

**ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE****Tuesday, 11 March 2025**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>CITY REGION SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SETTLEMENT COMBINED AUTHORITY TRANSPORT PLAN PROGRAMME 2025/26</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES</b>

**REPORT SUMMARY**

This report requests approval of the recommended City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) Combined Authority Transport Plan (CATP) programme for 2025/26. The report also seeks approval for the indicative recommended CRSTS CATP programme for 2026-2027.

The effective delivery of the Council's CRSTS CATP programme aligns with the Council Plan for 2023-2027, in particular: theme 5: working together to protect our environment, and theme 6: working together to create safe, resilient, and engaged communities.

The delivery of the Council's CRSTS CATP programme contributes to the strategic objectives of the Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy and the Council's Road Safety Plan 2023-2027.

This matter is a Key Decision as it may affect all wards within the borough.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

1. the proposed City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement ("CRSTS") Combined Authority Transport programme for 2025/26 and the spending of the associated grant funding once accepted by the Council's Section 151 Officer, as set out in Appendix A to this report.
2. the indicative CRSTS Combined Authority Transport Plan programme for 2026/27 as set out in Appendix B to this report.
3. that the Director of Neighbourhood Services be authorised to amend the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority for the 2025/26 CRSTS Combined Authority Transport Plan programme having regard for available resources

and risk-based prioritisation of schemes, in consultation with the Chair and party Spokespersons of this Committee; and

4. that the Director of Law and Corporate Services be authorised to execute any grant funding agreements associated with these recommendations.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 To ensure that the Council's transport capital programme reflects the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) Transport Plan, the Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy, the Wirral Working Together 2023-2027 Council Plan and the Council's Road Safety Plan 2023-2027 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 City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) Combined Authority Transport Plan (CATP) programme contributes to the following strategic objectives of the Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy:
- 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 CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- 1.3 The LCRCA is currently developing the Local Transport Plan (LTP) 4 for the region which will set out plans, policies and ambitions for transport services and investment in the LCR until 2040. With a clear vision to provide clean, safe, and accessible transport across the region for moving people and goods, the Council's CRSTS CATP programme, that includes the delivery of highway improvement schemes for local safety and active travel supports the objectives of LTP4.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 The Council may wish to decide not to accept the grant funding offered. However, this is not considered to be an appropriate option given that the proposed programmes and schemes identified within this report enable the Council to comply with its statutory duties as set out in paragraph 5.1 of this report and achieve the strategic objectives set out in this report as reasons for the recommendations.
- 2.2 The funding cannot be accepted and used for other purposes as it would not meet the grant funding agreement (GFA) conditions. Schemes and projects included in the recommended programmes have been selected and developed in line with guidance provided by the LCRCA.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

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

- 3.1 In Spring 2022, the Department for Transport issued a five-year Liverpool City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement of £710m to the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority with part of this funding being allocated for road safety and sustainability across the City Region. Existing funding arrangements for small scale transport capital improvement schemes, previously referred to as the Integrated

Transport Block funding is rolled into the CRSTS as part of the move towards greater consolidation of transport capital funding streams.

- 3.2 Over the current five-year CRSTS settlement period from 2022/23 to 2026/27, funding will be allocated to specific locations across the borough targeted at reducing the number and severity of road traffic collisions, to promote and improve active travel facilities, and provide traffic signal and pedestrian movement improvements.
- 3.3 On 12 March 2024, this Committee agreed to accept the grant allocation of £2.17m and approved the CRSTS Combined Authority Transport Plan programme for 2024/25 together with the indicative associated programme for 2025-2027.
- 3.4 The LCRCA have confirmed the Council's CRSTS budget allocation for 2025/26 is **£1.92m** with an anticipated allocation of the same value for 2026/27. The table below sets out the five-year CRSTS CATP capital budget allocations, together with the spend profile for the first 3 years of the programme, budget carry over, in-year spend, and revised annual available budgets. The in-year spend for year 3 currently stands at £643,507 which represents the claim to date, however the outturn for 24/25 is predicted to be £1,839,043 once the committed work (i.e. purchase orders raised and invoiced) within the programme is included.

Theme	Year 1 2022/23	Year 2 2023/24	Year 3 2024/25	Year 4 2025/26	Year 5 2026/27
Local Safety Schemes	£440,000	£670,000	£670,000	£670,000	£670,000
Active Travel Improvements	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000
Traffic Signal & Pedestrian Improvements	£310,000	£1,000,000	£1,000,000	£750,000	£750,000
Total allocation	£1,250,000	£2,170,000	£2,170,000	£1,920,000	£1,920,000
Plus carry over		£724,274	£1,508,085	£1,839,043	
<b>Total available budget</b>	<b>£1,250,000</b>	<b>£2,894,274</b>	<b>£3,678,085</b>	<b>£3,759,043 (forecasted)</b>	
Less in-year spend	£525,726	£1,386,189	£1,839,042 (forecasted)		
Carry over to next year	£724,274	£1,508,085	£1,839,043 (forecasted)		

- 3.5 Whilst the CRSTS CATP programme is spread over a five-year period, it is expected that the budget allocation for each financial year is spent in-year. However, there is potential for some slack within the programme to slip part of the budget into the following year should this be necessary.
- 3.6 In the CRSTS CATP programme for 2024/25 there is currently predicted £1.839m carry over of budget into the 2025/26 programme. The nature of the schemes within the programme requires consultation/engagement with residents and businesses which extends the delivery timeline. Furthermore, some of the programmed schemes have required the procurement of additional external resources to support internal Council staff. It is anticipated that 50% of the total CATP budget allocation will be spent within 2024/25 and therefore the remaining budget to be carried forward into 2025/26 will change accordingly from the carry over figure shown in the table

above, as further spend is yet to be submitted and claimed back from the CA for the Q3 and Q4 financial year periods.

### **Wirral Council's Combined Authority Transport Plan Programme**

- 3.7 Each of the Liverpool City Region (LCR) constituent authorities is required by the LCR to develop their own capital programme which, when combined, form a Liverpool City Region wide Implementation Plan.
- 3.8 Demand for road safety improvements is high and the Highways and Infrastructure service in Neighbourhood Services continues to receive a very high volume of direct requests for improvements to the highway network from residents, Council Members, and other stakeholders. Requests can 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. All such requests have been reviewed by officers, based on investigations into recorded road traffic casualty data and in line with the priorities and recommendations identified by the Road Safety Working Group.
- 3.9 Appendix A to this report presents the recommended 2025/26 CATP delivery programme against a capital budget allocation of approximately £5m (including carry over and bringing forward the initial design work for the 2026/27 programme). The proposed schemes identified meet the priorities of the Road Safety Working Group and other key themes including local safety, traffic signal, pedestrian access, and public rights of way improvements.
- 3.10 Appendix B to this report sets out an indicative list of recommended schemes for further investigation and delivery during the final year in the overall five-year CRSTS programme. This is an evolving list which is updated to reflect schemes identified through annual reviews of road traffic casualty data and strategic road safety policies. It will form the basis of the recommended programme for 2026/27 year which will be brought back to this Committee in March 2026.
- 3.11 Appendix C to this report provides a full list of all locations that have been assessed as part of an annual local safety scheme review, and all customer service requests, including petitions, reported to the Council by residents, Ward Members, and other stakeholders up to the end of December 2024 for road safety improvements. This list has been objectively ranked based upon recorded injury collision data analysis and local, regional, and national guidance. The highest-ranking schemes are recommended to reduce the number and severity of road traffic casualties on Wirral's roads with some been included within the proposed 2025/26 CATP programme. Any locations included in this appendix that have not currently been recommended for inclusion in the forthcoming programmes will be reviewed again during 2025 along with all other locations reported or service requests received.
- 3.12 Where local safety engineering measures have not currently been recommended, borough-wide road safety education and engagement activities and/or initiatives will continue to be delivered that 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.

3.13 These activities are supported via the promotion of national campaigns including Project EDWARD (Every Day Without A Road Death), Brake Road Safety Week 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 CATP grant funding allocation to Wirral Council for 2025/26, which is £1,920,000. The Council's total CRSTS CATP budget for 2025/26 is approximately £3.76m, including for capital programme carry over from 2024/25. The indicative allocation is a component of the CRSTS and must be defrayed in-year, where possible, to fund transport improvement schemes.

4.2 Engineering measures constructed as part of the programme are likely to have additional ongoing maintenance requirements for any additional asset elements created (traffic signals, signs, and road markings) which will have some revenue implications. Officers are not able to quantify these implications at the present time. Any future maintenance costs will need to be met from the Council's existing limited highway maintenance revenue budget. However, where highway improvements are made under a capital scheme there will be offsets that may reduce current revenue spending demand.

4.3 There are no other financial revenue implications as all scheme 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. A reduction in the number and severity of road traffic collisions is a key priority for the Council, in respect of its duty under Section 39 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 to take actions to both reduce and prevent road traffic collisions.

5.2 The Council has a statutory duty to communicate and consult with specific customers and stakeholders for highway improvement schemes where the Council intends to implement Traffic Regulation Orders (restricting access, waiting, or parking); or to alter the speed limit under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. This process will be followed for any schemes identified within the CRSTS CATP programme that requires a Traffic Regulation Order.

- 5.3 Part 3 Section C of the constitution provides that express delegation is given to the Section 151 Officer to accept grant funding. This is subject to a requirement to report the acceptance of the grant funding to the appropriate Committee.
- 5.4 A grant funding agreement will need to be finalised by the Director of Law and Corporate Services between the Council and the LCRCA for funding allocated through the CRSTS programme for 2025/26. Following scheme delivery, the Council's Section 151 Officer will be required to sign a declaration confirming that the relevant grant funding agreement 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 the schemes identified within the CRSTS CATP programme together with assistance from specialist advisors and/or external support where required.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 7.1 There are key risks associated with the effective delivery of the Council's CRSTS CATP programme for 2025/26 that are outlined below. These risks will be managed and monitored by an already established CRSTS CATP Board throughout the delivery of the programme, which reports into the Highways and Infrastructure Programme Governance Board and, if necessary, will be reported to the Council's Senior Leadership Team and Members.
- 7.2 Failure to undertake the identified programme of works could result in the Council not meeting its statutory duties as set out in item 5.1 of this report and would also result in failure to support the delivery of the priorities contained within the LCRCA Transport Plan.
- 7.3 The GFA includes conditions relating to deployment of funding resources and performance monitoring and evaluation of CRSTS programme delivery and if the GFA conditions are not met, this could result in the loss or clawback of funding that is likely to lead to reputational damage to the Council.
- 7.4 It is important to highlight that the CRSTS CATP programme includes engineering schemes that are being delivered predominantly to reduce the number and severity of road traffic collision casualties and to provide improved facilities for vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists. Therefore, this programme seeks to mitigate any highway safety risks in accordance with the hierarchy of road users.
- 7.5 The list of schemes identified in appendices A and B has been prepared with initial cost estimates, however, it should be noted that final schemes will be subject to a further estimate to determine a more accurate cost 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 require the implementation of a traffic regulation order or orders (TRO), 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 appropriate delegated Chief Officer or Committee for approval to proceed.

- 7.6 Failure to adhere to the objectives of the Department for Transport (DfT) National Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy and associated technical guidance LTN 1/20 may result in the Council failing to meet the standards set by Active Travel England (ATE). ATE will assess the Council's performance with respect to sustainable travel outcomes, particularly cycling and walking, which will be considered as part of the funding allocations. ATE will enforce the standards with the aim of raising performance.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 The Council has a statutory consultation process that is required for the undertaking of work on the adopted highway that specifically relates to the implementation of a TRO, which will require public consultation. Any objections through the TRO process would be considered under the Scheme of Delegation in the Council's Constitution or by the ECET Committee once a level of objections have been reached exceeding the current scheme of delegation number.
- 8.2 Where identified engineering schemes within the programme that do not require a TRO, officers will still engage and consult, where possible with those residents and businesses that are directly affected. However, irrespective of whether the engineering scheme includes a TRO or not, officers will ensure that they engage and consult with all local Members where the engineering scheme is being proposed within their Wards.

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision, or activity.
- 9.2 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 several 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 CATP programme includes measures to assist the transport needs. The IA that is still relevant can be found at the following address:  
<https://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50085555/Appendix%20C%20LTP3%20Integrated%20Assessment.pdf>
- 9.3 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.

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The proposed programme of works set out in the report generally have environmental benefits and are aligned with regional and Wirral carbon emission targets as set out in the LCRCA Five Year Climate Action Plan 2023-2028 and the 'Cool2' Climate Change Strategy for Wirral. Many of the identified schemes are



aimed at improving access to the highway network which will help support better air quality across the borough and enable a greater number of journeys to be undertaken by sustainable modes, therefore reducing residents' reliance on the use of private car and reducing carbon emissions.

- 10.2 Increasing cycling and walking will help combat climate change. By encouraging and enabling people to travel more on foot and by cycle as an alternative to the private car, harmful emissions will be reduced. Promoting active travel can result in reduced emissions of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), Particulate Matter (PM) and Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) helping to tackle climate change and improve air quality.
- 10.3 The CATP 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. Retaining leisure provision within local communities will all serve to minimise emissions from car usage. The CATP programme also support the Council Plan 'Wirral Working Together' 2023-2027 by working together to protect our environment and play our part in addressing the climate emergency.

## **11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 It is considered that the proposed CATP Integrated Transport Block programme for 2023-2027 as set in Appendices A and B helps deliver Wirral's wider Community Wealth Building strategy commitments to deliver a prosperous, inclusive economy that benefits 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 programme 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 – 2025/26 Combined Authority Transport Plan Capital Programme

Appendix B – 2026-27 Indicative Forward Programme

Appendix C – Local Safety Schemes Annual Review

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Developing a vision for Local Transport Plan 4  
<https://liverpoolcityregion-ca.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s60735/Enc.%201%20for%20Developing%20the%20new%20Local%20Transport%20Plan%20for%20the%20LCR.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 Way Improvement Plan 2018-2028  
[https://api.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/LCRCA\\_ROWIP\\_AUG2018.pdf](https://api.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/LCRCA_ROWIP_AUG2018.pdf)

Cycle Infrastructure design (LTN 1/20)  
<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ffa1f96d3bf7f65d9e35825/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-1-20.pdf>

Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy  
<https://www.merseysidepcc.info/media/uv4px4an/lcr-road-safety-strategy-final.pdf>

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is linked to the terms of reference for the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee, part 5.2 (b, c, and d) in relation to all highways matters and as highway authority, street authority, bridge authority, including but not limited to public open spaces, street furniture on the highway and open spaces or parts of open spaces immediately adjacent to the highway; in relation to traffic management and transport and as traffic authority, including but not limited to public passenger transport and the co-ordination of transport for service users, traffic orders and rights of way issues; in relation to parking, including on and off-street parking and civil parking enforcement.

## SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee – Combined Authority Transport Plan Programme 2022/23	1 March 2022
Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee – Combined Authority Transport Plan Programme 2023/24	14 March 2023