

15 March 2023		ITEM: 17 Decision: 110649
Cabinet		
Integrated Transport Block (ITB) Capital Programme 2023/24		
Highways Maintenance Allocation and Programme 2023/24		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Councillor Ben Maney - Cabinet Member for Transport and Public Safety		
Accountable Assistant Director: Leigh Nicholson – Assistant Director Planning, Transport and Public Protection - Place Julie Nelder – Assistant Director – Highways, Fleet & Logistics – Public realm		
Accountable Director: Mark Bradbury - Director, Place Julie Rogers, Director, Public Realm		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report sets out how the Transportation Services team, within the Place 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 2023/24.

The report also sets out the Highways Maintenance Block Allocation for 2023/24 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

Members are asked to approve the following recommendations:

- 1.1 Approve the 2023/24 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 (as detailed in Appendix A).**

- 1.2 **Approve the 2023/24 Highways Maintenance Block Allocation Programme (as detailed in Appendix B).**
- 1.3 **Delegate authority to the interim Director of Place and the Director of Public Realm, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport and Public Safety to make any required changes to the ITB programme and the Maintenance programme, for 2023/24, within the overall programme budget, as well as other government funding allocations that may arise within the year to ensure delivery of the programme and to ensure spend of the grant allocations.**

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 2023/24 amounts to £979,000. This funding is allocated to the capital schemes to be implemented within the programme and staff time required to design, manage and deliver the programme.
- 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 the interim 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.
- 2.4 To achieve this, it is important for the programme to have a clear policy direction. Agreed approaches already exist to inform policy, priority and budget allocation. The existing agreed policy areas are:
 - **TDP1 Road Safety Engineering** – schemes proposals are prioritised as a result of criteria consisting of category of road, vehicle movements and safety issues. A 5-year CRASH data search is also used to determine priority and location of potential schemes.
 - **TDP2 Safer Routes to Schools** – scheme proposals are prioritised as a result of set criteria consisting of accident records, site assessment score and school travel plan status.
 - **TDP3 Area Intervention Programme** - scheme proposals are prioritised as a result of Police CRASH data to ensure consistency with other policies. The defined areas for AIP are not similar in geographic size. To eliminate this issue and to ensure that each area has a fair weighting, the accident analysis on PIAs / kilometre.

- TDP4 Electric Vehicle Charging – scheme proposals are identified to align with the OLEV strategy for transition to ultra-low emission motoring. A minimum of 20 charging points will be installed each year within key locations. EV Charging will promote sustainable travel and reduce vehicle emissions in Thurrock. The existing programme ensures the supply and installation of charging points throughout the borough along with ongoing maintenance, back office services, customer service and interface and payment services.

Additional detail on the policy approach is provided in Appendix C.

- 2.5 The report also sets out the 2023/24 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. This approach has allowed us to achieve the highest funding band 3.

3. Update and Analysis – Policy, Priority & programme

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 In light of the above the funding allocations in the 2023/24 ITB programme have been discussed in detail with the Portfolio Holder and are set out as follows:

2023/24 ITB Capital Funding Allocations	
Road Safety Engineering TDP1	£212,500
Safer Routes to School TDP2	£50,000
Area Intervention Programme TDP3	£350,000
EV Charging Facilities TDP4	£150,000
Emergency Minor Works and Parking requests	£54,500
Passenger Transport	£15,000
Salary costs	£147,000
TOTAL	£979,000

- 3.3 The allocation for each project heading is identified in Appendix A and is based on policy criteria. The allocation for Safer Routes to Schools has been reduced, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to enable an increased funding allocation for Road Safety Engineering and AIP, where some SRTS issues can be addressed. Following the successful award of the EV Charging contract, £150,000 allocation to EV Charging identifies the Council's commitment to delivering increased on-street charging opportunities across the borough. OZEV grant funding will also be explored to enhance the EV Charging budget.
- 3.4 The provision of £54,500 within the Emergency Minor Works budget 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. The allocation of £15,000 to Passenger Transport is considered necessary to support small-scale network improvements in that area. No new funding has been allocated to the Public Rights of Way section of the capital programme as underspend from the previous year and maintenance funding can be utilised in that area.
- 3.5 The Transportation Services team will continue to utilise additional funds received by the Council to deliver the A126 Safer Roads Fund programme, Capital Bid schemes and the Active Travel Fund programme within the 2023/24 financial year.

Variation

- 3.6 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.
- 3.7 The responsibility to authorise variations to the ITB and Maintenance allocations, using new funding or carry forward funds, is delegated to the Interim Director of Finance and the Director of Public Realm in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport and Public Safety.
- 3.8 Similarly, delegated authority can be used for additional Government funding (such as Safer Roads Funds, Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme and Active Travel) and schemes can be 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 and 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 and Local Plan roadshow events.) have been influential in providing regular input for the evidence base that has informed the development of the ITB Capital Programme. Community Forum engagement, Member Enquiries and Resident Enquiries also allow 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 and approved by Members) to clarify the schemes and measures to be implemented in 2023/24.
- 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.
- 6.5 Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted and provided comment on the report at the meeting held on 26 January 2023. O&S members requested that a working group is established next financial year to discuss the ITB programme in detail.

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 £979,000 ITB capital and £1,383,000 Block Allocation for Maintenance for 2023/24.

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

The recent s114 announcement has no implications on the ITB and Maintenance programmes.

8.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **John Jones**
Director of Legal and Governance

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: **Rebecca 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 have positive impacts including for the health and wellbeing of local residents. 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 is informed through engagement with a wide range of local community stakeholders set out further in section 6.2.1. Feedback from this engagement supports Community Equality Impact Assessment.

The 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 2010. These have been applied to the capital programme.

8.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, and Impact on Looked After Children

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 – ITB Capital Programme
- Appendix B –Highways Maintenance Programme
- Appendix C – Transport Development Policy

Report Author

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