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| COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES LEADER OF THE COUNCIL | <u>STRONG LEADER DECISION REPORT</u> 21 MARCH 2017 <u>SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT</u> <u>ENHANCEMENT PACKAGE YEARS 3-6</u> <u>(STEP)</u> |
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Councillor Phil Davies, Leader said:

“I am delighted Wirral has been successful in securing over £3 million to deliver five major transport projects – helping to make key employment and retail sites in the borough more attractive, more accessible and less congested.

“The success of our economy depends upon good transport links. We are constantly working to make it easier and safer to travel around the borough and we will continue to invest in our local infrastructure to keep Wirral moving”.

REPORT SUMMARY

As part of the Growth Deal announcement in July 2014 the Government made a total of £41.4m available to the Liverpool City Region for a Sustainable Transport Enhancements Programme (STEP) over a six year period from 2015/16 to 2020/21.

Cabinet approved the acceptance and allocation of £1,700,000 of funding on the 9th July 2015 for delivery of schemes in years 1 and 2 of the programme (2015/16 and 2016/17).

This report seeks the Leader’s approval to accept £3,025,000 of funding for schemes to be delivered over years 3 to 6 of the programme (2017/18 – 2020/21), and allocate it to the projects as outlined in this report.

The Liverpool City Region Transport Plan for Growth supports the Wirral Plan 2020 Pledge to provide Transport and Technology Infrastructure fit for the future by ensuring that Wirral has safe, affordable, well maintained and efficient transport networks for residents to access community services, leisure facilities and commute to work.

This is a key decision and affects all Wards in the Borough.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Leader of the Council is requested to:

- (1) Approve the acceptance of £3,025,000 of Sustainable Transport Enhancements Programme (STEP) funding allocated to Wirral Council by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.
- (2) Approve the proposed programme as set out in Appendix 1.
- (3) Delegate authority to the Strategic Commissioner – Environment, in conjunction with the Assistant Director, Law and Governance to enter into a formal funding agreement with the Combined Authority to accept the funding and commit the Authority to the delivery of the programme.
- (4) Delegate authority to the Strategic Commissioner – Environment, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure to liaise with the Combined Authority to make adjustments to the programme should the need arise, due to financial or other factors.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 To ensure the Sustainable Transport Enhancements Programme reflects the Wirral Plan and the Transport Plan for Growth priorities.
- 1.2 To ensure the Wirral element of the Liverpool City Region Sustainable Transport Enhancements Programme delivers against the aims and objectives identified in the STEP Major Scheme Business Case, in recognition of transport as an enabler of economic growth in the City Region.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 None. The proposed projects identified within the report have been evaluated as part of a WebTag compliant major transport business case which has been deemed to achieve a high benefit cost ratio as required by the Assurance Framework developed by the Combined Authority.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 As part of the Growth Deal announcement in July 2014, the Government allocated a total of £41.4m to the Liverpool City Region for Sustainable Transport improvements over a six year period from 2015/16 to 2020/21. £13,800,000 of capital funding was available for the first 2 years of the programme with a further £27,600,000 for years three to six.
- 3.2. The accountable body for this devolved funding is the Combined Authority, supported by the Merseytravel Committee as the Executive Body. The approval process is set out in the Liverpool City Region Assurance Framework, which was updated in May 2014 to reflect the creation of the Combined Authority. The Combined Authority (CA) is the executive decision making body with responsibility for the policy and funding arrangements previously the responsibility of the Department for Transport. In making these decisions the CA is guided by the principles set out in the Assurance Framework. A copy of the Assurance Framework is available at <http://www.merseytravel.gov.uk/about-us/local-transport-delivery/Documents/STEP/Appendix%20A%20Liverpool%20City%20Region%20Assurance%20Framework.pdf>
- 3.3. The aim of the STEP schemes is to improve transport links, address key pinch points on the network, remove transport barriers and broaden travel choices available to Liverpool City Region visitors and residents. The overarching objectives for STEP are as follows;
 - Support economic growth in the Region, particularly around the Strategic Economic Plan Growth Sites, to further the objectives of the Growth Plan;
 - Build on the ongoing sustainable transport initiatives in the LCR to further expand the Region's multi modal transport network;
 - Complement the ongoing Major Transport Schemes programme by providing smaller scale sustainable transport investments;
 - Remove travel barriers for local residents, helping to address socio-economic issues in the Region; and

- Improve transport provision to capitalise on growth in sectors of the economy where the Liverpool City Region has a competitive advantage, particularly the low carbon and visitor economy sectors.

- 3.4. Officers from across the Liverpool City Region have worked together to develop a robust programme of schemes for the STEP programme, ensuring that clear linkages are demonstrated with other Liverpool City Region Major Transport Schemes, the City Regions Strategic Economic Plan and the City Region Growth Deal. A detailed Major Scheme Business Case for STEP, 'A STEP Change for Growth', has been developed to demonstrate how the schemes support growth in the City Region and detail the wider benefits of the schemes, such as reducing congestion or reducing carbon emissions.
- 3.5. In order to maximise the benefits from the STEP investment, the programme is geographically targeted at seven Growth Zones, which align with the key areas of investment targeted in the Strategic Economic Plan. These zones are;
1. Liverpool City
 2. Mersey Waterfront
 3. Port and Hinterland
 4. Mersey Gateway
 5. A41 Corridor
 6. Eastern Investment Area
 7. Coastal Towns

The STEP investments for years one and two were focussed on Growth Zones 1 to 6 with Investment in Growth Zone 7 Coastal Towns included for years three to six. The STEP will invest in new pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, bus and rail upgrades, public realm improvements and support a door to door sustainable travel experience through local improvement grants. In total 26 schemes will be delivered across the City Region in years three to six.

- 3.6. On the 16th December 2016, following submission of the Full STEP Business Case, the Combined Authority approved the programme for years 3 to 6 of the Sustainable Transport Enhancements Package (STEP). This business case 'A STEP change for Growth' is available to view at <http://www.merseytravel.gov.uk/about-us/local-transport-delivery/Pages/STEP-Business-Case-Years-3---6.aspx>

4.0. WIRRAL'S SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT ENHANCEMENTS PACKAGE

- 4.1. Wirral has been successful in applying for five schemes totalling £3,025,000 (excluding local contributions) out of the £27,600,000 of capital funding available for years three to six of the programme. Schemes submitted for STEP funding were required to support the ambitions of the LCR Strategic Economic Growth Plan and link into committed developments within 7 designated growth zones within the LCR.
- 4.2. Formal notification has been received from the Combined Authority on 13th February 2017, that the Wirral element of the Liverpool City Region Major Scheme for the financial years 2017/18 to 2020/21 is as follows;

| Wirral | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | Total |
|--------------------|------------|---------|----------|------------|------------|
| STEP funding | £1,540,000 | £0 | £440,000 | £1,045,000 | £3,025,000 |
| Local Contribution | £ 133,000 | £0 | £ 37,000 | £ 87,000 | £ 257,000 |
| Total | £1,673,000 | £0 | £477,000 | £1,132,000 | £3,282,000 |

4.3. It should be noted that no schemes have been scheduled for 2018/19, however, the funding allocation letter of 13th February states that funding can be drawn forward from future years and it is the intention to develop our programme to do so, ensuring early completion of the programme outlined to the Combined Authority.

4.4 The Wirral schemes support Growth Zones two and five, the Mersey Waterfront and A41 Corridor respectively. The objectives of Mersey Waterfront Growth Zone are to;

- Support investment and regeneration by accommodating business, leisure and residential developments on both sides of the Waterfront through sustainable transport enhancements.
- Increase the attractiveness of the Mersey Waterfront by improving the quality of the public realm and reducing carbon emissions
- Reduce severance for pedestrians and cyclists on the Western side of the Merseyside

4.5 The objectives of the A41 Corridor Growth Zone are to;

- Provide sustainable access to employment opportunities for local residents by providing pedestrian and cycle infrastructure along and across the A41
- Support the visitor economy in the A41 corridor by improving the accessibility and attractiveness of visitor attractions

4.6 The detailed STEP programme for Wirral is set out in **Appendix 1**.

5.0 MERSEYTRAVEL'S SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT ENHANCEMENTS PACKAGE

5.1 As part of the wider Liverpool City Region STEP package Merseytravel have been awarded funding for two schemes for 2017 to 2019, one of which is in Wirral and the other which Wirral businesses and residents will benefit from. These schemes are;

- Bromborough Park and Ride - £990,000
- LCR workplace charging post scheme (Electric Vehicle Infrastructure) - £110,000

5.2 More detail on the Merseytravel programme is contained within the Major Scheme Business Case.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 All schemes are funded from the Combined Authority allocation for Sustainable Transport Enhancement Programme (STEP) for 2018/19 to 2020/21 totalling £3,025,000.

7.0 LEGAL

7.1 The Council has statutory duties as defined by the Highways Act 1980, Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, Road Traffic Act 1988, Local Government Act 2000 and the Traffic Management Act 2004.

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

8.1 All capital schemes are funded from the Liverpool City Region Sustainable Transport Enhancements Package (STEP) element of the Growth Deal. The local contribution identified is existing Integrated Transport Block (ITB) funding for 2017/18 and developer contributions. Existing staff resources will be used for the detailed investigation, design and supervision of these schemes. Future maintenance costs will be met from the Highway Maintenance Revenue Budget.

9.0 RELEVANT RISKS

9.1 Failure to undertake the identified programme of works could result in the Council not meeting the capital grant conditions in accordance with regulations made under section 11 of the Local Government Act 2003. If the Authority fails to comply with the grant conditions then the Combined Authority may;

- a) Reduce, suspect or withhold grant;
- b) Require repayment of whole or part of the grant

9.2. Wirral's failure to undertake the identified programme of works and support delivery of the priorities of the years three to six Liverpool City Region STEP Change for Growth Programme may have implications for the wider Liverpool City Region in terms of future Growth Deal allocations.

9.3. In order to mitigate the risks, Merseytravel have identified a central Programme Management Office. All scheme promoters will be required to report progress on a monthly basis and contribute towards the maintenance of an ongoing risk register.

9.4. The list of schemes identified has been prepared with initial estimates, however it should be noted that final schemes will be subject to the costing of detailed designs and statutory undertakers' works and further detailed investigations will be required prior to any final scheme being designed. Some of these schemes may also be subject to the requirement of a Traffic Regulation Order(s), and delivery may be dependent on resolving objections to proposals during consultation.

9.5. As the promoting authority for these elements of STEP, Wirral Council is solely responsible for meeting any expenditure over and above the maximum capped amount of £3,025,000.

9.6. Wirral Council is responsible for keeping Merseytravel (as the accountable body for the Local Growth Fund Schemes), informed of progress in terms of delivery and expenditure on individual schemes on a quarterly basis.

9.7. All funding approvals by the Combined Authority are conditional upon an appropriate monitoring methodology and evaluation framework being put into place.

10.0 ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION

10.1 Detailed scheme proposals will be subject to further Public and Ward Councillor consultation as appropriate and engagement with other interested bodies (Active Travel Forum / W.I.R.E.D etc).

11.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 As part of the development of LTP3, a comprehensive Integrated Assessment (IA) was carried out in accordance with Government LTP Guidance. The IA included a number of assessments, including an Equality Impact Assessment (link attached below) that can demonstrate that there are no negative implications associated with the implementation of these activities on the 'protected characteristics'.

http://www.letstravelwise.org/files/741779878_2010%2012%20-%20Motts%20-%20Equality%20Impact%20Assessment%20Final%20Report.pdf

11.2 The STEP programme sits within the Liverpool City Region Transport Plan for Growth strategy and includes measures to assist the transport needs of all sections of the community. The Transport Plan for Growth can be viewed at

<http://councillors.knowsley.gov.uk/documents/g6257/Public%20reports%20pack%2006th-Mar-2015%2011.30%20Liverpool%20City%20Region%20Combined%20Authority.pdf?T=10&StyleType=standard&StyleSize=none>

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – WIRRAL STEP FUNDING – SCHEMES YEAR 3 TO 6 (2017/18 TO 2020/21)

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Assurance Framework

<http://www.merseytravel.gov.uk/about-us/local-transport-delivery/Documents/STEP/Appendix%20A%20Liverpool%20City%20Region%20Assurance%20Framework.pdf>

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Sustainable Transport Enhancements Package 'A STEP Change for Growth' Major Scheme Business Case

<http://www.merseytravel.gov.uk/about-us/local-transport-delivery/Pages/STEP.aspx>

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority - 'A Transport Plan for Growth'

<http://councillors.knowsley.gov.uk/documents/g6257/Public%20reports%20pack%2006th-Mar-2015%2011.30%20Liverpool%20City%20Region%20Combined%20Authority.pdf?T=10&StyleType=standard&StyleSize=none>

Equality Impact Assessment: http://www.letstravelwise.org/files/741779878_2010%2012%20-%20Motts%20-%20Equality%20Impact%20Assessment%20Final%20Report.pdf

Liverpool City Region Growth Deal

<http://www.liverpoollep.org/pdf/LCR%20Growth%20Deal%20-%20Deal%20Final.pdf>

Liverpool City Region Strategic Economic Plan

<http://www.liverpoollep.org/pdf/FINAL%20Growth%20Plan%20and%20Stategic%20Economic%20Plan%20Portrait.pdf>

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|---|---------------------------------|
| STEP Programme for Years 1 and 2 approved by Cabinet | 9th July 2015 |