

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

Report of:	Director of Environment and Commercial Services
Relevant Executive Member:	Executive Member for Environment
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	10 April 2024
Title:	2024/25 Transport and Infrastructure Capital Programme
Report for:	Decision
Status:	Public
Strategic priority:	Physical environment
Key decision:	Yes
Why:	Decision(s) will incur expenditure or savings above £250,000
Subject to call in?:	Yes
Why:	Not Applicable

Proposed decision(s)

That the Executive

- approve the allocation of £4.015m 2024/2025 Local Transport Plan (LTP) Highways Maintenance / Incentive grant funding to specific schemes as detailed in Appendix 2.
- approve a budget virement of £0.316m from the LTP Incentive Funding scheme to the LTP Highways Maintenance Scheme in order to fund to works detailed within Appendix 2.

Executive summary

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

On 8 March 2024, Council approved the capital programme for 2024/25 to 2026/27, of which £17.396m expenditure was approved in 2024/25 within Environment & Community Services. This report seeks approval to undertake a budget virement of £0.316m of the 2024/25 approved funds within the LTP Incentive Funding Scheme to the LTP Highways Maintenance Scheme to fund schemes detailed within Appendix 2 of this report.

The report also seeks approval for the allocation of the 2024/25 overall £4.015m LTP funding towards specific schemes as per Appendix 2 of this report.

1. Purpose

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

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Executive

2.1.1 approve the allocation of £4.015m of approved LTP grant funding to develop and deliver infrastructure improvements as outlined within the report.

2.1.2 approve the programme package as set out in Appendix 2; and,

2.1.3 Should it be required to change the phasing of these programmes to delegate any programme amendments and virements to new or prioritised projects and where such activity is permissible within the funding criteria, to the Director of Environment and Community Services and the Executive Member for Environment where appropriate.

3 Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

3.1 Recommendation will allow strategic allocation of funding to ensure that the Council is not only working toward its ambitions and objectives but is 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”.

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

4. Background and relevant information

4.1 Middlesbrough Council receives Local Transport Plan funding from the Department for Transport, via Tees Valley Combined Authority, to undertake maintenance and improvement works on the Councils transport network.

- 4.2 The current Council approved LTP allocation for 2024/25 is £1.377m, specified against Incentive Funding (new works) and £2.638m for Highways Maintenance. Appendix 2 details the planned works totalling £4.015m.
- 4.3 It is proposed that the Council approves the expenditure of the Local Transport Plan allocation for 2024/25, as outlined in appendix 2. This will provide the Council time to identify the most prudent method of delivering a longer-term programme; ensuring that best value for money is achieved.
- 4.4 The projects within the proposed programme have been identified from the Council's "Future Year scheme" list. This is a compiled table of all known requirements and suggestions received, which are matrix ranked for their suitability against a set criterion, forming a priority basis. However, this is also conditional upon external funding criteria, eligible uses, statutory obligations, and other implications.
- 4.5 The maintenance schemes are based on asset condition rating systems and allocation of resources work to address a "worst first" is used. This is rationalised based on public safety and asset longevity priorities (such as ensuring that structures are safe). This ensures that the Council is sequentially addressing the areas of the network in most need of resolving.
- 4.6 The Council also receives specific allocations through competitive grant programmes and awards that are to deliver prescribed pieces of work, depending upon national / regional criteria. Any awards for such projects by-pass the matrix scoring criteria (although this may be used to identify the most suitable candidates) and can be awarded / is accessible throughout the financial year. The proposals within this report include all known awarded allocations at time of approval but can be subject to change. If required, approvals will be sought through the formal decision-making process.
- 4.7 A map of the scheme locations can be found in appendix 1. The full funding allocations used to identify the projects / programmes can be found in appendix 2.

5. Other potential alternative(s) and why these have not been recommended

- 5.1 Re-assessing the project proposals – this is not recommended, as they have 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

- 5.2 This is not recommended as it will not allow the Council to allocate funding and make the necessary arrangements in advance of receipt of the allocations. The delivery of infrastructure improvements requires prudent planning, and co-ordination, so approvals in a timely manner are pivotal to ensuring a successful delivery programme.

6 Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

6.1 Financial (including procurement and Social Value)

The Transport and Infrastructure Capital Programme is 100% grant funded from the Local Transport Plan provided by the Department of Transport via the Tees Valley Combined Authority. The proposals have been costed at a high level (including an element for contingencies), based on delivering similar schemes in previous years. Appendix 2 of this report details the planned expenditure.

The project allocations are indicative and may require alteration to address unforeseen issues and service demand responsiveness. Should costs exceed the available budget, the programme can be re-prioritised, and projects removed to account for unforeseen additional expenditure.

Should additional funding become available during the financial year, this will be considered subject to the same rules and regulations, and Executive/financial approvals; and governed as such.

The Capital Programme reported to Council on 8 March included several schemes that have been funded from the 2023/24 allocation but will now not complete until 2024/25.

The table below shows the relevant element of the 2024/25 Capital Programme and the proposed budget virements:

2024/25 Capital Programme Approved By Council 8.3.24			
Scheme Title	Current Programme £m	Proposed Virements £m	Revised Programme £m
Local Transport Plan -Highways Maintenance	2.638	0.316	2.954
Local Transport Plan - Incentive Funding	1.377	-0.316	1.061
Total	4.015	-	4.015

Any underspends within 2023/24 relating to the above will be reported within the Quarter 4 Revenue and Capital Outturn Report.

6.2 Legal

Any legal issues associated with the approved programme will be managed through the Council's established procedures. The allocations within this report are indicative, are not committed and can alter. Should the figures vary beyond the delegation sought in this report, appropriate Executive approvals will be sought.

The funding allocations and proposed expenditure is required to ensure the Council complies with Highways Act 1980.

6.1 Risk

The proposal does not require any change to the Council's existing policy framework.

The funding allocations identified are indicative or are pending funding allocation within the programme. Should funding levels alter, there is an element of contingency within the proposed programme. Should this be exceeded, the programme will be re-addressed, and approval sought to allow re-prioritisation to fit with the available funding.

By approving this allocation of funding, the Council is positively and actively managing risk to support the outcomes of the department(s), such as not having appropriate planning in place.

The approval of the programme will allow targeted interventions, which will reduce the risk of Road Traffic Accidents. Without investment in mitigations, those killed and seriously injured because of road traffic accidents may increase, particularly in areas where the Council is aware of issues. Additional to increased injury to individuals, this also results in increased costs on other local stakeholders such as the Police, the Fire Authority, and the NHS, but also reputational damage to the Council as the Highway Authority.

The proposed programme reduces financial risk. Highway network deterioration is greater than the available funding to maintain it. By approving the allocations, the Council will be able to minimise the number of claims made against it due to surface defects.

6.2 Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion

There will be no negative, differential impact on protected groups and communities.

It is not anticipated that any other protected groups will be impacted upon negatively because of progressing with proposals. The Equality Impact Assessment in appendix 3 provides this assurance.

6.3 Climate Change / Environmental

The proposals will improve accessibility to key services and facilities and assist the Borough's impact on climate change and the environment by providing and updating our infrastructure to support alternative methods of travel therefore improving the public realm, and reducing congestion, traffic noise and improving air quality.

6.4 Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers

The proposals outlined will not negatively impact children and young people cared for by the authority and care leavers as the highway schemes we have proposed will be accessible to all and will improve safety, accessibility and usability of the Councils Transport network; ensuring that people can access employment, education, retail and leisure opportunities.

6.5 Data Protection

The proposed decision does not involve the collation and use of personal data.

Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Produce project management documentation for all new projects, which will be monitored by the Transport and Infrastructure Capital Programme Board, and the Project Management Office, which will ensure prudent and active management of projects	Infrastructure Programme Manager (Liyaaqat Ud-Din)	March 2024

Appendices

1	Ward map of locations for intervention
2	Indicative Funding allocations and proposed projects
3	Equality Impact Assessment

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
N/A	Future years scheme document (internal document)	January 2024

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