of the total, especially in future years once bids come in for its more costly objectives, such as freight facility grants. [Note - this is a perfect example of the need to adopt your recommendation of a separate budget line for active travel and/or cycling – these purposes should not be competing at this level with road/rail projects].

Third para/ Bullet 1 Predicts a significant cut in **CWSS** (now confirmed in Local Govt Settlement)

Bullet 2 **CCF** total £1.3m over several years, so no major impact on active travel investment, albeit we very much support CCF and the individual local projects concerned. Also note that the £1.3m is for projects which *include* cycling/walking – many of these projects have other objectives. For example Edinburgh Bike Station *Better Way to Work* project also heavily encouraged bus travel, yet is counted as cycle spending alone.

Bullet 3 £200k **health funding** to walking. Welcome but insignificant in terms of total active travel. It is unclear why the Minister mentions this item, since presumably similar small sums could be identified in other budgets (e.g tourism) but with little impact on the overall total of active travel investment. Indeed doubtless other budgets contribute similar relatively small sums to inactive-travel projects, yet these are not added in to the totals for inactive-travel.

Bullet 4 **Forestry Commission/ SNH** The totals given are quite irrelevant in calculating annual investment in active travel, as they appear to be total funding for the entirety of these organisations! Again sensible investments in active travel are welcome, but such recreational and often remotely-located funding is unlikely to make much impact on the 2020 CAPS targets or the climate targets. Indeed remote mountain biking often results in long car trips with bikes on top, and should be counted as sport/recreation rather than as active travel.