Report to:	**Lead Member for Transport and Environment**
Date of meeting:	**16 March 2026**
By:	**Director of Communities, Economy and Transport**
Title:	**Programme of Transport Improvements 2026/27**
Purpose:	**To seek approval for the proposed allocation of funds to a specific programme of transport improvements for 2026/27**

RECOMMENDATIONS: **The Lead Member is recommended to:**

(1) agree the draft programme of transport improvements for 2026/27 set out in Appendix 2 to this report;
(2) agree the allocation of County Council funding, development contributions, active travel funding, Bus Grant, Local Growth Fund and Town Deal monies towards specific improvements identified in the 2026/27 programme set out in Appendix 2;
(3) note that the 2026/27 programme of transport improvements will be included in the initial Sussex and Brighton Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA) Local Transport Delivery Plan submitted to Government in March 2026, and the more detailed delivery plan for the period up to 2029/30 to be submitted in September 2026; and
(4) agree the proposed allocation of the bus grant capital allocation up to 2029/30 as set out in Tables 1 and 2 in section 2 of the report which will also feed into the Sussex & Brighton MCCA Local Transport Delivery Plan.

1. Background Information

1.1 The programme for transport improvements sets out the proposed programme of local and major transport schemes to be developed and delivered in various locations across the county in 2026/27. The programme is funded from several sources including consolidated transport funding (capital and revenue) received by the County Council from Government towards integrated transport schemes, development contributions and government's Local Growth funding previously secured from the former South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP). A copy of the draft programme for 2026/27 is included in Appendix 2.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 The East Sussex Local Transport Plan (LTP4) covering the period 2024 to 2050 was adopted by the County Council on 8 October 2024. The LTP4 sets the strategy and policy framework for transport in the county for the next 25 years, and its adoption followed an extensive consultation and engagement process over a two-year period which helped shape the final Plan.

2.2 The LTP4's vision is for 'an inclusive transport system that connects people and places, is decarbonised, safer, resilient, and supports the natural environment, communities, and businesses to be healthy, thrive and prosper'. This will be achieved through an increased emphasis on 'planning for people and places'.

2.3 This means that there will be a focus on enabling and encouraging integrated journeys and reducing the need to travel through land-use and planning policies. These will include encouraging and enabling inclusive and sustainable travel modes (walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport), adopting vehicles with cleaner fuels alongside the utilisation of emerging transport technologies that will help to achieve the Council's and the Council's partners' net-zero ambitions.

2.4 The LTP4 Strategy is supported by an Investment Plan. This sets out the County Council's and the Council's partners' ambitions for delivering the policies and investment priorities to achieve the vision and objectives of LTP4. This includes identified schemes and the types of schemes that the County Council and key partners wish to deliver, subject to funding being secured.

2.5 Whilst there are various schemes in the 2026/27 programme of transport improvements that support the delivery of LTP4 and its principles of 'planning for people and places', there are several legacy schemes which are reflective of the previous LTP3 and its priorities which will need to continue through their development and delivery cycle to construction.

2.6 The introduction of a revised scheme request assessment approved by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment in September 2025 will mean new schemes included in the programme of transport improvements will closely align with delivering the objectives of LTP4.

Draft 2026/27 programme of transport improvements

2.7 Several funding sources - capital and revenue/resource - are available to the County Council towards the delivery of transport improvements in East Sussex for 2026/27. Detailed information on these is set out in Appendix 1.

Consolidated Transport Funding

2.8 The Government has announced consolidated revenue/resource and capital funding for transport for the period between 2026/27 and 2029/30. This brings together various funding grant sources that the County Council previously received annually and now provides longer term certainty of funding, enabling more effective medium-term planning of the development and delivery of transport improvements in the county. The capital grant allocations have been reflected in the Council's capital programme that was approved by the County Council on 10 February 2026.

2.9 The programme will be funded from the following 2026/27 consolidated transport grant funding allocations from Government:

- Capital: local transport grant, active travel, bus grant - £3,958,000
- Revenue: local transport capacity and capability and active travel - £683,000

2.10 The 2026/27 allocations above have been used to inform the development of the 2026/27 programme of transport improvements as set out in Appendix 2.

Other grant funding sources

2.11 In addition to the consolidated transport grant funding set out in section 2.9 above, there are a number of other existing funding sources that are available to support the development and delivery of transport improvements in East Sussex in 2026/27.

Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) – existing bus priority schemes

2.12 Using £8,645,196 of funding slippage from 2025/26, bus priority schemes will be taken forward in 2026/27 on the A259 Seaside and St Anthonys Avenue, Eastbourne; Eastbourne Station (Upperton Road and Station Parade); and A259 Denton Corner, Newhaven.

Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) – Bus Grant capital funding 2026/27 to 2029/30

2.13 East Sussex County Council's (ESCC) bus strategy is set out in the East Sussex Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIP1 and BSIP 2) and the delivery is set out in the East Sussex County Council Bus Service Improvement Delivery plan 2025.

2.14 On 5 December 2025, ESCC was awarded a total of £17,305,288 of Bus Grant capital funding (as set out in Table 1) over 4 years from the Department for Transport (DfT), for future bus grant funding. This report seeks to allocate funds based on the strengths of the BSIP1 and BSIP2 delivery, which will focus on continuing to deliver key successes and to continue to deliver ESCC's strategy and ambitions for bus services in the county. A breakdown of allocations can be found at Appendix 3.

Table 1: East Sussex County Council Bus Grant

	Total	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Capital	**£17,305,288**	£4,199,698	£4,284,114	£4,368,530	£4,452,946

2.15 The proposed allocations of the bus grant capital allocations are shown in Table 2. A key element of the proposed new allocation is to continue the delivery of Bus Priority schemes in the county, (with 68% of the funding being allocated), both through physical provision in the form of bus lanes and through the provision of bus priority at traffic light controlled junctions, as well as continued improvements to bus stop infrastructure and Real Time Information (RTI) provision. The bus grant capital funding is expected to deliver:

- Bus Priority (physical bus lanes): 1 to 2 bus lanes including previously developed schemes – such as Peacehaven/Telscombe – and/or new pipeline schemes
- Traffic Light Priority at up to 40 Junctions;
- 150+ RTI displays - a combination of external powered and battery and internal screens;
- Bus Stop Infrastructure improvements at over 1,250 bus stops
    - from small scale improvements such as bus stop clearways and raised kerbs to the provision of lighting, CCTV and bus shelters.

Table 2: Proposed Indicative Allocation of Capital Bus Grant

Scheme	**Allocation**	
Bus Priority	£7,805,288	45%
Traffic Light Priority (TLP)	£4,000,000	23%
Bus Stop Infrastructure	£3,500,000	20%
RTI	£2,000,000	12%
Total	**£17,305,288**	

Note: these are **indicative** allocations. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Active Travel – capital funding

2.16 Active travel capital funding slippage of £1,103,715 from 2025/26 will enable the continued development and/or delivery in 2026/27 of wider school measures associated with the 3 existing school street schemes (Southover Primary, Lewes; Langney Primary, Eastbourne; All Saints Primary, Sidley); and Memorial roundabout active travel improvements in Eastbourne.

Local Growth Fund and Town Deal

2.17 £2.87m of Local Growth Fund, plus £0.27m in development contributions and £0.236m from the local transport grant, will fund finalising the detailed design and construction of Station Approach, Hastings to be delivered in 2026/27, and Bexhill Cycle Route A across 2026/27 and 2027/28.

2.18 £1.720m of Local Growth Fund will fund finalising the detailed design and construction of the Eastbourne Town Centre to Seafront cycle route and the Horsey Way Cycle Route Phase 1B schemes which will commence in 2026/27, with the Town Centre to Station cycle route continuing into early 2027/28.

Schemes to be funded from development contributions

2.19 External funding in the form of development contributions will continue to be used, as appropriate, to increase the level of funding available to implement transport improvements in the county. There are constraints on how this funding may be applied, as it can only be used on specific schemes in specific geographical areas and some contributions are time limited.

2.20 The total amount of external funding from development contributions (s106 contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy) will amount to £6,277,000 in 2026/27. The vast majority of this, via Community Infrastructure Levy from Wealden, is to deliver the Ersham Road/Diplocks Way/South Road roundabout scheme.

2.21 Officers are continuing to programme the use of existing held s106 contributions across future financial years to support the delivery of transport schemes around the specifics of the funding's user provision. Likewise, as funding bidding rounds are opened, the Council continues to bid for Community Infrastructure funding via the charging authorities (all the borough and district councils except Hastings and the South Downs National Park Authority) to enable the delivery of local and major transport schemes in the respective areas.

Road Safety

2.22 Within the local transport grant element of the programme, there is 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.

2.23 As part of the Strategic Casualty Reduction Programme, targeted engineering measures will continue to be introduced in response to problems identified through the ongoing analysis of crash data. Road safety engineering work is 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 A and B roads where crashes have occurred.

2.24 Funding allocations for 2026/27 of £315,900 to the Casualty Reduction Programme and £112,800 to the Speed Management Interventions Programme have been made in the overall programme.

Consultation on draft 2026/27 programme

2.25 The draft programme and briefing note was circulated by email to all Councillors on 13 February 2026 for review and comment. It was requested that any comments about the programme be reported back through their spokesperson for Transport and Environment. These comments were considered at the cross-party Member Panel consisting of Councillors Daniel, Holt, Redstone, Stephen Shing and Wright on 25 February 2026. Following consideration of the comments and responses provided by officers, the Panel endorsed the draft programme.

Submission of Local Transport Delivery Plan

2.26 The Government's introduction of consolidated transport funding requires local transport authorities to produce and publish a Local Transport Delivery Plan. This plan must outline, at a high level, the schemes the authority intends to prioritise using this funding along with their expected costs.

2.27 In addition to the consolidated funding streams outlined above, the Local Transport Delivery Plan must also set how the authority will use other funding streams including highways maintenance, bus grant revenue, and other bus grant capital funding for measures such as bus stop upgrades, real-time passenger information, and traffic light priority.

2.28 A detailed plan for 2026/27, plus a high-level plan for 2027/28 to 2029/30, must be submitted to Government by 20 March 2026. A full detailed plan for the period up to 2029/30 is required by 18 September 2026. Because East Sussex is part of the Devolution Priority Programme, a single joint plan covering the Sussex and Brighton Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA) area must be submitted on both deadlines and signed off by the MCCA's Section 73 officer. The content of the

2026/27 programme of transport improvements, as well as the bus grant capital allocations over the next four years, will feed into the initial submission of the Local Transport Delivery Plan to Government, via the MCCA, in March 2026.

3. Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 The draft programme of local transport improvements for 2026/27 represents a balanced programme of improvements which supports the key objectives of both the previous Local Transport Plan (LTP3), and the recently adopted Plan (LTP4) and its principles of 'planning for people and places'.

3.2 Whilst there are various schemes in the 2026/27 programme of transport improvements that support the delivery of LTP4 and its principles of 'planning for people and places', there are several legacy schemes which are reflective of the previous LTP3 and its priorities which will need to continue through to construction. The introduction of a revised scheme request assessment approved by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment in September 2025 will mean new schemes included in the programme of transport improvements will closely align with delivering the objectives of LTP4.

3.3 The draft programme was considered and endorsed by the cross-party Member Panel on 25 February 2026. It is therefore recommended that the consolidated funding received by the County Council from Government towards integrated transport schemes, development contributions, active travel funding, Town Deal funding and Local Growth Fund monies for the Eastbourne and South Wealden Walking and Cycling Package and Hastings and Bexhill Movement and Access Package identified to support the capital programme for local transport improvements for 2026/27 be allocated to the respective schemes as set out in Appendix 2.

3.4 The Lead Member is also recommended to note that the 2026/27 programme will feed into the initial Sussex and Brighton Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA) Local Transport Delivery Plan that will be submitted to Government on 20 March 2026, as well as the final detailed delivery plan for 2026/27 to 2029/30 submitted to Government in September 2026. As part of the Local Transport Delivery Plan, the Lead Member is also recommended to approve the proposed allocation of the Bus Grant capital funding for the period up to 2029/30 as set out in Tables 1 and 2 in section 2 of the report.

RUPERT CLUBB
Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

Contact Officer: Andrew Keer
Tel. No. 07876 878370
Email: andrew.keer@eastsussex.gov.uk

LOCAL MEMBERS
All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
None