

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Stuart Whittingham
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Highways and Transport
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	Mark Smith, Head Of Environment & Regulation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an update from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to Members of the Council on matters relevant to his portfolio.

1. MAINTENANCE PROGRAMMES FOR 2014/15, INCLUDING THE POTHOLE REPAIR FUND

With the exception of a small number of schemes which have had to be deferred until 2015/16 because of utilities activity, most of the current years £3.6M programme has been completed. In addition, the Pothole Fund works have also continued to progress and 4,680 potholes have been filled to date, and it is expected that over 9,000 potholes will have been filled by the time the programme is completed.

2. HIGHWAY SERVICES CONTRACT

Both the Contractor and the Council's officers have recently presented progress in mobilising the new contract, handover from the previous contractor and performance on the contract to date, to the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee on 3 February 2015. The report included reference to the good performance of the contract as measured through registration with the Considerate Constructors' Scheme, and the Council's own customer satisfaction surveys on highway schemes are being modified so that the areas of feedback to be sought from residents mirror those within this national benchmarking scheme.

3. MAJOR SCHEME SUBMISSION – DOCK BRIDGES

The technical reports and options appraisals for the replacement of two of the Docks Bridges are now complete, and the scheme has been included in the Council's Capital Programme approved at the last Council meeting. In order to take advantage of the opportunity presented by a new funding programme, a grant bid of £6.408 M has been submitted for the cost of the scheme to the DfT Local Highways Maintenance Challenge Fund, which along with the Council's contribution would meet the full costs of this important £7.12 M project. A decision on the grant funding bid is expected in March 2015. Even if unsuccessful, preparation of the Outline Business Case is underway ahead of submission of the full Major Scheme Business Case to the Combined Authority later in the year for funding from the city region Growth Deal programme.

4. LOCAL SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FUND (LSTF)

The DfT funded LSTF programme will come to an end across Merseyside on the 31st March. Approximately £1M remains in the Liverpool City Region (LCR) budget for allocation across the partnership during 2015/16 and discussions are on-going as to how to best utilise this funding to support LCR priorities.

Wirral residents have been fortunate to benefit from capital and revenue projects supported by LSTF over a four year period. This has resulted in excess of £4million of funding delivering infrastructure improvements in the borough as well as revenue programmes assisting residents to access employment, and supporting businesses and employees to travel more sustainably.

Despite the LCR being unsuccessful in receiving further LSTF funding for 2015/16, the Public Health Innovation Fund has recognised the value of the revenue elements of the programme and we are extremely pleased to be working with Public Health during 2015/16 to support the delivery of the Mind Your Business, Travel Solutions and Working with Employers Projects in order that Wirral residents will continue to be able to benefit from the services offered. An important focus of this new programme for 2015/16 is to support the improvement of their physical and mental health and to reduce the vulnerability of those residents supported to from becoming road traffic casualties.

5. LIVERPOOL CITY REGION TRANSPORT PLAN FOR GROWTH

The Liverpool City Region's *Transport Plan for Growth* is expected to be approved by the Combined Authority on 6 March 2015, and replaces the completed Local Transport Plan Delivery Plan 2010/11 – 2014/15 (LTP3). The Plan puts transport at the heart of the Liverpool City Region and demonstrates its vital role in enabling and connecting the work of other key themes including Freight and Logistics, Economic Development, Health & Wellbeing, Education and Skills, Housing and Land Use Planning, Improving Air Quality, Connecting Communities and the Visitor Economy. The Plan has wide senior level endorsement and is a step change for partnership working in the LCR and sets our direction for the next 5 years.

6. LIVERPOOL CITY REGION GROWTH DEAL

The Business Plan to support the £13.8m Sustainable Transport Enhancements Programme (STEP), to deliver the first 2 years of the growth deal programme will be submitted to the Combined Authority for final approval on the 17th April. The programme will provide the Council with £900k of capital investment for transport improvements in 2015/16, and a further £800k in 2016/17. Additional funding allocated to Merseytravel will also be utilised to enhance Wirral's public transport network.

7. STREET LIGHTING STRATEGY DELIVERY-

Procurement for the supply and installation of approximately 7000 LED lamp units, combined with central management system (CMS) controls is now underway and, subject to satisfactory procurement outcomes, the project is expected to commence in late May this year, and be completed by February 2016.

8. NETWORK MANAGEMENT CO-ORDINATION

The Council continues to demonstrate that it is complying with the Traffic Management Act 2004 and Network Management Duty and minimising congestion and delay on the road network by successfully facilitating and co-ordinating high profile utility projects and Council schemes including United Utilities Crosshill Reservoir scheme between Thingwall and Wallasey, the Highways Agencies M53 J2 Moreton East and South bridge refurbishment scheme and the Council's own extensive Structural Maintenance Programme.