

PLACES SCRUTINY PANEL

24th April 2014

HIGHWAYS CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Report of the Director for Places (Environment, Planning & Transport)

STRATEGIC AIM:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creating a safer community• Building our infrastructure
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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the highway capital programme for 2014/15 and the procurement and delegation arrangements for programme delivery.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Places Scrutiny Panel recommend to Cabinet that:

- 2.1 **That the highway capital programme for 2014/2015 (attached as Appendix 1) be approved;**
- 2.2 **That the Council continues to use the Midlands Highway Alliance (MHA) Medium Schemes Framework for procuring schemes over the approved Term Maintenance Contract threshold;**
- 2.3 **That the Council continue to use Leicestershire County Council's framework agreement to procure structural engineering work undertaken through the structural consultancy services trading agreement;**
- 2.4 **That authority is delegated to the Director for Places (Environment, Planning & Transport) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Places (Environment & Transport) and Resources and Ward Member(s) to approve the detail of the integrated transport schemes.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Government provides local transport capital funding in 2 blocks; maintenance and integrated transport. The funding is provided to allow RCC to fulfil the following statutory duties through a highway capital programme:
- a) Maintain the public highway (Highways Act 1980);
 - b) Carrying out studies into accidents arising out of the use of vehicles on the highway and take appropriate measures to prevent such accidents (Road Traffic Act 1988);
 - c) Prepare a Local Transport Plan (LTP) and deliver the programme of works and policies set down within it (Transport Act 2000).

4 CARRIAGEWAY MAINTENANCE

- 4.1 Carriageway condition is monitored through SCANNER surveys (Surface Condition Assessment of the National Network of Roads). The information generated by these surveys is analysed using an asset management system called Horizons. This generates schemes based on the available budget, the costs of different treatment options and a minimum length of each treatment type. This is supplemented by the information gathered by the highway inspectors during routine cyclic safety inspections.

5 BRIDGES AND STRUCTURES

- 5.1 RCC has 87 bridges. A cyclic programme of bridge inspections is carried out by Leicestershire County Council under a trading agreement. The inspection reports have identified about £500k of defects of varying severity. This has reduced from about £1M over the last 3 years.
- 5.2 Major works have been identified at listed structures in the vicinity of Collyweston & Duddington, requiring major survey work and consultation with English Heritage and local stonemasons. Due to ongoing consultations £231k is to be carried forward to 14/15.
- 5.3 Major works are also required to rectify the collapse of a highway retaining wall at Tixover. This scheme is currently under design and is expected to cost in the region of £300k.

6 LOW ENERGY STREET LIGHTING UPGRADES

- 6.1 Report 23/2012 recommended the replacement of RCC's low pressure sodium lamps (35W SOX) with compact fluorescent low energy lamps (24W PLL). This programme has been completed, and to date around 50% of the street lighting stock within Oakham and Uppingham, and virtually all sign stock has been replaced with energy efficient units. The option of upgrading to LEDs will be reassessed based on current technology and prices. Through the initial scheme of replacements, annual savings of around £8k per year have been achieved. These have helped to offset rising energy costs and the costs of the additional stock identified during the recent inventory survey.

7 ACCIDENT CLUSTER SITES

- 7.1 The police accident database has been searched for clusters of 4 or more accidents within 100m over the last 3 years. Clusters have been identified in Oakham Town Centre and on the A47. A further anti-skid project has been included in the programme as this appears to have been extremely successful at reducing accidents rates on the A6003. This will include the A47 which has been delayed from 13/14 due to exceptionally adverse weather and changing contractors.

8 INTEGRATED TRANSPORT SCHEMES

- 8.1 The Council's 3rd Local Transport Plan (LTP) includes a prioritisation system for integrated transport schemes based on the Council's previous strategic aims and objectives. This system has been updated to reflect the Council's current strategic aims and objectives and used to produce the capital programmes for the 2014/15 financial year. The programme is detailed in

Appendix 1 and the prioritisation list can be seen in Appendix 2. It is proposed that schemes with a BCR of 1 or less are not approved as they do not represent adequate value for money. This will allow additional maintenance to be carried out

- 8.2 It is recognised that many of the actions identified in the LTP have been completed or have been funded from other sources (e.g. the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF)), especially the actions related to economic growth and employment. The LTP is being reviewed with the intention of identifying new actions which support the growth agenda. From 2015/16 a proportion of the integrated transport block will be allocated through the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) as part of the single growth fund. This is likely to result in a reduction of about £145k of direct capital funding. However, the LEP's draft Strategic Economic Plan includes £250k for integrated transport in Rutland.

9. FINANCE

- 9.1 DfT has confirmed allocation of the maintenance block and integrated transport funding block for the financial year 2014 /2015 as follows:

- a) Maintenance block £1,358k
- b) Integrated transport block £295k

In addition funding will be carried forward from 13/14. Appendix 3 shows the detail of the total available highway capital budget. This funding is not ring fenced and part of the integrated transport block has been allocated to highway maintenance (see Appendix 1).

- 9.2 As this funding is non-ring-fenced and can be spent on any capital project, in line with Council priorities. This report has been prepared on the assumption that 100% of the grant will be spent on highways related projects. The Scrutiny Panel may wish to consider whether this assumption is correct in the medium term, as reallocating this grant to alternative schemes could reduce the borrowing requirement and therefore reduce the annual revenue cost of borrowing.
- 9.3 The Council has secured over £4M from the LSTF, including £2.6M of capital. Some of this funding remains unallocated; however this will be the subject of a separate approval process.
- 9.4 Developers provide a significant amount of funding for integrated transport schemes through S106 contributions. About £2.2M of contributions have been negotiated and will be received when, or if, the appropriate trigger points are reached by the development. The proposed Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) infrastructure schedule includes about £3.4M for highway and transport schemes.
- 9.5 The Highways Act includes the theoretical provision for the recovery of maintenance cost associated with 'extraordinary' traffic associated with development. This provision in law means that it is very difficult to agree S106 contributions for maintenance. The developer has a valid argument that contributions do not meet the test of being necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. In practice the Council must demonstrate the cost of maintaining the specific section of highway is higher than the cost of maintaining similar roads as a result of carrying excessive

weight specifically associated with the development. This is very difficult in practice.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT

RISK	IMPACT	COMMENTS
Time	M	Delays in approving the programme may result in some schemes not being completed by the end of the year.
Viability	L	Routine procurement and construction methods will be used.
Finance	L	The programme budget matches the DfT grant allocations.
Profile	M	Some schemes may cause disruption to highway users, however this will be managed.
Equality and Diversity	L	An Equality Impact assessment has not been produced as the report does not affect policy or service. However individual highway schemes will assist disabled access and improve access to services.

Background Papers

Local Transport Plan 3 (15/02/11)
Cabinet report 68/2012
Highway Capital Programme 2012/13

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