

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Stuart Whittingham
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Transport & Infrastructure
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	Mark Smith, Head of Environment

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

1.0 TRANSPORT AND TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE FIT FOR THE FUTURE

The transport strategy, Connecting Wirral, which underpins all of the pledges we have made in the Wirral Plan, has been approved by Cabinet.

The Steering Group for ensuring the Strategy is successful has been established and met for the first time on 23 August to consider a Delivery Plan for the Strategy and performance in meeting our commitments to date. I was pleased to welcome not only officers from all main service areas across the Council but also our key partners in transport matters: the Police, MerseyTravel and our main highway services contractor, BAM Nuttall.

I am pleased to report design and other preparatory activity is continuing on programme to enable replacement of the 2 Dock Bridges during 2017.

The Council was allocated £206,000 from the Department of Transport's Pothole Action Fund, and approximately £150,000 of this funding has now been utilised during our summer programme of maintenance work. I will provide an up-to-date figure on the number of potholes filled at the meeting of Council.

Our overall highways Structural Maintenance Programme for road carriageways is 95% complete with £2.545 million of works carried out, and has resulted in over 268,000 square metres of road being resurfaced or receiving a surface treatment. Of particular interest to me has been a programme for the first use of a new technique for Wirral, 'Lockchip' which provides the benefits of durable, low cost surface dressing without the issues of loose chippings, meaning that it can be used more widely than traditional surface dressing.

The establishment of a Key Route Network of strategically important roads across the City Region has progressed. At its meeting in September, the Combined

Authority, who will be responsible for the Key Route Network from May 2017, approved principles that will ensure that Wirral Council continues to manage and maintain those routes in the Borough. I believe this is an important outcome, which will bring the benefit of strategic oversight and investment on our main roads whilst continuing with local management to reflect our local needs.

I am also pleased to report to Council that since the start of the financial year to the end of August, the Travel Solutions programme has assisted over 600 people to access employment using sustainable modes. The team are continuing to work with numerous local agencies such as Reach Out, Today's Women and the Princes trust to assist job seekers to overcome barriers to employment. Support and advice has been given to new students at Wirral Met College to help them to develop sustainable travel patterns.

The Road Safety team are continuing to deliver the 'Mind your Business Programme'; engaging with businesses to encourage safe and sustainable travel and reduce the numbers of people killed and seriously injured on our roads. The Driver Profiling Tool is very popular with businesses along with theory workshops and practical sessions covering a wide range of topics such as speeding, drink/drug driving, distractions and fatigue as well as legislation such as vehicle checks and maintenance.

The Business Travel Support programme is also continuing to support many events planned to help staff to travel to work using sustainable modes. Over the summer months Dr Bike events have been held at many local businesses to help people to maintain their bikes and offer guidance and support to people to cycle to work. The team participated in national cycle to work day on the 14th September and worked with local businesses to raise the profile of cycling.

The Liverpool City Region has submitted a £4.2 million bid for revenue funding from the DfT's Access Fund. The bid was developed with considerable input from a wide range of partners and builds on strong and imaginative links with Local Chambers of Commerce, Sustrans, Living Streets and The Mersey Forest as well as the Health Sector and transport operators.

If successful the funding will provide support to employers, employees and individuals, to enable increased levels of walking and cycling and continued improvement of our sustainable transport network, resulting in increased benefits for individuals, communities and businesses across the City Region. The outcome of the application will be announced at the end of the year.

Finally I can report Wirral are leading the development of the future Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan for the City Region for 2018 – 2028, for when the existing plan is completed, and work with City Region colleagues is underway to ensure our network continues to be a high quality benefit to all our residents and visitors.