

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 8th April 2010

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment and Economy

SUBJECT: Transport Capital Implementation Programme 2010/11

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval to the inclusion of the 2010/11 Transport Capital Implementation Programme into the Council's 2010/11 Capital Programme.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Executive Board recommends the Council to approve:

(1) The incorporation of the Transport Implementation Programme for 2010/11, (Shown in Appendix A), in the sum of £9,412,114 into the Council's 2010/11 Capital Programme.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1.1 During the period of the first Local Transport Plan (LTP, (2001/2 – 2005/6) the amount of LTP funding allocated was, in part, dependant on annual assessments of the progress that each authority had made in delivering its LTP.

3.1.2 However, the commencement of the second LTP (2006/7 – 2010/11), (LTP2) brought with it a much less rigorous reporting requirement, based upon a collaborative approach between the DfT and the local authorities, to enable weaknesses in progress to be jointly addressed and strengths built upon.

3.1.2 This new approach required the de-coupling of the link between funding and performance, which resulted in the DfT, in its November 2007 settlement letter confirming the block allocations for the period 2008/9 – 2010/11 for both Integrated Transport Capital and Highways Capital Maintenance.

3.2 LTP Integrated Transport Allocation

3.2.1 Appendix A sets out the proposed schemes and interventions which in 2010/11 will contribute to the delivery of the Shared Transport Priorities, and Regional & Local Priorities contained in the Local Transport Plan and the Mid-Term Review. In addition to the

allocations for local safety schemes, walking, cycling and transport, specific funding has been made available to continue improvement schemes at Hough Green and Widnes Railway Stations.

3.2.2 The Integrated Transport Allocation is £64,000 less than last year (3% reduction) which has resulted in a trimming of the budgets across the various initiatives. **The integrated Transport allocation for 2010/11 is £1,767,000.**

3.3 Highways Capital Maintenance

3.3.1 Three-year allocations for the Highways Capital Maintenance Block were based on a new formula, which were notified in the 2007 settlement letter. These allocations were between 11% & 16% less than indicative allocations previously announced for LTP2 maintenance programmes, although the allocation for 2010/11, the final year of the settlement is £167,000 higher than last year (an 8% increase). **The Highways Capital Maintenance allocation for 2010/11 is £2,190,000.**

3.3.2 In addition to the Block allocation, Halton was also allocated £14,288,000 of additional funding from the national Primary Route Network (PRN) Bridge Strengthening and Maintenance allocation. (See paragraph 3.5 below). This has enabled the Highways Capital Maintenance allocation to be strongly biased towards road maintenance. For 2010/11 this will again permit a substantial programme of carriageway and footway maintenance to be implemented across the Borough. However, it should be noted that initial indications from the DfT are that highway capital budgets are likely to be significantly reduced in future years and this could potentially have serious resource and performance implications for the service.

3.3.3 Last year, the Board were informed of a proposed re-profiling of the Road Maintenance element of the Highways Capital Maintenance Block, aimed at increasing the resources available for footway maintenance in order address problems which had been identified by condition surveys and performance indicators. In 2009/10 thirty-six footway reconstruction schemes were implemented across the Borough, a substantial increase on previous year's programmes. It is proposed in 2010/11 to maintain this level of funding, to continue to make progress on the replacement of flagged footways in residential areas and the safety benefits which accrue from this work.

3.3.4 The increased allocation for 2010/11 will also enable improvement schemes on Halton's independent footpath network to be brought forward. The proposed 30% increase on last year's independent footpath budget will allow reconstruction, resurfacing and drainage improvement works to address various problems including tree-root

damage, landscape area wash-down and flooding, which have been identified and raised by members.

- 3.3.5 The condition of Halton's carriageways, particularly those forming the classified road network, remains good and Halton continues to rate highly in comparison with other Authorities for this performance indicator. However, the two recent severe winters has undoubtedly had an effect on our roads with an increased number of potholes and carriageway defects which have occurred over the winter period. Higher levels of revenue expenditure on the winter maintenance service during the two year period 2008/10 has to an extent been compensated by reduced spend on routine highway repairs. The combination of these factors has resulted in additional pressures and need for structural maintenance. It is proposed to increase the budget share for carriageway structural maintenance by around 20% to enable us to begin to address these issues.

3.4 Detailed Implementation Programme

- 3.4.1 It was agreed at the Executive Board Meeting 2nd March 2006 that the authority to agree each year's detailed implementation programme of the LTP 2006/7 – 2010/11 be delegated to the Strategic Director, Environment, (now the Strategic Director Environment and Economy) in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning Transportation and Development (now the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal) (Minute EXB181),
- 3.4.2 The individual schemes for the Integrated Transport and Highway Maintenance Blocks will be drawn from the programmes included in LTP2 and shown in Appendix A

3.5 Bridge Strengthening and Maintenance on the Primary Route Network

- 3.5.1 Halton was allocated £14,288,000 of additional funding for use between 2008/9 and 2010/11. This was from the national Primary Route Network (PRN) Bridge Strengthening and Maintenance allocation to enable much needed maintenance and inspection work on the Silver Jubilee Bridge (SJB), to be undertaken. This funding replaces some of that identified in the SJB Major Maintenance Scheme bid, which was submitted in 2006. Government announced on 26th March this year that further funding up to £18,600,000 will be invested in maintenance of the SJB, which will allow the full programme of works to continue, with a scheduled completion date of 2016. **The PRN Bridge Strengthening and Maintenance allocation for 2010/11 is £4,980,000**

3.6 Halton's Capital Programme

- 3.6.1 The Council allocated a total of £300,000 in the capital Programme over the period 2008/09 to 2010/11, aimed at bringing private streets up to adoptable standards. The issues surrounding the adoption of private streets are varied and complex. Whilst the Private Street Works Code provides a precise, detailed framework to work within, it is very prescriptive and can be unwieldy to operate. Establishing current ownership of the street and gaining the agreement of owners to adoption are both key to the successful development of proposals. Furthermore, reaching agreement on an acceptable, affordable scheme and then determining owner's contributions to the cost of improvement work is fraught with difficulty.
- 3.6.2 In response to resident's requests, we have sought to progress one particular scheme, but have been frustrated by these types of issues, with the result that the capital budget for adoptions has under-spent. Section 228 of the Highways Act provides a mechanism for the Street Works Authority to undertake works in a private street and, subject to notice to the owners of the street, to adopt as publicly maintainable. This approach would not require financial contribution to the scheme from the owners.
- 3.6.3** Approval to agree the programme of work for adoptions has been delegated to the Strategic Director Environment and Economy, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning Transportation and Development (now the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal) (Minute EXB181). It is proposed that a priority list of prospective streets for adoption, based upon agreed assessment criteria (including; ownership, public benefit and affordability) be prepared for approval, which will form the basis for a programme of improvements and adoption in 2010/11. **The Council's Capital Programme for bringing streets to adoptable standard for 2010/11 is £100,000**
- 3.6.4** The Council's 'Flood Defence' Programme comprises a range of improvement and refurbishment schemes. Last year it was anticipated that part of the capital allocation would be used as a possible contribution to a planned Environment Agency (EA) flood relief scheme for Keckwick Brook at Sandymoor. Keckwick Brook is classified as a Main River and comes under the responsibility and control of the EA. Unfortunately the EA have not yet been in a position to progress this comprehensive scheme, although there was a possibility to implement one element of it, the provision of a silt trap for Keckwick Brook.
- 3.6.5 In November 2009 Halton submitted an 'Early Action' Bid for DEFRA funding that would be matched by allocations of £50,000 from the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) as adjacent landowners, and from Halton's Capital Programme. Whilst the bid did not exactly fit the strict DEFRA criteria for surface water flooding, the EA accepted that the scheme was worthy of a bid. Unfortunately, we learned on 19th March that the bid had not been successful. However, the HCA

allocation was also tied into the adoption of the pedestrian subway which forms part of the Keckwick Brook culvert and flood relief infrastructure. In order to allow adoption to proceed, the HCA have paid this sum to Halton and it will be held in the capital budget pending the design and implementation of an acceptable scheme to mitigate the effects of flooding.

3.6.6 Work will continue to de-silt culverts and highway/land drainage systems at known flooding 'Hotspots' throughout the Borough. **The Council's capital 'Flood Defence' Programme for 2010/11 is in the sum of £100,000**

3.6.7 The Council's capital funding allocation for street lighting will be used for the renewal of street lighting equipment (lighting columns, lanterns, signs and bollards, etc.) and will address the replacement of age expired equipment and enable improvements to save energy. **The Council's 'Street Lighting' Capital Programme for 2010/11 is in the sum of £200,000**

3.7 Area based Grant

3.7.1 Halton's Road Safety Grant, which is funding used to help support the Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership was also confirmed in the November 2007 Settlement Letter. The revenue element of this grant, is incorporated into the area based grant and Halton's allocation within this for 2010/11 is £87,837. **The capital element of the Road Safety Grant for 2010/11, which will be paid as direct capital grant, is in the sum of £75,114.**

3.7.2 Halton continues to be allocated an element of De-trunked Roads Maintenance Grant, which is used to maintain the Widnes Eastern Relief Road. However, indications from the DfT are that it is unlikely that this grant will be available for maintenance of this road and associated infrastructure in future years. This would place significant pressure on existing budgets. The De-trunked Roads Maintenance Revenue Grant for 2010/11 is £219,175, which will also be included in the area based grant allocation

3.8 The final Transport Capital Implementation Programme for 2010/11 will be in-line with the capital budget to be agreed by the Council. This programme will be included in the Highways, Transportation and Logistics Department's Service Plan.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The programmes of work to deliver the strategies are contained within the Council's second Local Transport Plan, which was approved by the Executive Board on 22nd June 2006.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 **Resource Implications** – The report outlines the programmes of work to be implemented during 2010/11, which are proposed to be the subject of detailed approval by the Strategic Director Environment and Economy, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal.

5.2 **Social Inclusion & Sustainability** – The LTP is targeted at improving transport opportunities for those without access to private cars and has therefore positive impacts on social inclusion and sustainability issues.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton**

The 2010/11 Transport Capital Implementation Programme will assist children and young people in accessing services in the Borough and improve road safety.

6.2 **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

Measures contained within the 2010/11 Transport Capital Implementation Programme are expected to improve access to employment, training, and learning facilities within the Borough thereby contributing to the Council's efforts to tackle unemployment, worklessness and the problems associated with the current economic downturn.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

The 2010/11 Transport Capital Implementation Programme will help to encourage local communities to adopt more healthy lifestyles through the introduction of measures to increase the use of cycling and walking for local journeys and which could help address health problems such as obesity.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

The 2010/11 Transport Capital Implementation Programme incorporates measures to reduce road casualties in the Borough, to improve road safety and to provide a safe and serviceable highway network.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

The 2010/11 Transport Capital Implementation Programme will continue to support the ongoing regeneration of Halton, although funding is not proposed to be targeted at specific regeneration initiatives, during 2010/11.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 A risk associated with the report is the failure to deliver against the Transport Capital Implementation Programme. This risk will be

managed through regular progress meetings with senior managers to enable early action to be taken, should the need arise.

- 7.2 In addition, there is a risk that the transport related funding that has been pooled into the area based pot will not be fully allocated for transport measures. If this is the case, then it will not be possible to undertake all of the works proposed.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 Accessibility and connectivity are essential issues for equality and diversity and every effort is made to facilitate barrier free movement around the Borough. Particular emphasis is given to improving access for people with disabilities and to education and training, employment, health, shopping and leisure facilities, which are key services impacting on quality of life.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Three Year Local Transport Capital Settlement (2008/09) Letter from DfT Dated 27 November 2007	Highways Transportation and Logistics Department, Rutland House, Halton Lea, Runcorn	Dave Cunliffe
Halton Borough Council, Local Transport Plan 2006/07 to 2010/11	Highways Transportation and Logistics Department, Rutland House, Halton Lea, Runcorn	Dave Cunliffe

Appendix A**TRANSPORT CAPITAL IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME 2010/11**

LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN ELEMENT	£000
Highways Capital Maintenance Allocation	
Bridge Assessment, Strengthening & Maintenance	
Bridge Assessment	25
Bridge Strengthening	100
Minor Bridge Works (SJB Complex)	100
Other Bridges	275
Sub total	500
Road Maintenance	
Structural Maintenance of Carriageways	550
Independent Footpath Network	180
Footway Reconstruction	720
Lighting	170
Cycleways	70
Sub total	1690
Total for Bridge & Highway Maintenance	2190
LTP Integrated Transport Allocation	
Local Safety Schemes:	150
Quality Corridors:	
Walking	200
Cycling	175
Bus Route Improvements	242
Sub total	617
Interventions Outside Quality Corridors:	
Cycling	105
Walking	65
Bus Interchanges	215
Integrated Transport including Forward Planning	265
Intelligent Traffic Systems	40
Sub total	690

Other Improvements:	
Rail Station Improvements	
Hough Green	250
Widnes	60
Beechwood (design)	0
Direct Contribution to Regeneration	0
Real Time Information	0
Sub total	310
Total for Integrated Transport	1767
Halton's Capital Programme	
Adoptions	100
Flood Defence	100
Street Lighting	200
Total for Halton's Capital Programme	400
Road Safety Grant – Contribution to Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership (Capital only)	75.114
PRN Bridge Strengthening & Maintenance	
Bridge Maintenance (on SJB Complex)	4580
Other Bridges	400
Bridge Assessment	0
Sub total	4980
Total Capital Programme 2009/10	9412.114