

1 February 2022		ITEM: 8
Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
Integrated Transport Block Capital Programme 2022/23. Highways Maintenance Allocation and Programme 2022/23.		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: No	
Report of: Mat Kiely, Transportation Services Strategic Lead and Peter Wright, Highways Infrastructure Strategic Lead		
Accountable Assistant Directors: Leigh Nicholson – Assistant Director Planning, Transport and Public Protection and Julie Nelder – Assistant Director – Highways, Fleet & Logistics		
Accountable Director: Julie Rogers – Director, Public Realm		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report sets out how the Transportation Service within the Public Realm Directorate will prioritise funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) Integrated Transport Block Capital Programme (ITB) to enhance transport infrastructure and service provision within the Borough in 2022/23.

The report also sets out the Highways Maintenance Block Allocation for 2022/23 for the Highways Maintenance Service within the Public Realm Directorate is to be prioritised in alignment with Thurrock Council Highways Assets Management Strategy and Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme.

1. Recommendations

1.1 Planning Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny provide comment on the report and the following Cabinet recommendations:

1.2 Endorse the ITB Capital Programme allocations, policy and prioritisation direction for the DfT ITB Block funding under the key Policy areas of Road Safety Engineering, Safer Routes to School, Area Intervention Programme and EV charging programme.

- 1.3 **Endorse the Highways Maintenance Block Allocation Programme (as detailed in Appendix 4) for 2022/23.**
- 1.4 **Support the process which delegates authority to the Director of Public realm, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, to review and make local changes to the ITB programme and the DfT Maintenance Block Allocation programme, as well as other funding allocations that may arise within-year.**

2. Transportation Services - Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The DfT annual settlement provides the allocation for ITB schemes. The total ITB capital programme allocation for Thurrock in 2022/23 amounts to £978,000.
- 2.2 The ITB programme has the ability to deliver an extensive range of transport improvements which reflect the vision and aims set out within the Council’s long term Transport Strategy (2013-26). Tackling congestion, delivering accessibility, improving air quality and making Thurrock’s roads safer are core elements of the Transport Strategy which support sustainable growth and regeneration in the Borough.
- 2.3 It is important that the ITB programme is closely aligned with the emerging Local Plan and new Transport Strategy (currently being developed) so as to make the most effective use of the funding available to deliver necessary improvements to the transport network. To achieve this, it is important for the programme to have a clear policy direction. There already exists agreed approaches to policy, priority and budget allocation for the Road Safety Engineering and Safer Routes to Schools programmes and a similar approach is required for the ITB programme.
- 2.4 The report also sets out the 2022/23 DfT Block Allocation Programme £1,383,000, which is prioritised in alignment with Thurrock Council Highways Assets Management Strategy (covered in more detail in Section 5). This is the key document which ties into the Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme.

3 Update and Analysis – Policy, Priority & programme

- 3.1 The ITB funding is currently allocated to various programmes and projects. The table below illustrates the allocations from 2020/21:

Road Safety Engineering TDP1	£250,000
Safer Routes to School TDP2	£250,000
Area Intervention Programme TDP3	£300,000
EV Charging Facilities TDP4	£75,000
Emergency Minor Works and Parking requests	£50,000
Passenger Transport	£50,000
Walking & Cycling	£50,000

TOTAL	£971,000
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3.2 As agreed previously, the ITB programme is informed by an adopted policy and data led approach to intervention. The Transport Development Policies allow the data led approach to be consistently applied to the ITB programme, ensuring that priority areas receive funding to enable measures to be implemented.

3.3 In light of the above the funding allocations in the 2021/22 ITB programme are as follows:

Road Safety Engineering TDP1	£250,000
Safer Routes to School TDP2	£250,000
Area Intervention Programme TDP3	£293,000
EV Charging Facilities TDP4	£75,000
Emergency Minor Works and Parking requests	£50,000
Passenger Transport	£20,000
Public Rights of Way	£20,000
Walking and Cycling	£20,000
TOTAL	£978,000

3.4 The allocation for each project heading is identified in Appendix A and is based on policy criteria. The allocation of £20,000 into both Passenger Transport and Public Rights of Way is considered necessary to ensure improvements in those two areas, but may be accommodated through underspend to enable additional funds to be allocated elsewhere across the ITB programme. The provision of £50,000 into the Emergency Minor Works and Parking Requests is proposed in the event that there is a severe adverse impact on the network that needs to be addressed as a priority outside of the Policy process. Following the successful award of the EV Charing contract,

£75,000 allocation to EV Charging identifies the council's commitment to delivering increased charging opportunities across the borough.

Variation

- 3.5 The Council is likely to continue to receive regular ad-hoc requests for improvements to be carried out on the transport network. 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 or where serious deterioration on the network may have occurred.
- 3.6 The responsibility to authorise variations to the allocations is delegated to the Director of Public Realm in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport.
- 3.7 Similarly, delegated authority can be used for additional Government funding (such as Safer Roads Funds, Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme and Active Travel) schemes are subject to cost changes as a result of increasing scope or unforeseen revisions to schemes.

4 Highways Maintenance Block Funding

- 4.1 The DfT annual settlement provides the funding for the Maintenance Block Allocation, depending on the HMEP banding achieved. The total funding allocation for Highways Maintenance is expected to be £1,383,000.
- 4.2 Members are advised that the allocations are not 'ring fenced' for spend in the specific areas set out within the programmes therefore, Local Authorities have some flexibility to manage these allocations. As a result, the funding allocations may be amended within the total allocation to meet local needs on the network in accordance with the maintenance strategy. Appendix C provides a summary of how the DfT Block Allocation is allocated across the Council's maintenance programme.
- 4.3 The Maintenance Programme is built around the good practice principals set out in the Code of Practice for Well Managed Highway Infrastructure. The Council's adopted approach to this is via the Highways Maintenance Strategy, which focuses on maintaining and prioritising the asset in the most efficient way. Not just focusing on the financial element, but also the end user. It is therefore generated using a data lead approach.

5 Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 Endorsing the recommendations set out in this report will enable the ITB Capital Programme and the Maintenance Block Allocation programme to be implemented to ensure ongoing improvements to transport infrastructure,

service provision and to ensure ongoing improvements are undertaken to the borough's adopted highway network.

- 5.2 Supporting / endorsing a consistent policy approach for ITB projects provides a level of assurance and consistency for the policy approach that is taken to identify, prioritise and deliver key elements of the ITB programme in relation to Council priorities.

6 Consultation

- 6.1 The ITB Capital Programme has been developed in line with the priority areas identified and agreed in the Council's Transport Strategy, following extensive community and stakeholder engagement.
- 6.2 Local residents, interest groups and key stakeholders (including Community Forums, Bus User Group, Local Access Forum and Your Place, Your Voice etc.) have been influential in providing regular input for the evidence base that has informed the development of the ITB Capital Programme. Input and feedback from these groups has also supported the direction of the Safer Roads funding submission. A renewed focus on Community Forum engagement allows increased engagement and understanding of local issues. Ward Members will be advised of works affecting their respective wards. The ITB programme is to be added to the Council's web page (when completed) to clarify the schemes and measures to be implemented in 2022/23.
- 6.3 The Maintenance Block Allocation Programme has been developed in line with the priorities identified and set in the Council's Highway Maintenance Strategy.
- 6.4 Once approved, the nature and time frames for delivery of the maintenance schemes will be shared with residents and stakeholders accordingly, with further, more detailed communications being carried out in advance of the works starting.

7 Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 7.1 The ITB Capital Programme and Maintenance Block Allocation Programme will help improve and enhance the transport network across the Borough making it safer, less congested and more accessible, thereby promoting and supporting People, Place and Prosperity within Thurrock.

8 Implications

8.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mark Terry**
Senior Financial Accountant

The Council will be allocated £978,000 ITB capital and £1,383,000 Block Allocation for Maintenance for 2022/23.

The cost of implementation will be contained within the funding announced by Government or built into future capital programmes.

8.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Gina Clarke**
Corporate Governance Lawyer and Deputy Monitoring Officer

There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations included in the body of the report. A Cabinet decision is required to approve the recommendations. The Council is required to use the allocated funds in accordance with Council approved policies and procedures, and also any conditions and requirements set by the relevant government department as to how the funds are to be spent.

8.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Becky Lee**
Team Manager - Community Development and Equalities

Transport interventions should support improved quality of life in the Borough and its social and economic regeneration. Transport priorities for congestion & CO2 mitigation, accessibility, safety, air quality and climate change adaptation will aim to have positive impacts on the community. A CEqIA will be completed to assess the impacts.

Access to services and the safety of residents have been highlighted and will be addressed throughout the plan period. The ITB and Safer Roads programme takes account of 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.

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

None

9 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

10 Appendices to the report

- Appendix A – 2022/23 ITB Capital Programme
- Appendix B –Highways Maintenance Programme

Report Author:

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