

Appendix 4

Lobbying Plan: Securing Funding to Tackle Peat Soil Affected Roads

Objective:

The objective of this lobbying plan is to secure funding from central government and other potential funders to address the issue of soil-affected roads in Cambridgeshire. This plan aims to; highlight the significance of this as an economic, community connectivity and road safety problem; outline the potential solutions, and effectively advocate for financial support to implement long term solutions.

As set out in the accompanying report, the County Council will fund and progress short, and medium term, actions on the network in parallel, though it is recognised that there is a significant longer-term funding gap that Government needs to address.

1. Research and Data Collection:

- Gather information on the extent and impact of peat soil affected roads in the county. **Stage 1 complete Autumn / Winter 2023 (see paper)**
- Compile data on accidents, maintenance costs, and economic losses associated with these roads. **Initial work carried out in 2023 (see paper)**
- IRAP Safety Assessments. **For A class affected roads due Early 2024**
- Identify areas most affected by soil-related road issues. **Stage 1 complete Autumn / Winter 2023 (see paper)**
- Further work in identifying technical solutions and effectiveness of previous interventions – **Continued review of previous interventions combined with monitor of short and medium-term interventions throughout 2024.**

2. Stakeholder Engagement:

- Liaise with local Members, Town, Parish, and City Councils, and businesses affected by the soil-affected roads.
- Identification of key stakeholder groups, to include; National Farmers Union; Federation of Small Businesses; Local Chambers for Commerce; Town and Parish Councils and District Councils; Local Government Association; ADEPT; LGTAG; LCRIG and others to be identified through stakeholders analysis. **by May 2024**
- Form a coalition with above stakeholders who support the cause and are willing to participate in lobbying efforts. Hold meetings, workshops, and public forums to raise awareness about the problem and gather support. **Initial meeting June 2024**

3. Develop a Comprehensive Proposal:

- Building on research and data (see 1) - Conduct a thorough analysis of the soil-affected roads issue to include: detailed estimates of economic, social and transport impacts; further investigation of cause factors; further investigation of innovative long-term engineering solutions. **During 2024**

- Engage with experts and consultants to evaluate the best approaches and technologies available to address the problem. **During 2024**
- Develop a detailed proposal that outlines the scope, costs, and expected benefits of proposed solutions. **By end 2024**

4. Lobby with Central Government Representatives:

- Initial discussions with Department for Transport Local Roads and Resilience leads **carried out 2023. Discussions ongoing,**
- Issue raised with the Chair of United Kingdom Roads Leadership Group (UKRLG) Adaptation, Biodiversity and Climate Board **in December 2023.**
- Continue discussion with DfT and UKRLG through 2024
- Brief key decision-makers in the central government responsible for transportation and infrastructure funding. **July 2024**

Local MPs

Cambridge - Daniel Zeichner MP.

Huntingdon - Jonathan Djanogly MP.

North East Cambridgeshire - Steve Barclay MP.

North West Cambridgeshire - Shailesh Vara MP.

South Cambridgeshire - Anthony Browne MP.

South East Cambridgeshire - Lucy Frazer MP.

DfT Ministers

Mark Harper

Huw Merriman

Lord Davis of Gower

Anthony Browne

Guy Opperman

- Lobby local Members of Parliament (MPs) to advocate for the county's cause at the national level. Present investment proposal and communicate the importance of addressing soil-affected roads and the benefits it will bring to the county and its residents. **Late 2024**
- Provide MPs with the necessary information, data, and proposal to support their efforts in securing funding as part of Lobbying. **Throughout 2024.**
- Encourage MPs to raise the issue in Parliament and engage in discussions with relevant ministers and committees. **Throughout 2024**
- Engage and raise the issue with All Party Parliamentary groups. Potential groups: *City Region Transport, Climate Change, Farming, Local Resilience and Civil Contingency, Transport Safety.*

6. Collaborate with Other Local Councils:

- Reach out to neighbouring counties or councils facing similar road issues and form alliances to strengthen the lobbying efforts. Initial meetings held early in 2023 - to be reinstated with a lobbying focus: **April 2024**.
- Group to share information, strategies, and resources to collectively advocate for funding from the central government.

7. Media and Public Outreach:

- Develop a media strategy to raise awareness about the soil-affected roads issue and the need for central government funding. **April 2024**
- Utilise local newspapers, radio stations, and social media platforms to amplify the message.
- Organize public events, awareness campaigns, and community demonstrations to garner public support.

8. Continuous Advocacy:

- Maintain regular communication with central government representatives, MPs, and other stakeholders throughout the lobbying process.
- Provide updates on progress made, share success stories, and address any concerns or questions raised by decision-makers.

9. Monitor and Evaluate:

- Establish a monitoring and evaluation system to track the progress of the lobbying efforts. **Develop by June 2024**
- Measure the impact of the advocacy activities on increasing awareness and securing funding.
- Use the data collected to refine future lobbying strategies and improve effectiveness.
- Adapt the lobbying strategy as needed based on feedback and changing circumstances.

This Lobbying Plan with an accompanying public communications strategy will be further and more fully developed in early 2024.