

## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### CABINET – 14 JANUARY 2010

#### REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

#### LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2010/11

##### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 In November 2007, the Department for Transport (DfT) approved a Local Transport Capital settlement for Wirral of £7,684,000 for 2010/11. This report sets out a proposed Local Transport Plan (LTP) Capital Programme for approval based on this settlement.
- 1.2 This is a Key Decision included on the Forward Plan.

##### 2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members will be familiar with the Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Merseyside, which sets out the transport strategy for the sub-region. The second LTP (LTP2) covers the period between 2006/07 and 2010/11 and contains a five year programme and a comprehensive set of performance indicators and targets.
- 2.2 In November 2007, the Council was given notification of its annual LTP settlements from the Department for Transport for 2008/09 to 2010/11. A full report on the LTP settlement letter was reported to Cabinet on 23 January 2008 (Minute 457 refers).

##### 3.0 TRANSPORT CAPITAL SETTLEMENT 2010/11

- 3.1 The LTP settlement is made up of two main blocks – the Integrated Transport Block and the Highway/Bridge Maintenance & Strengthening Block. Members will observe from Table 1 below that the total amount to be received in 2010/11 exceeds that in 2009/10 by an additional £1,177,000, however it should be noted that this is largely due to a specific ring-fenced allocation for bridge strengthening on Wirral's Primary Route Network.

**Table 1: Summary of Wirral's LTP Settlement 2008/09 – 2010/11**

	<u>2008/09</u>	<u>2009/10</u>	<u>2010/11</u>
Integrated Transport Block	3,339,000	3,254,000	3,155,000
Highway / Bridge Maintenance	2,720,000	2,992,000	3,441,000
Bridge Strengthening on PRN	<u>0</u>	<u>261,000</u>	<u>1,088,000</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>6,059,000</u></b>	<b><u>6,507,000</u></b>	<b><u>7,684,000</u></b>

- 3.2 Members will recall that a key aspect of the success of the Merseyside LTP has been the quality of the Partnership that exists between the six Merseyside authorities and the level of joint working that is essential to produce and deliver a strong transport strategy. Funding for this type of work is held in a Joint Working Budget (JWB) that each partner authority funds as a proportion of the Merseyside total settlement. Members will be aware that the Merseyside allocation is split between the partner authorities using an agreed formula related to the level of need in each authority, and includes criteria such as population and accident data.
- 3.3 Wirral's contribution to the Joint Working Budget for 2010/11 is anticipated to be similar to last year (£130,000) and is separate to Wirral's settlement. The JWB budget is monitored by the Merseyside Strategic Transport and Engineers Group (MSTEG), which reports to the Merseyside Strategic Transport and Planning Committee (MSTPC).

#### 4.0 PROPOSED 2010/11 TRANSPORT CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 4.1 Wirral Council's total 2010/11 LTP Settlement of £7,684,000 is made up as follows:

Integrated Transport Block	£3,155,000
Maintenance Block	£3,441,000
PRN Bridges	<u>£1,088,000</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>£7,684,000</u></b>

- 4.2 The Integrated Transport and Maintenance Blocks form part of the Council's "single capital pot". The only element that is ring-fenced is the allocation to undertake strengthening works to bridge structures on the PRN (Primary Route Network).
- 4.3 Members may recall that I had anticipated developing and bringing to Cabinet a new appraisal criterion to assess potential schemes against local and regional policies and objectives in order to maximise scheme outcomes and delivery of appropriate targets.
- 4.4 Whilst work has taken place this year to develop such an appraisal criterion, it has become clear since the more recent publication of LTP3 Guidance that the current LTP priority areas (known as 'shared priorities') – i.e. congestion, road safety, accessibility and air quality/environment - are to be replaced by new 'goals' with effect from 2011/12. These new 'goals' reflecting the Government's new transport strategy "Delivering a Sustainable Transport System" (DaSTS) are as follows:
- to **support** national **economic** competitiveness and **growth**, by delivering reliable and efficient transport networks;
  - to reduce transport's emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, with the desired outcome of **tackling climate change**;

- to **contribute to better safety, security and health** and longer life expectancy by reducing the risk of death, injury or illness arising from transport, and by promoting travel modes that are beneficial to health;
- to **promote** greater **equality of opportunity** for all citizens, with the desired outcome of achieving a fairer society; and
- to **improve quality of life** for transport users and non-transport users, and to promote a **healthy natural environment**.

To ensure, therefore, that the appraisal criterion is based on forthcoming policy guidance and robust enough to inform longer-term programming beyond 2010/11, I propose that the criterion be revised to reflect new guidance before being considered by Cabinet.

4.5 Furthermore, it is understood that there will be significant reductions in the level of funding from the DfT after 2010/11, therefore it is recommended that the residual priority schemes from LTP2 are implemented before the new LTP3 criterion and programme are developed. To this end, I have included three new named projects in the LTP Integrated Transport Block (ITB) programme:

- Allport Road/ Allport Lane junction (improved pedestrian facilities at existing signals)
- Borough Road/Mount Road junction (improved pedestrian facilities at existing signals)
- Noctorum Avenue/Upton Road junction (new traffic signal installation).

4.6 In addition to the regular blocks of funding (e.g. cycling and walking, safer routes to school and local safety schemes etc), details of which will be reported to Members in February 2010, ITB funding is allocated for projects continuing from 2009/10:

- Safety works at M53 Junction 3
- Wirral Speed Limit & TRO Review
- Local traffic improvements using funding delegated to the eleven Area Forums under the "You Decide" process.

4.5 **Appendix A** sets out the proposed 2010/11 programme of works for approval.

## 5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Funding levels for transport as set out in the Government's settlement letter dated 27 November 2007 (Cabinet 23 January 2008, Minute 457 refers):

- 2008/09 = £6,059,000
- 2009/10 = £6,507,000
- 2010/11 = £7,684,000

5.2 Any scheme revenue implications will be absorbed within existing Departmental budgets.

## **6.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Staff from my Department will continue to provide Wirral's input to the LTP and its strategic development. However, delivery of the Transport Capital Programme will continue to have an impact on staffing requirements, particularly in the areas of work that require detailed accident analyses and public consultation prior to the scheme identification and implementation. It may be necessary, therefore, to appoint consultants to undertake certain categories of work so that I have the necessary capacity to deliver the proposed programme of works.

## **7.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no specific ethnic minority, elderly persons or equal opportunities implications arising directly from this report. The transport strategy, which underpins the LTP, includes measures to assist the transport needs of all sections of the community.

7.2 In addition, the Accessibility Plan within LTP2 identifies current transport barriers to key destination across Wirral. This work will inform the identification of potential transport proposals to improve opportunities for all people.

7.3 Wirral's highway and transport proposals consider the needs of people with disabilities and impaired mobility, as set out in the Merseyside Code of Practice on Access and Mobility, which takes full account of the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

## **8.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 Most of the schemes in the LTP Capital Programme have positive Community Safety implications, either through improvements in road safety (e.g. introducing physical changes to the highway) or improvements in personal safety (for example, better street lighting).

8.2 LTP2 directly addresses the Government's Road Safety shared priority, which links closely with the Council's Local Area Agreement and Corporate Plan objectives to reduce traffic accidents.

8.3 LTP2 also complements most of the Council's corporate objectives. The Accessibility work supports strategic aims to reduce worklessness, promote greater independence and choice, improve support for those with mental health problems, reduce numbers not in employment, education or training, and increase numbers going to university, especially from disadvantaged communities. Projects to increase the use of sustainable modes of transport support the aims to reduce our carbon footprint, encourage healthy lifestyles and participation in fulfilling activities, and reduce childhood obesity.

## **9.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Sustainability and LA21 issues are common threads running through all the transport policies.

9.2 Specific elements of LTP2 include:

- Sustainable Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the strategy;
- Joint working with health authorities and the promotion of walking and cycling;
- Reduction of transport related emissions;
- Encouraging greater use of public transport and non-motorised modes of transport;
- Development of Travel Plans with schools and businesses; and
- Merseyside 'TravelWise' – the initiative that is specifically helping to make an important contribution to people's behaviour change and the promotion of alternative modes of travel to the private car.

## **10.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 In accordance with DfT guidelines, the LTP2 is closely aligned with the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and other strategic and local policies, including the Regional Transport Strategy, Wirral's Tourism Strategy and local environmental, social and economic regeneration strategies.

10.2 The Merseyside Authorities are committed to approving a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which will improve linkages between land use and transport within the planning approvals' process. Members may recall that the SPD was particularly noted by the Government in the settlement letter as "indicative of forward thinking on the links between transport and planning".

10.3 This SPD will form an integral part of the Core Local Development Framework (LDF). It is intended that the full SPD be approved and implemented in the near future and will be reported to Members separately in due course.

## **11.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 It is recognised by the LTP partners that the cost of travel by public transport, which has risen out of proportion to the cost of travel by car, can be a barrier to unemployed people or those on low incomes. Wirral officers are currently working with bus operators, Merseytravel and Cheshire West and Chester Council with a view to developing a Statutory Quality Partnership Scheme for future implementation. The cost of fares has been identified as a potential element for consideration in this project; however, this will require further detailed work and sharing of commercially sensitive data between partners. I anticipate bringing a report to inform Members of this project around Easter next year.

## **12.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 Social inclusion is a thread running through the LTP, which aims to provide a fully integrated transport system that is accessible to everyone.

### **13.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 There are no implications under this heading.

### **14.0 ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT**

14.1 No background papers have been used in the preparation of this report.

### **15.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 The LTP contains a Wirral-wide transport strategy and implementation plan.

### **16.0 RECOMMENDATION**

16.1 Cabinet is requested to approve the LTP Capital Programme set out in this report.

DAVID GREEN, DIRECTOR  
TECHNICAL SERVICES