

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 13th March 2025

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Executive Director Environment and Regeneration

**PORTFOLIO:** Environment and Urban Renewal

**SUBJECT:** Additional Highway Grant Allocations

**WARD(S)** Borough-wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 This report seeks Executive Board approval to accept capital funding from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCR CA) in compliance with Council Standing Orders.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDED: That**

- 1. The grants for Runcorn Busway and the Local Highway Maintenance Funding 2025/26 are formally accepted;**
- 2. Delegated powers are provided to the Director - Planning and Transport, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Environment and Urban Renewal, to deal with the Grant Funding Agreement(s) described above; and**
- 3. Delegated powers are provided to the Director - Planning and Transport, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Environment and Urban Renewal, to deal with any matters relating to procurement and the operation and delivery of these agreements.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Via the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA), Halton will receive a further grant of £1,233,766 for the Runcorn Busway Cycleway Scheme. This additional grant is to be utilised on the remaining design and utility diversion works, that will prepare the way for construction in 2 years' time, expected to be funded via the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement 2.

3.2 In addition, advanced notification of a 2025/26 'Local Highways Maintenance Funding Allocations' has been given to the LCR Combined Authority, to be received in April 2025 (part of the Government's 'funding uplift') (see letter in Appendix 1). Halton's

allocation of this funding is expected be £995,895.90. The notification letter explains this funding is “*not just for fixing potholes, but for resurfacing roads and cycleways, mending broken pavements, and looking after bridges, tunnels, retaining walls and other structures*”.

3.3 The letter also states that “25% of the funding uplift for 2025/26 will be contingent on local highway authorities demonstrating compliance with certain criteria aimed at driving best practice and continual improvement in highways maintenance practice. Further details of this will be set out in due course.” At this time, further details have not been received from Government.

3.4 The LCR Combined Authority have requested formal grant acceptance for the highway maintenance funding in advance of receipt to ensure funding expenditure can start as soon as possible in the new financial year. Funding is expected to be spent by March 2026.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Formal grant acceptance is required to comply with Procurement Standing Orders.

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The schemes to be delivered by these capital grant funding allocations have no requirement for Council match funding.

#### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL’S PRIORITIES**

##### **6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence:**

A well maintained highways network ensures that the public can travel quickly and easily around the borough and beyond. The construction of cycleways enables a health choice for the public when selecting travel modes, and not only for commuting but also leisure purposes.

##### **6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy:**

Workforce accessibility to jobs and amenities supports the local economy.

##### **6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families:**

Everyone benefits from a safe and low carbon transport network.

6.4 **Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need:**  
A well maintained highways network ensures that the public can travel quickly and easily. Cycle routes give everyone, including those on low incomes travel options for safe and commodious options to travel for work and other opportunities.

6.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future:**  
Active travel in all its forms supports a greener future by reducing carbon based transport miles and their associated carbon footprint.

6.6 **Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community:**  
A well maintained highways network contributes to community cohesion and social well-being.

## 7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Formal acceptance of these grants allows an expedient start to scheme delivery. Failure to accept this funding would mean the associated schemes could not be delivered.

## 8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 There are no direct equality and diversity issues associated with this report.

## 9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Highway funding is generally to be invested to likely utilise materials which have high carbon values, such as bituminous and concrete products. However, the service aims to use lower carbon materials if possible, such as warm mix asphalt rather than hot mix which reduces carbon emissions. Similarly proprietary materials are used where they are suitable which overall as a process have been independently evaluated as carbon neutral.

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

10.1 Funding letter to LA Chief Execs, 20<sup>th</sup> December 2024.