

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

20TH JULY 2015

SUBJECT:	SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT ENHANCEMENTS PACKAGE (STEP)
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	KEVIN ADDERLEY, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR FOR REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR STUART WHITTINGHAM HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT
KEY DECISION?	YES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 On the 17th April 2015, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority approved the Major Scheme Business Case 'A STEP Change for Growth' for the Sustainable Transport Enhancements Package (STEP) to enable scheme promoters to draw down allocated Growth Deal funding to commence the delivery of STEP schemes.
- 1.2 On the 12th May 2015, the Combined Authority confirmed the Wirral element of the Growth Deal STEP funding for years 2015/16 and 2016/17.
- 1.3 This report seeks Cabinet approval to accept the £1,700,000 STEP capital funding and allocate it as outlined in the report.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 2.1 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 is available for the first 2 years.
- 2.2 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 now the executive decision making body with responsibility for the policy and funding arrangements that were 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>

- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 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 are focussed on Growth Zones 1 to 6. Investment in Growth Zone 7 Coastal Towns is planned 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 38 schemes will be delivered across the City Region in years one and two.

- 2.6 On the 17th April 2015, following submission of the STEP Major Scheme Business Case, the Combined Authority approved the programme for years 1 and 2 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.aspx>. The delivery programme for years three to six is currently under development and will be submitted to the Combined Authority for approval at a later date.

3.0 WIRRAL'S SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT ENHANCEMENTS PACKAGE

3.1 Wirral submitted schemes totalling £1,700,000 out of the £13,800,000 of capital funding available for the first 2 years 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.

3.2 On the 12th May 2015 the Combined Authority provided notification of the Wirral element of the Liverpool City Region STEP Major Scheme for the financial years 2015/16 and 2016/17 as follows;

Wirral	2015/16	2016/17	Total
STEP funding	£900,000	£800,000	£1,700,000

3.3 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

3.4 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

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

4.0 MERSEYTRAVEL'S SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT ENHANCEMENTS PACKAGE

4.1 As part of the wider Liverpool City Region STEP package Merseytravel have been awarded funding for several schemes for 2015/16 and 2016/17, which are either in Wirral or Wirral residents will benefit from. These schemes are;

- Local Improvement Grants to develop sustainable travel infrastructure in businesses
- Improvements to Birkenhead North Railway Station to provide additional car parking provision
- Bebington Rail Station platform upgrade
- Green Lane Rail Station platform upgrade and improved waiting shelters

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

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

5.1 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

5.2 Failure to undertake the identified programme of works and support delivery of the priorities of years one and two Liverpool City Region STEP Change for Growth Programme may have implications for Wirral in terms of allocations made to the authority for years three to six.

5.3 Wirral's failure to undertake the identified programme of works and support delivery of the priorities of the year one and two Liverpool City Region STEP Change for Growth Programme may also have implications for the wider Liverpool City Region in terms of future Growth Deal allocations.

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

5.5 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.

5.6 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 £1,700,000 as identified in Section 3.1.

5.7 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.

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

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 None. The proposed projects identified within this report have been identified and evaluated as part of a comprehensive City Region-wide business case development process. The schemes have been assessed against various criteria as part of a comprehensive and WebTAG compliant business case to achieve value for money. A sample of 18 of the 38 schemes indicates that the Benefit to Cost Ratio represented high or very high value for money.

7.0 CONSULTATION

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

8.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS

8.1 None.

9.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

9.1 All groups will benefit from improved transport provision, including road safety and access to opportunity.

10.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

10.1 All capital schemes are funded from the Liverpool City Region Sustainable Transport Enhancements Package (STEP) element of the Growth Deal. The Cabinet at its meeting on the 10th February 2015 approved a capital contribution of £700,000 to support the delivery of the Hamilton Street Accessibility Improvement Scheme and this was ratified at Budget Council on 24 February 2015. 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.

11.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

12.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 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

- 12.2 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>

13.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The schemes in the STEP programme will help to support active travel modes and improve the efficiency of the highway network, and therefore will contribute towards a reduction in CO₂ emissions.

14.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 There are no specific planning or community safety implications arising from this report.

15.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15.1 Cabinet is request to:

- (1) Approve the acceptance of the £1,700,000 STEP capital funding awarded to Wirral Council and the implementation of the programme outlined in section 3.0 of this report;
- (2) Delegate authority to the Head of Environment & Regulation, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Highways & Transport and Party Spokespersons, to make necessary adjustments to the priorities within the programme should the need arise due to financial or other factors.

16.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 16.1 To ensure that the Wirral element of the Liverpool City Region's STEP 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.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS / REFERENCE MATERIAL

BRIEFING NOTES HISTORY

Briefing Note	Date
None	

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%202012%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
CABINET - AGENDA ITEM 4 CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND FINANCING 2015/18	10th February 2015

APPENDIX 1 – WIRRAL STEP FUNDING - SCHEMES YEARS 1 AND 2

Scheme Description	Delivery Year	STEP Theme	STEP funding	Key Benefits
Hamilton Street Accessibility Improvements	2015/16	Invest for Growth	£400,000	Improved attractiveness and accessibility of Hamilton Square. Improved bus access to Hamilton Square Station and improved accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists. STEP funding is in addition to a £700,000 Council Capital allocation (total scheme cost £1,100,000).
Croft Retail Corridor	2015/16	Sustainable Access to Employment	£200,000	Increased accessibility into Croft Retail Park and increased attractiveness of area for businesses. Reduction in congestion and carbon emissions.
West Float Access Improvements via Poulton Swing Bridge	2015/16	Sustainable Access to Employment	£200,000	Improved connectivity between Birkenhead North and Wallasey for pedestrians and cyclists. Reduction in congestion and carbon emissions.
Port Sunlight Connection – Dibbin Bridge Link	2015/16	Sustainable Access to Employment	£100,000	Improved connectivity to business park and access to employment opportunities. Reduction in congestion and carbon emissions.
East Float Access Improvements Tower Road	2016/17	Sustainable Access to Employment	£200,000	Improved access and safety for pedestrians to key sites.
Wirral International Business Park Connections	2016/17	Sustainable Access to Employment	£200,000	Increased accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists to and within the business park and increased attractiveness of area for businesses.
East Float Access Improvements via Duke Street	2016/17	Sustainable Access to Employment	£400,000	Increased accessibility to employment through the provision of cycle facilities. Reduction in congestion and carbon emissions.
		TOTAL	£1,700,000	