Questions from Eastbourne Reporter to Councillor Claire Dowling, East Sussex County Council’s (ESCC) lead member for transport and the environment

**1. Sustrans produced a second report for ESCC in 2017. Among the documents produced was a** [**95-page report on Eastbourne**](https://consultation.eastsussex.gov.uk/economy-transport-environment/escc-lcwip-2020/supporting_documents/Appendix%205C%20%20Sustrans%20LCWIP%20Report%20Eastbourne%20Final.pdf)**. This recommends (page 15) that the middle tier of the promenade becomes shared use and that car parking by the sea wall on Marine Parade is removed to create a two-way traffic-free cycle route.**

**Has ESCC looked into alternative parking in largely empty car parks nearby in order to remove approximately 75 parking spaces along the sea wall between the Pier and Redoubt? Eastbourne Borough Council has already offered Fisherman’s Green as an alternative. Has this been investigated?**

The report referred to was developed by Sustrans on behalf of ESCC to inform our evidence base for our Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. The schemes indicated in the evidence base report outline the potential alignment of a route or measure, with an emphasis on demonstrating how they can connect people with the places they may travel for everyday journeys. They do not contain detailed proposals. The potential scheme alignments will be assessed as part of any future design work

We are only responsible for on-street parking in Eastbourne. Our on-street scheme is designed to make the most efficient use of the limited kerb space and parking charges are usually designed to encourage motorists that need long stay or commuter parking to use the car parks. Most of the car parks in Eastbourne are owned and managed by Eastbourne Borough Council (EBC). When any design work is undertaken on this stretch, should the removal of parking need to be considered we will work in partnership with EBC to assess other parking opportunities.

**2. Bearing in mind one of the aims of a climate emergency plan is to reduce emissions, why is ESCC operating a parking voucher scheme for hotels for just £2 a day when the usual cost of all-day parking is £7.80 on the RingGo parking app? If the on-street parking was moved, Sustrans says a safe cycle route can be created?**

**(plus the answer to this question, according to ESCC)**

**7. What do you, as lead for transport and the environment, see as the main obstacle to progress on this issue? What would it take for something to happen? If not now, when?**

We recognise the huge benefits that cycling and walking have on people’s health and wellbeing, as well as improving air quality and reducing carbon emissions but this needs to be balanced with the needs of our communities as a whole to deliver our ambitious plans and we continue to actively pursue funding.

Our parking schemes are designed to balance the often-conflicting needs of different groups and is intended to achieve the efficient and fair use of the limited space that is available. The charges for parking and permits form part of that. Parking charges were increased in 2020, for the first time in over a decade.

Our parking schemes are reviewed regularly and the hotel permit scheme will form part of our current review for Eastbourne. More details about the Eastbourne parking review are available on our website with the informal consultation due to start in February. Although the cost of permits is not something that has been raised for this review, anyone that would like to make a request for changes to the parking scheme can submit a request via our website https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/parking/parking-reviews/requests-for-parking-restrictions

NB: Reference to the seafront route is outlined in questions 1 & 6.

**3. You seem to have £267,821.75 from tranche 1 of the Covid emergency travel fund left, which is about half what you received. How is this now being spent?**

**4. You also seem to have £1,162,364.30 from tranche 2 left for longer-term measures. You say this is being "used to develop further permanent measures". When will these be confirmed and details released? The funds left from both tranches total £1.43 million**

In 2020 the Government announced an Emergency Active Travel Fund (EATF) to help local authorities support safe social distancing in areas such as town centres and transport hubs and to enable more people to walk and cycle where possible.

In July 2020, we were allocated £535,171 in tranche 1 of funding. This money was to be used for temporary schemes. Following further consultation with local businesses and residents, it was decided not to progress a number of schemes. In November 2020, we were allocated a further £1,820,200 from tranche two of the Emergency Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 (EATF T2) funding was for longer-term measures.

We currently have a total capital underspend of £831,185.84 in total and we are liaising with Active Travel England regarding the re-allocation of the EATF T2 funding to the construction of other schemes which support active travel in the County.

**5. What happened to the ‘S106’ developer contribution from Sovereign Harbour that was earmarked for a safe seafront cycle route? How much is it and how is it being used?**

Over a number of years, the County Council has used financial contributions secured from the development that has taken place at Sovereign Harbour to deliver, in accordance with the legal agreement, transport infrastructure to manage additional traffic that has been generated by the development.

At present, there is around £700,000 development contributions still held by the County Council which has been provisionally allocated towards improving walking/cycling infrastructure which supports access to and from Sovereign Harbour.

A number of such schemes are identified within the County’s Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), including the seafront cycle route, but its use against this or any of the LCWIP-identified schemes will be dependent on the progression of the design, consultation and deliverability of high-quality facilities for pedestrians/cyclists. The allocated contribution is likely to be spent within the next 3 years.

**6. The LCWIP summary does not include a seafront route in its five priority routes for Eastbourne (listed on page 42). There appears to be one drawn on a map of possible routes on page 19, but that is the only mention. Why is there still not one planned for the seafront?**

Appendix B East Sussex LCWIP Part 2 - Infrastructure Plan, page 93, on the below link, lists the seafront route as a priority scheme.

[East Sussex Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan Public Consultation 2020 - East Sussex - Citizen Space](https://consultation.eastsussex.gov.uk/economy-transport-environment/escc-lcwip-2020/)

To provide some context, the County Council has previously worked with Eastbourne Borough Council on proposals for a seafront cycle route utilising a section of their promenade, however the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) at the time did not permit a variation of the existing byelaw prohibiting cycling on the promenade and it was, therefore not possible to progress this scheme.

The County Council remains committed to delivering a continuous cycle route for Eastbourne seafront and has allocated funding in its capital programme for local transport improvements to undertake feasibility work on potential options within the highway.

Any option involving reallocation of road space to construct a high-quality cycle route will need extensive engagement and support from a range of key stakeholders, including local businesses, and therefore cannot be delivered in the short term.

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