

Report to: Lead Member Transport and Environment

Date of meeting: 16 March 2020

By: Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

Title: Capital Programme for Local Transport Improvements 2020/21

Purpose: To seek approval for the proposed allocation of funds to a specific programme of local transport improvements

RECOMMENDATION: The Lead Member is recommended to:

- 1) Agree the programme of local transport improvements for 2020/21 set out in Appendix 1 and 2 to this report; and**
 - 2) Agree the allocation of County Council capital funding, development contributions and Local Growth Fund monies towards specific improvements identified in the 2020/21 programme.**
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1. Background Information

1.1 The capital programme for local transport improvements sets out a proposed programme of schemes to be developed and delivered in various locations across the county in 2020/21. The programme is funded from a number of sources including a capital allocation from the County Council, development contributions and funding secured from the Government's Local Growth Fund (LGF) through the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP). A copy of the draft capital programme is included in Appendix 1.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 In May 2011, the County Council approved the Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2011 – 2026 which identified the Council's strategy for transport investment. The strategic approach adopted in the LTP is to invest in infrastructure which delivers sustainable economic growth and improves safety, security and health. This will be achieved by developing schemes which tackle congestion, improve safety for all road users and where practical and appropriate, promote sustainable travel on foot, by bike and by public transport.

2.2 The LTP is complemented by a series of Implementation Plans setting out delivery proposals in line with the priorities set out in the plan of supporting sustainable economic growth and improving safety, health and security for five-year time periods over its lifetime. The first of the Implementation Plans covered the period 2011/12 to 2015/16; the second Implementation Plan covers the period 2016/17 to 2020/21 and was approved by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment at his decision-making meeting on 14 March 2016. The content of the capital programme for local transport improvements is consistent with the second LTP Implementation Plan.

2.3 The programme for 2020/21 has been reviewed to take account of the priorities set out in the Council Plan, LTP and its associated Implementation Plan, as well as ensuring the

continuation of schemes commenced in the previous financial year and the availability of external contributions.

2.4 As part of the LTP and its Implementation Plans, and with a single budget for Local Transport and Road Safety schemes, a more robust, evidence based prioritisation process has been developed to assess requests received for all types of schemes. This prioritisation framework was approved by the Lead Member for Economy, Transport and Environment in September 2011. One of the key elements of this process involves assessing the extent to which scheme requests would meet the objectives of the LTP. These objectives include improving economic competitiveness and growth, improving safety and tackling climate change and demonstrate how our LTP and capital programme for local transport improvements can support the County Council's priority of sustainable economic growth as well as contributing towards the target of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050.

2.5 The amount of funding for integrated transport in the County Council's capital programme for 2020/21 is £3.329m. This allocation was approved by Cabinet on 28 January 2020. Additional external funding, such as development contributions and Local Growth Fund monies, increase the overall level of funding available to implement local transport improvements in the agreed programme by £9.167m in 2020/21. There are constraints on how this external funding may be used, as it can only be used to fund specific improvements in specific geographical areas. In addition, the terms of some funding streams only enable the construction cost of a scheme to be funded, with the design costs having to be funded from County Council resources. In addition, £78,000 has been allocated towards Community Match schemes with a further £78,000 of investment from community contributions set out in Appendix 2.

2.6 A number of the schemes in the capital programme are to be funded from the Government's Local Growth Fund. A total of over £66m of funding has been made available from Rounds 1, 2 and 3 of the LGF for transport projects in East Sussex up to 2020/21. This money has been made available following the submission of the Growth Deals by the South East and Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnerships. Some of this funding is for delivering major transport infrastructure (e.g. Queensway Gateway Road and Newhaven Port Access Road) required to unlock housing and/or employment sites. Funding has also been awarded for the delivery of the following packages of local transport improvements which will support the housing and employment growth in the growth corridors around Eastbourne/South Wealden and Bexhill/Hastings:

- Hastings and Bexhill Movement and Access Package (this comprises previous allocations for the junction improvement and walking/cycling packages)
- Eastbourne and South Wealden walking and cycling package
- Hailsham, Polegate and Eastbourne Sustainable Transport Corridor
- Eastbourne Town Centre access and improvement package

2.7 These packages of local transport improvements will be delivered through the capital programme in a phased approach, with the majority of the funding having been allocated in the years between 2017/18 and 2020/21. The South East Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Board agreed at its meeting on 31 January 2020 to endorse the extension of certain Local Growth Fund projects being delivered beyond 31 March 2021 subject to agreement by SELEP Board and SELEP Accountability Board. The LGF packages, which form part of the capital programme of local transport improvements, were also highlighted to the LEP as projects where spend beyond March 2021 was anticipated. Decisions on the continuation of spend beyond March 2021 on these LGF projects will be reported and considered by the LEP in the first quarter of 2020/21. If this is agreed, then work will continue to ensure expenditure on already committed schemes in each of the packages. The revised spend forecasts for beyond March 2021 will be included in the Local Growth Fund programme update report to be considered by the Lead Member for Strategic Management and Economic Development at his decision-making meeting in June 2020.

2.8 Historically, the capital programme included a separate allocation for road safety measures to fund the implementation of engineering schemes at specific sites identified as having a high crash record. There is a general consensus that the most dangerous sites have been addressed through road safety engineering works. However, targeted engineering measures will continue to be introduced in response to problems identified through the ongoing analysis of crash data. This road safety engineering work will be focused on a corridor approach which aims to introduce a package of measures (e.g. improvements to signing and lining) along high risk sections of routes on our A and B roads where crashes have occurred. Provision has been made for the Road Safety Team to undertake a route enhancement approach to a route(s) where road safety issues have been identified but no specific site or causation factor is evident. Precedence will be given to those sites of highest priority that have the potential to positively impact casualty reduction. The funding may be used in conjunction with other funding, if available, to maximise this impact.

2.9 The draft capital programme was circulated to all Councillors in February 2020 for comments. The comments received from Councillors were considered at a cross-party Member Panel, consisting of Councillors Bowdler, Godfrey Daniel, Grover, and an Independent representative, held on 2 March 2020. The purpose of the Member Panel was to review the draft programme included in Appendix 1 to this report, consider comments received from other Councillors and advise on its content prior to the Lead Member decision-making meeting today.

3. Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 The draft capital programme set out in Appendix 1 represents a balanced programme of improvements which will help deliver not only the objectives of the County Council's Local Transport Plan, but also contribute to achieving broader corporate objectives. It is therefore recommended that the funding approved by County Council, development contributions and Local Growth Fund monies identified to support the programme of local transport improvements for 2020/21 be allocated to the programme of schemes set out in Appendices 1 and 2

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LOCAL MEMBERS

All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None