

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Stuart Whittingham
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Highways and Transport
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	Kevin Adderley, Strategic Director- Regeneration and Environment

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 2015/16 AND THE POTHOLE REPAIR FUND

Delivery of the current year's Structural Maintenance Programme has now commenced, with the following work either underway or programmed for the coming months:

Hot Rolled Asphalt carriageway resurfacing	June to August
Microasphalt carriageway surface treatment	June to August
Surface Dressing of carriageway	July
Footway surface treatment	June to August
Footway reconstruction	June to March

The Pothole Fund works, for which £452,652 was available in 2014/15, have been completed. Using a combination of that fund, our own pre-patching for the surface treatment programme for 2014/15 and in responding to safety defects in the carriageway, the Council carried out permanent repairs to a total of 11,944 potholes in 2014/15.

2. HIGHWAY SERVICES CONTRACT

The first year of the new contract with BAM Nuttall has now been completed, and whilst there are always lessons to be learned in developing new relationships and aligning systems and processes, the arrangements have enabled provision of a service which has proved satisfactory and the contractor has met the performance criteria set for the first year, which has earned BAM Nuttall the first six-month extension to the contract.

The Council's use of the new Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme (HMEP) contract and procurement tools has been recognised nationally through Finalist status in the Government Opportunity (GO) Annual Awards and a Commendation in the MJ Annual Excellence Awards; both in the Innovation in Procurement category. Service Managers are fully engaged in HMEP, and are providing advice and guidance to other Councils across the country as they procure their own highway services contracts.

3. MAJOR SCHEME SUBMISSION – DOCK BRIDGES

The DfT announced in March that Wirral Council has been successful in securing a grant of £6.408m through the Local Highway Maintenance Challenge Fund for the replacement of the 'A' and 'C' bridges on the A554, Tower Road. Mott MacDonald Ltd has been appointed to assist the Council in drawing-up the necessary contract documentation with a view to a construction contract being awarded in early 2016 for works completion in 2018. Cabinet will be considering a report in July 2015 to formally accept the DfT grant and to approve the withdrawal of the scheme from the Local Growth Fund (LGF) major schemes programme, so that the previously identified indicative LGF funding may be considered for other schemes in the City Region.

4. LOCAL SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FUND (LSTF)

The DfT funded LSTF programme ended across Merseyside on the 31st March.

Wirral residents are continuing to benefit from the Mind Your Business, Travel Solutions and Business Travel Support Projects during 2015/16 from funding secured through the Public Health Innovation Fund. The new programme continues to support residents to access employment through the provision of travel passes, cycles and personalised journey plans, as well as working with local businesses to encourage safe and sustainable travel to work to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads. The programme places increased emphasis on the importance of active travel and increased levels of employment on the health of Wirral residents.

5. LIVERPOOL CITY REGION TRANSPORT PLAN FOR GROWTH

The Liverpool City Region's Transport Plan for Growth was approved by the Combined Authority on 6th March 2015; The Transport Plan for Growth is the key policy framework for future transport provision and consolidates Merseyside and Halton Local Transport Plans (LTPs) to provide a strategic direction for transport which supports growth, regeneration and carbon reduction.

6. LIVERPOOL CITY REGION GROWTH DEAL - SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT ENHANCEMENTS PACKAGE (STEP)

The Business Plan to support the £13.8m Sustainable Transport Enhancements Package (STEP), to deliver the first 2 years of the growth deal programme was approved by the Combined Authority 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, and Cabinet will receive a report to approve the use of the grant and the programme in July. Additional funding allocated to Merseytravel will also be utilised to enhance Wirral's public transport network.

The LCR partnership has also been invited to bid for STEP Revenue money to support the STEP Capital schemes, the funding will be available for 12 months. Wirral Council submitted 6 bids to the value of £103,500. Merseytravel are seeking clarification and further details from bidders and the outcome of these submissions are anticipated to be announced in late June.

7. STREET LIGHTING STRATEGY DELIVERY

The Council has now awarded contracts to Macleans for the supply of approximately 7,500 LED units and to SSE for their installation. It is expected that the first units will begin to replace traditional lamps for the higher wattage lighting on our network in July, and the programme will be completed by March 2016.

The Council has managed to secure an interest-free loan for the majority of the £2.9 million to complete this work, which will considerably reduce the revenue cost of financing this capital investment.