

Report to: Lead Member for Transport and Environment

Date of meeting: 15 March 2021

By: Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

Title: Capital Programme for Local Transport Improvements 2021/22

Purpose: To seek approval for the proposed allocation of funds to a specific programme of local transport improvements for 2021/22

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Lead Member is recommended to:

(1) Agree the programme of local transport improvements for 2021/22 set out in Appendix 1 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 2021/22 Programme.

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 2021/22. 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 capital programme for 2021/22 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 demonstrating 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. The County Council will be developing its fourth Local Transport Plan during 2021/22 and this will include reviewing the current prioritisation process used to assess requests for schemes for potential inclusion in the capital programme.

2.5 On 9 February 2021 Cabinet approved the allocation of £4.552m in the County Council's capital programme towards Integrated Transport measures. The draft programme allocates £3.973m of the County Council funding available towards delivering local transport projects across the county in 2021/22. 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 to £8.426m in 2021/22. 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.

Local Growth Fund funded packages

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 through various rounds of the Growth Fund to fund transport schemes 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 was secured and has been used to deliver major transport infrastructure (eg. Newhaven Port Access Road and North Bexhill Access Road) required to unlock housing and/or employment sites.

2.7 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

2.8 The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) has agreed the extension of certain Local Growth Fund projects being delivered beyond the end of the growth deal period of 31 March 2021. The LGF packages, which form part of the capital programme of local transport improvements, were highlighted to SELEP as projects where spend beyond March 2021 was anticipated. Consequently, approval has been given by SELEP to spend beyond this date and into 2021/22 and 2022/23.

Road Safety

2.9 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. The number of specific sites identified has reduced over the years and the latest approach combines a mix of site specific and route based interventions. Targeted engineering measures will continue to be introduced in response to problems identified through the ongoing analysis of crash data. Our road safety engineering work will be focussed on low cost traffic management measures

(e.g. improvements to signing and lining) and targeted engineering works at identified sites and high risk sections of our A and B roads where crashes have occurred.

2.10 Provision has been made for the Road Safety Team to undertake a targeted enhancement approach to identified sites and routes where road safety issues have been identified but no specific site or causation factor may be 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.

Consultation on draft programme

2.11 The draft capital programme was circulated to all Councillors in February 2021 for comments. The comments received from Councillors were considered at a cross-party Member Panel, consisting of Councillors Bowdler, Godfrey Daniel, Grover and Shing held on 24 February 2021. 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's decision-making meeting.

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 2021/22 be allocated to the programme of schemes set out in Appendix 1.

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LOCAL MEMBERS

All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None