

CABINET

DATE	8 March 2022
REPORT OF	Councillor Stewart Swinburn – Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Carolina Borgstrom, Director for Economy, Environment and Infrastructure
SUBJECT	Delivery of Local Transport Plan 2023/2026
STATUS	Open
FORWARD PLAN REF NO.	CB 03/23/03

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) Delivery Plan 2023/2026 sets out the LTP capital programme for financial years 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 and includes a range of schemes which contribute towards the Council's Stronger Communities outcome by promoting physical activity, reducing transport related carbon emissions, supporting accessibility, and improving road safety. The plan also contains schemes that contribute to the Stronger Economy outcome by reducing congestion, supporting access to employment, education, training and wider opportunities as well as encouraging sustainable growth.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report sets out the package of measures that will be delivered through the Council's 2023/24-2025/26 capital programme. The programme is fully funded by grant funding received from the Department for Transport (DfT) and in 2023/24 will deliver more than 30 individual projects across several programme areas including highway maintenance, structures and street lighting, public transport, traffic, road safety and active travel.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Approves the proposed LTP Delivery Plan (Appendix 1) including the LTP capital programme for 2023/24 – 2025/26.
2. Delegates authority to the Director for Economy, Environment and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport to:
 - finalise the terms of the funding arrangement with the DfT and receive funds,
 - establish programme governance arrangements including the approval of any project variations, commence any related procurement exercises to deliver projects within the programme in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and to make appropriate contract awards,
 - implement appropriate monitoring arrangements including receipt of a monthly update on programme progress.

3. Authorises the Director for Economy, Environment and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport to receive any additional in year grant funding and allocate spend accordingly through the LTP programme and to deal with all ancillary matters arising.
4. Authorises the Assistant Director Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) to settle, complete and execute all documentation arising from the above.
5. Delegates authority to the Director for Economy, Environment and Infrastructure in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment & Transport, to approve all further LTP Delivery Plans in subsequent years.

REASONS FOR DECISION

For the DfT grant funding to be received by the Council and for the 2023/24 LTP capital programme to be delivered within the necessary timescales and to the requirements outlined by the DfT.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 1.1. The proposed LTP Delivery Plan 2023/26 sets out the Council's approach to delivering highways and transport infrastructure improvements across the borough. The capital programme covers five broad areas of work:
 - Highways maintenance (carriageways and footways, street lighting and highway structures)
 - Traffic
 - Road safety
 - Public transport
 - Active travel (cycling, walking and Public Rights of Way)
- 1.2. The main objectives of the programme are to address the eight LTP transport challenges identified in the LTP Strategy (2016):
 - Enable sustainable growth through effective transport provision
 - Improve journey times and reliability by reducing congestion
 - Support regeneration and employment by connecting people to education, training and jobs
 - Enable disadvantaged groups or people living in disadvantaged areas to connect with employment, health, social and leisure opportunities
 - Provide safe access and reduce the risk of loss, death or injury due to transport collisions or crime
 - Improve the health of individuals by encouraging and enabling more physically active travel
 - Improve the journey experience on the local transport network
 - Ensure transport contributes to environmental excellence, improved air quality and reduced greenhouse gas emissions
- 1.3. In addition, delivery of projects utilising LTP capital funding will help deliver the aims and objectives of a range of other Council plans and strategies including the Local Plan and NELC Carbon Roadmap.

1.4. The DfT have announced capital allocations for 2023/24 and therefore the current programme is based on these figures identified below.

- £1.107m Highways maintenance needs-based assessment
- £1.107m 'Pot hole funding'
- £1.479m Integrated transport block funding
- £0.288m Highways maintenance incentive funding

1.5. The highways maintenance needs-based element is calculated by a formula based on the length of different classifications of road, the number of street lighting columns owned by the Council and the number of publicly maintainable highway bridges that the local authority has responsibility for. The highway incentive element is based on self-reporting by the Council in relation to performance delivering maintenance works in previous years. The final integrated transport block element is determined by a formula based on factors such as deprivation statistics, congestion data and information relating to the current cycling, walking and public transport networks.

1.6. Maintenance funding is to be spent on maintenance schemes such as major resurfacing, the maintenance or replacement of bridges (and other structures) and street lighting. The integrated transport block funding can be spent on improvements to the transport network such as junction improvements, road safety projects, bus stop shelters and kerbing, cycle route schemes or new pedestrian crossings. Neither of these capital funding blocks can be spent on initiatives that have a significant ongoing revenue cost, such as supported bus services, concessionary fares, travel planning or school crossing patrols.

1.7. The proposed schemes are identified in Appendix 1 – LTP Delivery Plan 2023/26. These schemes have been identified by programme managers using data from a variety of sources including:

- analysis of technical data including road condition data, accident statistics and asset life-cycle planning information
- review of any recent and relevant public and councillor requests
- monitoring and review of previously delivered schemes

1.8. Projects are prioritised based on statutory duties, existing commitments to contribute towards other projects and the potential impact that the scheme will have on addressing the eight LTP challenges. Following this prioritisation exercise the draft programme is reviewed by Assistant Directors and Leadership Team before consideration by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport and the Economy Scrutiny Panel ahead of formal consideration at Cabinet.

1.9. In order to comply with the DfT requirements and to ensure that the LTP programme is robust and can flex to current requirements and changing future priorities, the programme includes schemes to be delivered over the next three financial years. This allows for a balanced programme to be presented with reference to the available budget allocation whilst retaining the ability to switch schemes between years if conditions as required.

1.10. Within each year the scheduling of schemes is determined by several factors including the desire to avoid conflicts with major events, the wish to deliver

schemes within the vicinity of schools outside of term-time and the requirements to deliver most maintenance schemes during periods of good weather to minimise the possibility of weather-related disruption. Where possible, schemes of a similar nature, or within a similar geographical area, are combined to achieve economies of scale, increase value for money and reduced disruption for the travelling public.

2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 2.1. The LTP is closely aligned with the Council's strategic outcomes of Stronger Economy and Stronger Communities and as such supports (and is supported by) other key Council strategies such as the Local Plan and the NELC Carbon Roadmap. It therefore presents a low strategic risk.
- 2.2. The LTP capital programme is fully funded via grants from Government and is delivered in a way that retains flexibility to move schemes around within the lifetime of the three-year delivery plan and as such presents a low financial risk.
- 2.3. Financial risks are managed via a monthly co-ordination meeting and the use of a monthly highlight report where current project costs are anticipated to exceed the initial budget cost +10% or +£10,000. In these cases, authorisation to proceed with these schemes is sought from the Operations Director (Equans) and the Assistant Director for Housing and Infrastructure (NELC) before committing funding.
- 2.4. The way in which the delivery of the LTP programme has been developed over time significantly reduces the risk of non or poor delivery. At an early stage all schemes are scrutinised to ensure that they are in line with the LTP local transport challenges. Then as the project moves through the delivery phase there are several safeguards built into the process to ensure quality delivery, these include gateway signoffs at key stages and the requirement for all schemes to follow NELC procurement guidelines. The risk of non or poor delivery is therefore low.
- 2.5. Each scheme is subject to an individual communication plan which seeks to promote the positive benefits of the scheme and mitigate any negative aspects. To minimise this risk the Council and Equans have identified guidelines concerning scheme communications. These include the guidelines on how and when public consultation / engagement needs to happen as well as identifying appropriate messaging at key stages of scheme progression.
- 2.6. Overall delivery of the annual LTP capital programme is not wholly without risk but there are comprehensive measures in place including an annual audit of LTP expenditure to ensure compliance with requirements and further reduce risk.
- 2.7. The importance of robust planning and delivery of the capital programme is critical as the council forecasts its borrowing and investment decisions based on the assumed spending and delivery plans of the programme. The Council and its delivery partner Equans follow good practice and have developed a range of reserve schemes which can be substituted should there be any delay in the programmed schemes.

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1. When developing the annual LTP programme, programme managers consider a wide range of potential schemes, considering the likely impact on the LTP challenges as well as other criteria specific to individual programme areas. In doing so, they develop a comprehensive list of schemes that address our responsibilities as a local highway authority and support the delivery of the Council's Local Plan and other key strategies.
- 3.2. There is flexibility within the programme to consider changes to the list of schemes to be delivered within the year where there is an appropriate level of priority or urgency to the proposed scheme. Where amendments are necessary, they will be subject to support by the Operations Director (Equans) and the Assistant Director for Housing and Infrastructure (NELC), prior seeking the Portfolio Holders approval.

4. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1. Successfully delivering the programme will have a positive reputational/communication impact, as the delivery of the schemes in the programme will result in improved highway conditions, road safety and accessibility outcomes.
- 4.2. The management of individual schemes seeks to promote positive reputational and communications aspects whilst putting in place appropriate measures to mitigate any negative aspects of each scheme. An ongoing communications plan including a pro-active approach to engagement with residents, businesses, and Councillors, regarding individual schemes, has been agreed by the Council's Communications teams. This approach is complemented by the release of good news stories to highlight successful delivery of elements of the programme.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1. To deliver a balanced programme, the indicative funding split advised by the DfT for the maintenance block and the guidelines agreed in the delivery plan for the integrated transport element are used as a starting point for the annual programme. The table below shows the split (of the total grant received) between the programme areas, although these are only indicative, and the final amount of funding allocated to each programme area is dependent on the level of grant income and the assessment of schemes proposed for delivery.

Programme area	Budget split
Carriageway & Footway maintenance	55%
Highway structures	11%
Street lighting	4%
Traffic & Road safety	17%
Public transport	3%
Active travel	5%
Other	5%

- 5.2. There will be nil effect on long-term Council budgets. Any year-on-year over or

underspends result in an appropriate adjustment being made to the following years LTP initial budget.

6. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS

The report does not contain any specific opportunities or implications relating to children and young people in the Borough, above those associated with the general public. There are no corporate parenting implications associated with any recommendations or proposals previously identified.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. Delivery of the LTP annual Capital Programme recognises the importance of the environment and includes schemes that have the potential to enable and encourage more sustainable forms of transport such as cycling, walking and public transport.
- 7.2. The programme also includes support to increase the number of Electric Vehicle Charge Points and measures to address traffic congestion issues which have the potential to reduce the environmental harm associated with slow moving or stationary traffic.
- 7.3. The design and delivery of schemes seek to include measures which will result in net environmental gain, for example the introduction of sustainable drainage improvements alongside road maintenance works. The use of renewable and recyclable materials as part of sustainable construction methods further helps to reduce the overall environmental impact of schemes.

8. CONSULTATION WITH SCRUTINY

The Economy Scrutiny Panel have considered this report and the LTP Delivery Plan 2023/26 on 28 February 2023. The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport has also received regular briefings in relation to the development of the 2023/24 capital programme.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The 2023/24 programme is to be funded through external grant funding received from the Department of Transport, as outlined within section 1.
- 9.2 Future year schemes will be subject to grant allocations and approval of funding within the Council's Capital Investment Programme.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Immediate legal implications arising will be around the terms and conditions of external grant funding and the completion of funding agreements and ancillary documentation. Legal Services will support this process, ensuring the interests of the Council are protected.
- 10.2 As individual projects arise throughout the delivery phase, Legal Services will continue to support colleagues.
- 10.3 The delegations sought are appropriate to an exercise of this nature.

11. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct HR implications contained within this report.

12. WARD IMPLICATIONS

The delivery of the LTP capital programme affects all wards.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Appendix 1 LTP Delivery Plan 2023/26

14. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

- Carolina Borgstrom - Director for Economy, Environment and Infrastructure, North East Lincolnshire Council (01472) 32 6207
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