

25 March 2015		ITEM: 18
Council		
2015/16 Transportation & Highways Capital Programme		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Councillor Oliver Gerrish, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transportation		
Accountable Head of Service: Ann Osola, Head of Highways & Transportation		
Accountable Director: David Bull, Director of Planning & Transportation		
This report is public		

Executive Summary

This report sets out the recommended programme of work which will utilise the funding allocations available to the Highways & Transportation Service within the 2015/16 financial year.

The report covers the capital funding allocations to be received from the Department for Transport annual capital settlement, schemes funded by local development and the Local Growth Fund (LGF). It sets out the proposed programme that the Highways & Transportation Service plans to deliver in the 2015/16 financial year.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That the Highways and Transportation Capital Programme related to the Department for Transport funding allocation for 2015/16 (as detailed in Appendix 1) be approved.**
- 1.2 That the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) measures, developer funded Section 106 schemes and Grays Town Centre Access Improvements, to be delivered in 2015/16, be approved.**
- 1.3 That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning & Transportation, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, to approve the sections which require additional data.**
- 1.4 That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning & Transportation, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, to review and make**

local changes to these programmes during the course of the year taking into account local views and priorities.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 This report seeks approval for the 2015/16 Highways & Transport Capital Programme. The programme sets out how the Council will prioritise available funding, from the Department for Transport (DfT) allocation, to maintain and enhance the highways, transport infrastructure and service provision within the Borough. It also establishes the provision for variation to the programme and the means by which requests for additional works are considered and authorised.
- 2.2 In addition to the DfT settlement, the Council has been successful in its bid to the Local Growth Fund (LGF). This means that the Council has additional funding to deliver a further £750,000 package of Local Sustainable Transport Fund capital measures and a package of transport improvement measures for Grays, which was the subject of a report approved by Cabinet on 17th December 2014.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 This report covers the main sources of funding which make up the annual allocation for the 2014/15 Highways & Transportation capital programme. The DfT annual settlement provides the allocations for Maintenance and Integrated Transport schemes, while a separate allocation is identified for Local Growth Fund capital schemes. It should be noted that Section 106 developer contributions are identified.

Department for Transport capital settlement

- 3.2 The Department for Transport (DfT) confirmed that Thurrock Council will receive a total capital settlement of **£2,964,000** for transport improvements in the 2015/16 financial year. This settlement is allocated as **£971,000** for Integrated Transport schemes (e.g. bus priority, safety management and cycling schemes) and **£1,993,000** for Maintenance. This allocation is not 'ring fenced' for spend in the specific areas set out by DfT and Local Authorities have some flexibility to manage these allocations. As a result, our funding allocations may be amended slightly, within the total allocation, to meet local needs on the network.
- 3.3 The 2015/16 DfT settlement has been allocated to themes within the capital programme to ensure that maintenance and scheme improvement priorities are delivered. The works programme has been developed utilising the Thurrock Transport Strategy and supporting Implementation Plan which set out where transport priorities will be focused, taking account of national guidance and the views of local residents, communities, partners and stakeholders.

- 3.4 The benefits of some schemes will overlap due to the nature of work delivered. For example, traffic management schemes will deliver air quality benefits while walking and cycling schemes can help to reduce congestion and improve local air quality. Table 1 below provides a summary of how the funding is allocated across the works programme. **The full programme of works is attached at Appendix 1.**

Table 1

Maintenance	
Bridge Repair and Strengthening	£428,000
Structural Maintenance A class roads	£450,000
Structural Maintenance B & C class roads	£250,000
Structural maintenance Unclassified roads	£130,000
Footway / Cycleway Maintenance	£275,000
Street Lighting	£150,000
Other Infrastructure (including drainage)	£310,000
	£1,993,000
Integrated Transport	
Congestion	£466,000
Air Quality & Climate Change	£75,000
Accessibility	£150,000
Safety	£280,000
	£971,000

Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) measures

- 3.5 Following the bidding process for the Local Growth Fund, Thurrock Council has a further £1,000,000 capital budget allocation to be delivered over the next two years. £750,000 has been allocated to deliver LSTF schemes, supporting sustainable transport choices, within 2015/16. A further £250,000 will be allocated to measures in 2016/17.
- 3.6 The LSTF package consists of small-scale Public Transport route improvements, Automatic Vehicle Location enhancements (real time data), bus stop enhancements and focused improvements within Grays Town Centre (supporting the wider programme which was agreed by Cabinet in December 2014). Details of the LSTF programme are attached in Appendix 2. It should be noted that while more than £1m of schemes have been identified, this report is only seeking approval to deliver schemes equating to £750,000, which will be delivered in 2015/16. Separate approval will be sought if additional funding is made available.
- 3.7 Table 2 below provides a broad summary of how the LGF funding is to be allocated across the works programme. Further details of the LGF LSTF programme is contained in Appendix 2.

Table 2

Local Growth Fund LSTF programme	
Passenger Transport Unit Capital Spend prospective sites	£429,000
Potential sites for RTPI (AVL) Installation	£32,000
Bus Shelter locations	£120,000
LGF Joint TGSE LSTF Project	£460,000
Total	£1,041,000

(Note: The Council has identified measures in excess of £1m in order to utilise any unallocated LGF funding)

Grays Town Centre Access Improvements

3.8 In December 2014, Cabinet approved the development and implementation of a £1.4m package of experimental measures that will address key access issues in Grays. Broadly, the measures that were approved for development and delivery were:

- improvements to the existing road network and one-way system,
- additional and enhanced cycle links,
- a public realm scheme at the northern end of the High St (including two-way working on Orsett Road),
- reduced through-traffic on key routes,
- two way access on Crown Road
- gateway schemes at key entry points and
- improved access to key destinations in the town centre.

3.9 The measures to be delivered in Grays are split across budgets identified in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

Developer contributions (S106)

3.10 The Council will also receive developer contributions for the 2015/16 programme. Contributions are received from developers in order to enhance the transport network and to fund required infrastructure. There is some flexibility in the final allocations, due to the nature of the developer agreements. Appendix 1 sets out the schemes that the Council intends to deliver.

Prioritisation

3.11 The prioritisation process for the determination of highway and transport schemes was agreed by Cabinet and follows DfT guidance. The process sets out the means by which scheme proposals can be assessed transparently against policy, deliverability, acceptability and value-for-money. This process has been used to prioritise the schemes within the 2015/16 programme.

Variation

- 3.12 The Council receives regular requests for maintenance and improvements to be carried out on the transport network. These requests are prioritised using the agreed scheme determination process with the responsibility to authorise recommendations delegated to the Director of Planning & Transportation in consultation with the Leader of the Council or the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Highways & Transportation.
- 3.13 Whilst there is limited flexibility within the programme once agreed, in some cases requests will need to be implemented within the current financial year, rather than held pending a future programme. This might include works to protect the public from risk of injury, for example.
- 3.14 Similarly, schemes that are listed within the approved composite programme may be subject to cost changes. This might occur for a number of internal or external reasons, including increase to the scope of a project (to enable better outcome or value) and reassessment of the cost estimate for the works following local investigation or from stakeholder consultation.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 Approving the recommendations set out in this report will enable the 2015/16 Highways & Transportation Capital Programme, including the LGF programme, S106 and Grays Town Centre measures, to be implemented. The delivery of the programme will ensure the ongoing maintenance of the highway network and improvements to transport infrastructure and service provision within the Borough.
- 4.2 Delivery of the LGF section of the programme will support the Council's ongoing commitment to sustainable travel and Smarter Choices by enhancing key locations and public transport routes across the borough.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 The capital programme has been developed as a result of the extensive community and stakeholder engagement process for the Thurrock Transport Strategy and the Implementation Plan. The maintenance element of the programme has been developed in response to findings of specialist surveys relating to the highway network.
- 5.2 Local residents, interest groups and key stakeholders have been influential in providing the evidence base that has informed the development of the Highways and Transport Capital Programme, and all Ward Members will be advised of works affecting their respective wards.
- 5.3 The LGF element of the programme was subject to extensive consultation with local residents, key stakeholders, transport user groups and neighbouring

authorities as the LGF bid was developed. The LSTF Project Board has been involved in the development of the LSTF programme and the prioritised schemes that are to be taken forward for delivery in 2015/16.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 The Highways and Transportation Capital Programme will have an impact upon the local community within Thurrock. It will improve and enhance the transport network across the borough making it safer, less congested and more accessible to local people thereby promoting investment, job creation and access to skills and learning. Delivery of the programme will assist Thurrock's aspiration to create a great place for learning and opportunity, fulfilling its socio-economic potential and enhancing its sense of 'place' where businesses and retail grow and where vibrant and diverse communities live, meet and do business.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mark Terry**
Finance Officer (Capital)

Calculations have been provided, based on the DfT Decision Letter, confirming final allocations for 2015/16. The cost of implementation will be contained within the funding announced by Government or built into future capital programmes.

The Council's LGF allocation for LSTF schemes to be delivered in 2015/16 has also been identified within this report. £750,000 of LGF funding will be allocated within the 2015/16 financial year with a further £250,000 to be allocated in 2016/17 or future years.

Section 106 schemes will be delivered within the budgets identified. The funding required to deliver the Grays Town Centre access improvements was agreed by Cabinet in December 2014. The report stated that if the expenditure is to be funded from grant, to be received at some point in the future, the Council does not need to prudentially borrow in the first instance. However, the Council must wait for confirmation that the grant can be used retrospectively.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Alison Stuart**
Principal Solicitor

Section 108 of the Transport Act 2000 provides that a local authority must develop policies in a strategy for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport facilities. Because these policies supersede the policies in the adopted Thurrock Transport Strategy they have to be adopted by the Council.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
**Community Development and Equalities
Manager**

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the 2015/16 Highways & Transport Capital Programme. It recognises the transport interventions that will support improved quality of life in the Borough and its social and economic regeneration as well as transport priorities for, congestion & CO2 mitigation, accessibility, safety, air quality and climate change adaptation.

Access to services and the safety of residents have been highlighted and will be addressed throughout the plan period. The evidence base for the Thurrock Transport Strategy and Implementation Plan identify specific areas of the borough and population where implementation will be prioritised to improve road safety, air quality and access to services, taking account of legislative considerations such as the Equality Act. These have been applied to the capital programme.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Thurrock Transport Strategy
- Implementation Plan
- LGF business case
- December Cabinet Report – Item 23

9. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1 – 2015/16 Highways & Transportation Capital Programme
- Appendix 2 – Local Growth Fund LSTF programme

Report Author:

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