

ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**Tuesday, 14 March 2023**

REPORT TITLE:	CITY REGION SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SETTLEMENT COMBINED AUTHORITY TRANSPORT PLAN PROGRAMME 2023/24
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

REPORT SUMMARY

This report seeks approval of the recommended City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) Combined Authority Transport Plan (CATP) programme for 2023/24 and delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhoods to accept the associated grant funding. The report also seeks approval for the indicative recommended CRSTS CATP programme for 2024-2027.

The effective delivery of the council's CRSTS CATP programme aligns with the Wirral Plan 2021-26, in particular: working for safe and pleasant communities; active and healthy lives; inclusive economy and working for a sustainable environment.

The effective delivery of the council's CRSTS CATP programme contributes to the strategic objectives of the Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy.

The report is a Key Decision as it affects all wards.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee is recommended to:

- (1) Approve the proposed City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement Combined Authority Transport Plan programme for 2023/24 as set out in Appendix A to this report;
- (2) Approve the indicative City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement Combined Authority Transport Plan programme for 2024/27 as set out in Appendix B to this report; and
- (3) Authorise the Director for Neighbourhood Services:
 - (a) to accept the grant funding allocated to Wirral Council by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority for the 2023/24 City Region Sustainable Transport

Settlement Combined Authority Transport Plan programme and any related grant funding subsequently awarded;

(b) to, in consultation with the Chair and Spokespersons of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee amend the programme having regard for available resources and risk-based prioritisation of schemes; and

(4) Authorise the Director of Law and Governance to negotiate and finalise any grant funding agreements associated with these recommendations.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 To ensure that the transport capital programme reflects the Liverpool City Regions Combined Authority (LCRCA) Transport Plan, Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy, Mayoral priorities and the Wirral 2021-26 Plan and has the flexibility to ensure delivery of the most effective schemes within the financial year.
- 1.2 The effective delivery of the council's CRSTS CATP programme contributes to the following strategic objectives of the Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy outcomes:
- A reduction in the number and severity of road traffic collisions working to a target of no avoidable collisions by 2040;
 - Creating the conditions for more people to make safer journeys on foot or by bicycle and enabling more children to walk and cycle to school; and
 - Contributing to improved air quality and reducing climate changing CO2 emissions

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Council could decide not to accept the grant funding offered. This is not considered to be an appropriate option given that the proposed programmes and projects identified within this report enable the council to comply with its statutory duties as set out in the Highways Act 1980, Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, Road Traffic Act 1988, Local Government Act 2000 and the Traffic Management Act 2004 and address the priorities of the LCRCA Transport Plan, Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy, the Council's Road Safety Working Group, Wirral 2021-26 Plan and climate emergency declaration.
- 2.2 The funding cannot be accepted and used for other purposes as it would not meet the grant funding award agreement conditions. Schemes and projects have been developed in line with guidance provided by the LCRCA.

3.0 BACKGROUND

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Transport Plan & City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement

- 3.1 Until the LCRCA budget for transport is approved, this report proposes to allocate the anticipated CRSTS funding. The council's indicative grant allocation for 2023/24 is £2,160,000. Indicative allocations for the remaining years of the CRSTS are as follows:

Theme	Year 2 2023/24	Year 3 2024/25	Year 4 2025/26	Year 5 2026/27
Local Safety Schemes	£660,000	£660,000	£660,000	£660,000
Active Travel Improvements	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000
Traffic Signal and Pedestrian Improvements	£1,000,000	£1,000,000	£750,000	£750,000
Total	£2,160,000	£2,160,000	£1,910,000	£1,910,000

Wirral Council's Combined Authority Transport Plan Programme

- 3.2 Each of the Liverpool City Region (LCR) partner authorities is required by the LCR to develop their own capital programme which, when combined, form a Liverpool City Region wide Implementation Plan.
- 3.3 Demand for road safety improvements is high and the Highways & Infrastructure service continues to receive numerous requests for improvements to the transport network from the general public, Council Members and other stakeholders. Requests cover a wide range of measures from major highway improvements, traffic calming, pedestrian crossings, reduced speed limits, signage, footway provision and other road safety measures. Such requests have been assessed based on investigations into road casualty data and also in line with the priorities and recommendations identified by the Road Safety Working Group.
- 3.4 Appendix A to this report presents the recommended 2023/24 Combined Authority Transport Plan delivery programme against an anticipated allocation of £2,160,000. Schemes identified meet the priorities of the Road Safety Working Group including phase 2 implementation of the borough wide 20mph speed limit project and other key themes including local safety, traffic signal, pedestrian access and public rights of way improvements.
- 3.5 Appendix B to this report sets out an indicative list of recommended schemes for investigation and delivery over the next three years (24/25, 25/26 and 26/27) remaining in the overall five-year CRSTS programme. This is an evolving list which will be updated to reflect schemes identified through annual reviews of road casualty data and strategic road safety priorities and will form the basis of the recommended programme for 2024/25 year which will be brought to Committee in March 2024.
- 3.6 Appendix C to this report provides a full review list of all locations assessed as part of officers' 2022 annual local safety review and all customer service requests, including petitions, reported to the council by residents, Ward Members and other stakeholders by December 2022. The list has been objectively assessed and ranked based upon collision data analysis and local, regional and national guidance and strategic priorities, under the council's legal duties referenced in paragraph 5.1 of this report. Those highest-ranking schemes are recommended in an attempt to reduce the number and severity of casualties on Wirral's roads and have been included within the recommended 2023/24 CATP programme as detailed in Appendix A. Other schemes which have been identified for potential interventions and/or further investigation are included in Appendix B to this report. Any locations included in Appendix C to this report which have not currently been recommended for inclusion in the programmes at Appendix A and B will nevertheless be reviewed again during 2023 along with all other locations reported after December 2022 and will inform future CATP programme recommendations, including the recommended programme for 2024/25 year which will be the subject of a report to this Committee in March 2024.

3.7 Where engineering measures have not currently been recommended, borough wide road safety education and engagement initiatives will continue to be delivered. Measures include:

- Road safety education delivered through schools and young people, including the uptake of free cycle training.
- Raising awareness through popular interventions such as the Mock Trial via the Council's Mind Your Business programme
- A young driver initiative, delivered to novice drivers via Approved Driving Instructors
- Support provided to Merseyside Police for the delivery of the revered Bikesafe programme for motorcyclists; and
- Community engagement initiatives such as Safer Roads Watch.

These are supported via the promotion of national campaigns including Project EDWARD, Brake Road Safety Weeks etc whilst also supporting local campaigns alongside partners and key stakeholders.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 All schemes as set out in Appendix A are proposed to be funded from the CRSTS indicative grant funding allocation to Wirral for 2023/24, which is anticipated to be £2,160,000. The indicative allocation is a component of the CRSTS and must be used in year to fund transport capital improvement schemes.

4.2 Engineering solutions constructed as part of the programme may have additional ongoing maintenance requirements for any additional highway asset elements created e.g. signals, signs and lines, which will have some revenue implications that officers are not able to quantify at the present time. Conversely, where highway improvements are made from the capital scheme there will be offsets that may reduce current revenue spend demand. There are no other revenue implications since all design, development, construction, project management and supervision will be funded from the CRSTS grant award. There is additional separate grant provided under CRSTS for temporary fixed-term staffing resources to support the programme which the council will also fully utilise where applicable.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The council has statutory duties as defined by the Highways Act 1980, Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, Road Traffic Act 1988, Local Government Act and the Traffic Management Act 2004. Continual reductions in the number and severity of collisions is a key priority for the council, in respect of its duty under section 39 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 to 'take steps both to reduce and prevent accidents'.

5.2 For schemes identified in Appendices A and B to this report recommending engineering solutions, traffic regulation orders may be required and these will be subject to a statutory consultation process that may require, subject to the number of objections received, an Officer Decision or further report to this Committee before approval to proceed with the scheme is granted. Additionally, where schemes require tenders to be invited under the council's Constitution, Contract Procedure

Rules, an Officer Decision report or further report to this Committee may be required before approval to accept a tender and award a construction contract is granted.

- 5.3 A grant funding agreement (GFA) will need to be finalised by the Director of Law and Governance between the Council and the LCRCA for funding allocated through the CRSTS programme for 2023/24. Following scheme delivery, the Section 151 Officer will be required to sign a declaration confirming that the relevant GFA funding was appropriately defrayed in accordance with the grant conditions.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 Existing staff resources will be used for the detailed investigation, design and supervision of these schemes, supplemented by external support where required.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 Failure to undertake the identified programme of works could result in the Council not meeting its Statutory Duties as set out in the Highways Act 1980, Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, Road Traffic Act 1988, Local Government Act 2000 and the Traffic Management Act 2004.
- 7.2 Failure to undertake the identified programme of works would also result in a failure to support the delivery of the priorities of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Transport Plan. The GFA will include conditions relating to deployment of funding resources and performance monitoring and evaluation of CRSTS programme delivery. If the GFA conditions are not met, this could result in the loss or clawback of funding and reputational damage to the council. Funding cannot be rolled forward if programmes of work are not delivered 'in year.
- 7.3 The list of schemes identified has been prepared with initial approximate cost estimates. However, it should be noted that final schemes will be subject to re-estimation based upon developed detailed designs and statutory undertakers' works requirements. Further detailed investigations will be required prior to any final scheme being designed and implemented. Some of these schemes may also be subject to the requirement of a Traffic Regulation Order(s), and delivery timescales may be impacted by officers attempting to resolve objections to proposals during a consultation period or by the requirement to report back to the relevant Chief Officer or Committee for approval to proceed.
- 7.4 Failure to adhere to the objectives of the DfT national cycling strategy 'Gear Change' and associated technical guidance LTN1/20 may result in the Council failing to meet the standards set by the new Active Travel England body. Active Travel England will assess the Council's performance with respect to sustainable travel outcomes, particularly cycling and walking, which will be taken into account when considering funding allocations. Active Travel England will enforce the standards with the aim of raising performance.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Wirral Council has a statutory consultation process that is required for the undertaking of work on the adopted highway which will require public consultation, objections to which would be considered under the Scheme of Delegation in the council's Constitution or by the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee once a level of objections have been reached exceeding the current scheme of Delegation number.
- 8.2 The Wirral Active Travel Forum is a formally constituted group which meets quarterly with interested public and private organisations and individuals, to support active travel as a simple, low cost and effective way for people to access life opportunities whilst increasing levels of physical activity in their day to day life. Membership of this group is open to all and the forum will continue to be engaged as these programmes develop.
- 8.3 The Active Travel Members Working Group will also be engaged as these programmes develop.
- 8.4 Any associated consultation processes will follow the guiding principles of fair consultation, namely:
- It should be at a time when proposals are at a formative stage
 - Must include sufficient reasons for particular proposals to allow those consulted to give intelligent consideration and an intelligent response
 - Those consulted should be made aware of the factors that are of decisive relevance to the decision
 - Adequate time should be given for consideration and response
 - The product of the consultation should be conscientiously taken into account by the decision makers in finalising their statutory proposals/ when the ultimate decision is taken

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 As part of the development of the Merseyside Local Transport Plan (LTP) 3, 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 that can demonstrate that there are no negative implications associated with the implementation of these activities on the 'protected characteristics'. The proposed programme of works that supports the Combined Authority Transport Plan programme includes measures to assist the transport needs of all sections of the community.
- 9.2 Whilst there are no equality implications arising from this report, the associated actions arising from the delivery may need to assess any equality issues and mitigate any negative impact that may emerge which will be completed at the earliest possible stage.
- 9.3 The Council has an obligation under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality duty (Sect 149 2011) to show due regard to the duty and show due regard to mitigate any negative impacts that may affect people with protected characteristics under the Act. The Director for Neighbourhood Services recognises that this decision may have an impact on those who would wish to access certain locations by motor

vehicle and other modes of transport. The Council will be publishing details of any restrictions and alternative routes where applicable.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The proposed programme of works set out in this report generally have environmental benefits and are aligned with regional and Wirral emission targets and support for active transport, as set out in the Liverpool City Region's Pathway to Net Zero Strategy and the Cool2 Climate Change Strategy for Wirral. Many of the Local Journey and Network Management projects are aimed at improving access to the highway network which will help to support better air quality across the borough and also enable a greater number of journeys to be undertaken by sustainable modes, therefore reducing residents' reliance on the private car and reducing carbon emissions. Other projects will improve environmental safety for highway users.
- 10.2 Increasing cycling and walking will help combat climate change. By encouraging and enabling people to travel more on foot and by cycle instead of private car harmful emissions will be reduced. Promoting active travel can result in reduced emissions of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂), particulate matter (PM) and CO₂ helping to tackle climate change and improve air quality.
- 10.3 Gear Change Strategy identifies that mode shift to active transport is one of the most cost effective ways of reducing transport emissions and that meeting the targets to double cycling and increasing walking would lead to savings of £567million annually from air quality alone and prevent 8,300 premature deaths each year in England and provide opportunity to improve green spaces and biodiversity.
- 10.4 The Combined Authority Transport Plan will support the Council's Sport & Physical Activity Strategy in its role alongside all partners to shape and achieve "good growth" for Wirral; creating great places for people to live, work, learn and enjoy, with active travel solutions linked to walking and cycling, and ensuring Wirral's infrastructure is sustainable for the future. Keeping leisure provision within local communities and increasing the Council's outreach offer, will all serve to minimise emissions from car usage. The council's leisure centres will all have cycle storage and active travel access with associated infrastructure facilities, under the government's 'gear change' initiative, will be considered and implemented where appropriate.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 It is considered that the proposed Combined Authority Transport Plan Integrated Transport Block programme for 2023-2027 as set out in Appendices A and B helps deliver Wirral's wider Community Wealth Building commitments to deliver a prosperous, inclusive economy that benefits local residents and supports the principles of community wealth building. As the schemes move into the delivery phase, all opportunities to secure community wealth and social value through the council's construction contracts with suppliers will be explored.
- 11.2 The programme supports several key Community Wealth Building aims, including: Maximising the Wirral Pound – buying locally wherever possible to support local businesses and employment. Evidence shows that making changes that are good for

walking and cycling are also good for local businesses. Local people who walk and cycle spend more in local shops than those who drive as they visit more often and cumulatively spend more.

- 11.3 The project also supports community development – enabling resilient local communities that are more sustainable by protecting the environment, minimising waste and energy consumption and using other resources more efficiently.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: 2023/24 Combined Authority Transport Plan Capital Programme

Appendix B: 2024-27 Indicative Forward Programme

Appendix C: Local Safety Scheme Review

BACKGROUND PAPERS

LTP3 Integrated Assessment

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Transport Plan:
<https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/LCRCA-TRANSPORT-PLAN.pdf>

DFT Road Safety Research Report no.108 'Contribution of Local Safety Schemes to Casualty Reduction':
<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20090417002224/http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roadsafety/research/rsrr/theme5/rsrr108.pdf>

Liverpool City Region Rights of Ways Improvement Plan 2 2018 - 2028:
https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/LCRCA_ROWIP_AUG2018.pdf

Gear change – A bold vision for cycling and walking:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/904146/gear-change-a-bold-vision-for-cycling-and-walking.pdf

Cycle infrastructure design (LTN 1/20):
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/951074/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-1-20.pdf

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee in accordance with part 5.2 (b, c and d) of its Terms of Reference.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee – Combined Authority Transport Plan 2022/23	1 March 2022
Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee – Road Safety Working Group	16 March 2021
Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee – Combined Authority Transport Plan 2021/22	16 March 2021
Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change - Combined Authority Transport Plan 2020/21	11 June 2020