

EXECUTIVE MEMBER - ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

A meeting of the Executive Member - Environment and Sustainability was held on Wednesday, 4 June 2025.

PRESENT: Councillor P Gavigan.

OFFICERS: M Brown, G Field, C Lunn and L Ud-Din.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: None.

25/1 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received at this point in the meeting.

25/2 **2025/26 TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

The Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability considered a report regarding the 2025/26 Transport and Infrastructure Capital Programme.

The purpose of the report was to gain approval to allocate funding to develop and deliver transport and infrastructure improvements contained within the report.

Middlesbrough Council received City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) funding from the Department for Transport, via Tees Valley Combined Authority, to undertake maintenance and improvement works on the Council's transport network.

The current Council approved CRSTS allocation for 2025/26 was £1.065m, specified against Incentive Funding (new works) and £2.339m for Highways Maintenance. In addition, the Council had been allocated a one-off grant totalling £0.750m from the Department of Transport towards re-surfacing works as part of the Government's December Spending Review. Appendix 2 detailed the planned works totalling £4.154m.

It was proposed that the Council approved the expenditure of the CRSTS allocation for 2025/26, as outlined in Appendix 2. This would provide the Council time to identify the most prudent method of delivering a longer-term programme; ensuring that best value for money was achieved.

The projects within the proposed programme had been identified from the Council's 'Future Year scheme' list. This was a compiled table of all known requirements and suggestions received, which were matrix ranked for their suitability against a set criterion, forming a priority basis. However, this was also conditional upon external funding criteria, eligible uses, statutory obligations, and other implications.

The maintenance schemes were based on asset condition rating systems, and allocation of resources work to address a 'worst first' was used. This was rationalised based on public safety and asset longevity priorities (such as ensuring that structures were safe). This ensured that the Council was sequentially addressing the areas of the network in most need of resolving.

The Council also received specific allocations through competitive grant programmes and awards that were to deliver prescribed pieces of work, depending upon national / regional criteria. Any awards for such projects by-passed the matrix scoring criteria (although this may have been used to identify the most suitable candidates) and could be awarded / was accessible throughout the financial year. The proposals within the report included all known awarded allocations at time of approval but could be subject to change. If required, approvals would be sought through the formal decision-making process.

A map of the scheme locations was shown at Appendix 1; the full funding allocations used to identify the projects / programmes were shown at Appendix 2.

OPTIONS

Re-assessing the project proposals – this was not recommended, as they had been identified using a robust scoring matrix and the prescribed funding criteria, to ensure best allocation of resources. Any changes would deviate from this process and add delays to the delivery programme.

Do nothing. This was not recommended as it would not allow the Council to allocate funding and make the necessary arrangements in advance of receipt of the allocations. The delivery of infrastructure improvements required prudent planning and co-ordination, so approvals in a timely manner were pivotal in ensuring a successful delivery programme.

The Executive Member referred to the 'Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)' section of the report and queried the stated deadline date of March 2025. The officer clarified that this was an error and should have read March 2026. Subsequently, the Executive Member proposed that a further recommendation be added to the report for an interim update report to be provided to the Executive in October/November 2025.

ORDERED that:

1. The allocation of £4.154m of approved CRSTS grant funding to develop and deliver infrastructure improvements, as outlined within the report, be approved.
2. An interim update be provided to the Executive in October/November 2025 on the progress of the 2025/26 Transport and Infrastructure Capital Programme.

REASONS

This required a decision as the proposals would impact upon the whole Borough and utilise different streams of funding allocations secured by the Council. Approval would ensure that the proposals were aligned with the Council's ambitions and objectives.

This was being recommended as it would allow prudent allocation of funding to ensure that the Council was not only working toward its ambitions and objectives but was allocating resources to ensure statutory requirements placed upon the Council as the Highway Authority, "to ensure the safe and expeditious movement of people and goods on its network".

The allocations that were being proposed were based on ensuring a balance between maintaining existing asset and making improvements to the accessibility of the current network/alternate modes of transport enhancements. This balance was crucial to ensure the safety of the infrastructure and to assist in encouraging sustainability of the network.

In accordance with Section 6.38 of the Executive Scheme of Delegation, decisions that involved expenditure or savings above £250,000, or that had a significant impact across the Borough, were reserved to the Executive. The proposals outlined within this report met those criteria and therefore required formal Executive approval: in accordance with paragraph (g) of the Executive Scheme of Delegation, matters relating to bids for funding that did not have major financial or strategic significance - or which had already been approved in principle by the Executive, or as part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework - fell within delegated authority. However, due to the value of the proposals and their strategic importance, formal Executive approval was sought in this instance. Details of the scope of each Executive Portfolio could be found in the Executive Scheme of Delegation.

25/3

ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED.

None.

