



ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Thursday, 21 July 2022

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| REPORT TITLE: | CITY REGION SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SETTLEMENT HIGHWAY STRUCTURAL MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2022-23 |
| REPORT OF: | DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES |

REPORT SUMMARY

This report requests approval for the disbursement of grant funding from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority's (LCRCA) City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) for 2022/23 into Wirral Council's Capital Programme for Highways Structural Maintenance and Bridge Maintenance. The report also requests approval for the disbursement of the indicative funding for years 2023/24, 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27, in the same programme. The report also requests acceptance of an indicative highway condition matrix that will be used to inform future programme investment decisions.

The effective delivery of the Council's CRSTS structural maintenance programme contributes significantly to the Wirral Plan 2021-26, in particular: working for safe and pleasant communities, working for a sustainable environment, active and healthy lives and inclusive economy.

The services carried out under this programme of work will take place across all wards in the borough.

This decision will be classed as a Key Decision because of the value and the matter affects two or more wards and is included in the Council's Forward Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee is recommended to:

- (1) Approve the allocation of indicative grant funding likely to be allocated to Wirral Council in the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) Combined Authority Transport Plan programme (Highways Structural Maintenance) amongst the relevant subject areas over the next 4 years, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report;

- (2) Approve the proposed programme of works for Wirral's Carriageways, Footway Improvements and Bridge Maintenance for 2022/23, using grant funding allocated to Wirral Council by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) in the 2022/23 City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS), Combined Authority Transport Plan Programme (Highways Structural Maintenance), as set out in Appendix 2 to this report;
- (3) Accept the indicative RAG rated highway network condition matrix as set out in Appendix 3 to this report, to be used by officers as one of the decision tools when developing highway structural maintenance programmes, and..
- (4) Authorise the Director of Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Chair and Party Spokespersons of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee, to revise or amend the delivery or implementation of the work programmes, as deemed necessary, having due regard for the available resources and applicable risk-based prioritisation of locations selected for intervention and treatment.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 To ensure that the Council can comply with its statutory duty, to maintain the public highway in Wirral, as set out in the Highways Act 1980, Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, Road Traffic Act 1988, Local Government Act 2000, and the Traffic Management Act 2004.
- 1.2 An element of this funding will be specifically allocated to Wirral Council for delivery of schemes on the Liverpool City Region's Key Route Network (KRN), supporting the Council's main strategic routes providing links to economic growth and regeneration sites, and cannot be used for any other purpose. The Council will inevitably incur risk reputational damage should it not accept funding specifically allocated to invest in the KRN.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Council could decide to not accept the grant funding offered. This is not considered to be an appropriate option given that the programme identified within this report enables the Council to comply with its statutory duties.
- 2.2 The funding could be used for other purposes where applicable. This is not considered an appropriate option as it would not meet the conditions of the funding award. Schemes and projects within the recommended programme have been developed in accordance with the Council's Highway Asset Management Strategy and KRN priorities. The programme has been developed using a risk-based approach and prioritised within the funding available against condition and assessment criteria is considered the most appropriate option.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee on 1 March 2022 (Minute 75 refers) approved a proposed programme of works for Carriageway and Footway Improvements based upon the indicative CRSTS allocation for 2022/23 anticipated at the time.
- 3.2 The grant funding now confirmed for this year is £5,800,000, with a further £250,000 for bridge maintenance works as set out in Appendix 1 Table 1. A grant funding agreement (GFA) accepting this grant has now been executed by the Director of Law and Governance.
- 3.3 The budget for 2022/23 has been confirmed together with the indicative grant funding to be received over the next 4 years. Allocation of a further £1,900,000 ringfenced to the KRN is also expected to be confirmed. Funding for future years is subject to the Council adequately delivering its 2022/23 programme and providing regular and acceptable monitoring reports to the LCRCA.
- 3.4 The initial programme of Carriageway and Footway Improvements for 2022/23 approved by Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee on 1 March

2022 has now been developed further, following confirmed grant allocation and based upon current network condition, feedback from ward Members and risk-based prioritisation by professional officers. The proposed programme is included at Appendix 2 to this report.

- 3.5 An indicative 4-year network matrix has also now been developed following analysis of recent network condition data and is set out in Appendix 3 to this report. This matrix indicates the likely numbers of roads and footways which will receive re-surfacing, surface treatments and reconstruction works during this period.
- 3.6 This matrix is an indicative guide only and presented in a RAG rating basis where 'G' Green indicates a likelihood of no significant maintenance interventions, within the next 5 years; 'A' Amber equates to a likelihood that significant maintenance interventions will take place within the next 5 years, subject to resources, but probably in the final 3 years of the 5-year settlement period and 'R' Red indicates that significant maintenance interventions are proposed within the next 2 years (i.e. the current financial year, or in 2023/24). Where roads are classified as 'A' or 'G' this will not preclude them from consideration of reactive repairs including patching and repair of actionable defects such as trip hazards and potholes in the shorter term where necessary.
- 3.7 In order for the Council to provide a safe highway network and maintain revenue expenditure within the available budgets, it is essential that each year the highway network is assessed and inspected and that officers target the roads most in need of works, both planned and reactive. Without these interventions, officers would be unable to respond to Members enquiries and public liability claims would be likely to increase.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 All schemes as set out in the programme at Appendix 2 to this report are to be funded from Wirral Council's CRSTS Highways Maintenance allocation for 2022/23 which is £5,800,000 and is proposed for inclusion in the Council's Capital Programme for 2022/23. The £5,800,000 is a component of the CRSTS grant and must be used 'in year' to fund highways maintenance improvement schemes only.
- 4.2 The activity relating to years 2 to 5 of the programme noted in this report will subsequently be progressed through the approval process for the capital programme.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 imposes a duty on the Council, as Highway Authority, to maintain highways at the public expense. The Council also has a devolved duty to maintain and improve Liverpool's City Region's Key Route Network (KRN) in accordance with Section 6 of the Highways Act 1980.

- 5.2 Following delivery of works applicable to the GFA the Council's Section 151 Officer will be required to sign a declaration confirming that the funding was defrayed in accordance with the grant conditions.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 Existing staff resources will be used for the delivery of the programme. Highway maintenance activity will be carried out through the Highways Service delivery model approved by Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee on 16 March 2021, or discrete contracts procured in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, as appropriate.
- 6.2 Preventative maintenance to highway assets will increase their residual life and asset value, and spending is targeted to maintain carriageway condition indicators.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 Failure to undertake the identified programme of works could result in the Council not meeting its statutory duties as set out in the Highways Act 1980.
- 7.2 The highway network is constantly deteriorating hence without an effective structural maintenance programme targeted towards the highest priority locations, the network will deteriorate further, the asset value will decrease and the costs of carrying out more significant maintenance interventions at a later date will be disproportionately higher and the Council's claims repudiation performance may be adversely affected.
- 7.3 Failure to undertake the identified programme of works would also result in a failure to support the delivery of the priorities of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Transport Plan. Consequently, this could result in the loss or clawback of funding with reputational damage to Wirral Council and potentially the Liverpool City Region and may affect future funding allocations. Funding cannot be rolled forward if programmes of work are not delivered 'in year'.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 All Council Members were consulted and provide with an opportunity to suggest locations for inclusion in this programme. The proposed schemes currently identified for 2022/23 will be continually reviewed and the programme may be amended where necessary based on current road network condition data, financial and other constraints, in consultation with the Chair and Party Spokespersons of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee and, where applicable, relevant Ward Members.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact

Assessment is a tool to help Council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

- (a) Yes and impact review is attached –

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2017/delivery>

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The recommendations contained within this report are expected to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by improving the condition of road and footway surfaces, maintaining the highway network properly will help reduce congestion and improve journeys for active travel, bus and other road users.
- 10.2 Officers are planning to trial low temperature asphalt surfacing material and increased use of low temperature surface treatment solutions, in place of planing and resurfacing, as part of the works proposed under this programme. This will lead to a significant decrease in use of fossil fuel and disposal of contaminated waste. The Council intends to engage with suppliers to quantify reductions and the available performance monitoring data will be reported separately.
- 10.3 A resilient highways network is critical to the delivery of bus priority measures and high-quality walking and cycling route surfaces. As well as reducing noise and improving air quality promoting increased cycling and walking with better infrastructure will help combat climate change. By encouraging and enabling people to travel more on foot and by cycle instead of private car harmful emissions will be reduced. Promoting active travel can result in reduced emissions of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂), particulate matter (PM) and Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) helping to tackle climate change and improve air quality.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 It is considered that the proposed Highway Structural Maintenance Programme for 2022/23 as set out in Appendix 1 helps deliver Wirral's wider Community Wealth Building commitments to deliver a prosperous, inclusive economy that benefits local residents and supports the principles of community wealth building. As the schemes move into the delivery phase, all opportunities to secure community wealth and social value through existing contracts and any new procurement routes will be explored.
- 11.2 The programme supports several key Community Wealth Building aims, including: Local Employment – creation of local employment and training opportunities through Council's Term Maintenance Contracts when delivering the surfacing and footway programmes; Maximising the Wirral Pound – buying supplies for footway schemes locally wherever possible to support business and employment. Green and Sustainable: protecting the environment, minimising waste and energy consumption and using other resources efficiently, within contractor's supply chain.

REPORT AUTHOR: Linda Summers
(Highway Asset Manager)
telephone: 0151 606 2267
email: lindasummers@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 CRSTS 5 year funding 2022/23 – 2026/27
Appendix 2 Proposed Carriageway, Footway and Bridge Improvements 2022-23
Appendix 3 Indicative Programme of Works

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) for CRSTS Highways and Non-Highways Maintenance Work 2022/23

Gaist - Network Condition Data

Gaist Network Performance Indicators

Highways Asset Management Strategy

Highways Asset Management Policy

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|---|--------------------------|
| Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee | 1 March 2022 |
| Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee | 16 March 2021 |
| Cabinet Member Decision - Highway Structural Maintenance Programme 2020-21 Detailed Programme for Footways and Additional Highway Infrastructure | 28 September 2020 |

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| <p>Cabinet Member Decision - Highway Structural Maintenance Programme 2020-21 Detailed Programme for Key Route Network</p> | <p>22 July 2020</p> |
| <p>Cabinet Member Decision - Highway Structural Maintenance Programme 2020-21 Local (Unclassified) Roads Programme</p> | <p>24 June 2020</p> |
| <p>Leader of the Council Decision - Highway Structural Maintenance Programme 2020/21</p> | <p>24 March 2020</p> |
| <p>Cabinet Member Report Highway Structural Maintenance Programme 2019/20 - Local (Unclassified) Roads Programme</p> | <p>26 April 2019</p> |
| <p>Cabinet – Highway Structural Maintenance Programme 2019/20</p> | <p>25 March 2019</p> |