

Cabinet – 16 March 2022

West Midlands Local Transport Plan Settlement and Transport Capital Programme 2022/23

Portfolio: Councillor Adrian Andrew, Deputy Leader and Regeneration

Related portfolios: None

Service: Place & Environment (Highways & Transport)

Wards: All

Key decision: Yes

Forward plan: Yes

1. Aim

- 1.1. The delivery of a programme of transport capital projects in 2022/23 that supports the implementation of the West Midlands Local Transport Plan (LTP) objectives in various locations across Walsall Borough.

2. Summary

- 2.1. The West Midlands LTP – known as ‘Movement for Growth’ – sets out the transport strategy for the metropolitan area, together with an implementation plan. It was approved by the West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) in December 2015 and was subsequently adopted by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) in 2016. The LTP is currently being refreshed by Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) and a new plan is expected to be approved at WMCA Board in summer 2022.
- 2.2. The Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (BCLEP) set out its transport priorities in a Strategic Economic Plan (SEP). The transport capital programme is consistent with the SEP and includes ongoing support for the M6 Junction 10 major scheme and development of A41/A4038 corridor improvement proposals.
- 2.3. The Department for Transport (DfT) awards transport capital grant funding to the WMCA to help deliver against the LTP objectives. The WMCA then distributes this grant funding to the component metropolitan districts to be used to implement the LTP in their area. From April 2022 this will be part of a new City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS). A CRSTS bid was approved by the WMCA Board on 14 January 2022 and acceptance of the final grant funding determination from the DfT will be presented to WMCA Board on 18 March 2022.

- 2.4. The Council utilises the grant funding it receives to deliver the highways maintenance programme and the integrated transport capital programme (the latter – now known as Local Network Improvement Plan (LNIP) programme – comprising three main sub-programmes: major scheme development; strategic transportation; and road safety and active travel). The WMCA and BCLEP hold the Council to account for how this funding is utilised.
- 2.5. This report sets out the proposed LNIP capital programme for 2022/23 based on the output of a Cabinet-approved (12 December 2012) prioritisation process.
- 2.6. The highway maintenance programme is determined on an annual basis using a Cabinet-approved (18 March 2015) scheme prioritisation matrix. In accordance with the Council's approach to highway asset management framework, the programme aims to use a combination of preventative maintenance and structural repairs to maximise the lifespan of the highway network. The 2022/23 structural highway maintenance programme will be agreed with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration in March 2022, based on advice from the Head of Highways & Transport.
- 2.7. In light of the recommendations below, Cabinet is asked to note the West Midlands 2022/23 capital grant allocations for highways maintenance and LNIP programmes as set out at Table 1 in Section 4 of this report.
- 2.8. As the LNIP capital programme for 2022/23 will have a significant impact on two or more wards within the borough, the recommendations below constitute a key decision.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. That Cabinet approves the Walsall Council Transport Capital Programme 2022/23 funding of £5.16m as set out at Table 2 in Section 4 of this report.
- 3.2. That Cabinet approves the utilisation of the Local Network Improvement Plan element of the grant funding for 2022/23 (£1.56m) as described in paragraphs 4.36 to 4.38 of this report and **Appendices A to G**, including the allocation of any carry forward from 2021/22 to the 2022/23 programme.
- 3.3. That Cabinet delegate authority to the Executive Director for Economy, Environment & Communities, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, to manage any required changes to the 2022/23 Local Network Improvement Plan capital programme, including amending individual scheme budgets (within the overall programme budget); adding new projects (to replace or part-replace other projects that can no longer be delivered); and managing carry forward, to maximise the use of the grant.
- 3.4. That Cabinet delegate authority to the Executive Director for Economy, Environment & Communities, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, to negotiate on its behalf with the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership, West Midlands Combined Authority and government departments to maximise the values of future financial resources allocated to the Council in pursuit of its transport priorities, including signing relevant agreements and contracts for

schemes which are approved within the Walsall Transport Capital Programme 2022/23.

4. Report detail – know

Context

- 4.1. The West Midlands Local Transport Plan (LTP) – known as ‘Movement for Growth’ – sets out the transport strategy for the metropolitan area, together with an implementation plan, and was approved by the West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) in December 2015 and was subsequently adopted by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) in 2016.
- 4.2. The Walsall Transport Strategy ‘*Transport in Walsall*’ was approved by Cabinet in September 2017, and will help to deliver the LTP by focusing public and private funding towards areas/schemes which require it most.
- 4.3. Combined Authorities are designated as the ‘accountable bodies’ for local transport plans and the government funding allocated to deliver them.
- 4.4. For several years the DfT has awarded Integrated Transport Block (ITB) and Highways Capital Maintenance Block (HMB) grant funding to the WMCA to help deliver against the LTP objectives. The WMCA then distributed this grant funding to the component metropolitan districts to be used to implement the LTP in their area. From 2015 an element of ITB was top-sliced nationally and pooled in the Local Growth Fund. In the Black Country, this pooled funding is administered by the BCLEP.
- 4.5. Further, in 2016 it was agreed at the WMCA Board that a 15% ‘ring fence’ of the ITB funding would establish development funding for local authorities to take forward key named schemes. Since that time this development funding has been allocated to support the delivery of major schemes in Walsall such as the M6 Junction 10 highway improvements scheme.
- 4.6. This process of allocating transport capital grant funding has changed with the introduction of CRSTS funding from April 2022. CRSTS is a five-year capital settlement to March 2027 aimed at supporting the region in delivering a sustainable transport investment programme. The fund is overseen by DfT and provides an opportunity to plan transport investment over a longer time horizon than has previously been possible.
- 4.7. The headline allocation awarded to WMCA in autumn 2021 was £1.050bn, resulting in £788m new money to the region. DfT subsequently issued further guidance and advised that the allocation was ‘indicative’; to be confirmed as part of the review and acceptance of a final programme level business case.
- 4.8. DfT have stated that CRSTS will be the only significant source of capital transport funding for the region until March 2027. Each named scheme that is brought forward through the CRSTS programme must demonstrate as appropriate: -
 - Alignment with the Local Transport Plan and national CRSTS funding objectives

- Direct benefits to cycling and active travel (including consideration of Local Transport Note 1/20)
- Direct benefit to public transport and in particular bus travel
- Support measures for behaviour change, road safety and network resilience

4.9. The CRSTS fund will be operated through and be fully compliant with the WMCA Single Assurance Framework (SAF). However, WMCA have confirmed that the replacement funding for HMB and ITB will be subject to a simplified en bloc approval process, which the WMCA will process through the system at the earliest opportunity following confirmation of the CRSTS grant by government.

- Highways Maintenance Block – £120.4m funding component of CRSTS, which will be delivered through the local highway authorities (LHAs). Each LHA will lead on any procurement in line with public sector procurement guidelines. An annual monitoring report will be required (as per DfT guidance) from each LHA setting out how the funding has been spent and how the condition of the network has improved. These will be compiled to form a regional view as part of the overall CRSTS monitoring and reporting. An annual allocation will be confirmed by the WMCA Board in-line with the overall five-year programme allocation.
- Local Network Improvement Plan – the replacement funding for ITB. A light-touch approach is proposed to reflect the typically low complexity/low risk projects and often reactive nature of the works undertaken under this funding. A single WMCA SAF application will be processed by TfWM for the full £107.5m 5-year allocation, allowing it to be released in annual grants to each constituent LHA. A signed declaration will be required by each local authority Section 151 Officer with a simple funding agreement setting out delivery reporting requirements. This will include basic quarterly financial returns and a short annual monitoring report against a standardised format. This will set out what has been delivered, supported by a small number of case studies showing how delivery aligns to Local Transport Plan and CRSTS funding objectives, as well as proposed delivery for the next period. These will be compiled to form a regional view as part of the overall CRSTS monitoring and reporting. An annual allocation will be confirmed by the WMCA Board in-line with the overall five year programme allocation.

4.10. The financial and WMCA SAF processes for the LNIP and highway maintenance funding cannot be progressed until DfT confirms the CRSTS funding and any specific funding conditions, and funding cannot be released until the funding is received by the WMCA. However, LHAs should proceed to plan their own activity and budgets on the basis of the above and the full programme business case appended to this report.

4.11. The WMCA and the BCLEP monitors each District's transport capital programme to ensure that they are using funds to deliver the aims and objectives of the West Midlands LTP and the Black Country Growth Deal, and that funding is used in line with government grant conditions. In response to this, the Council has prioritised its proposed 2022/23 ITB programme against LTP objectives in line with its adopted appraisal and prioritisation process.

- 4.12. In addition to Department for Transport funding, the council directly fund a further £2.8m of council capital in highway maintenance. Investment is prioritised in accordance with the council's highway asset management framework, which is reviewed on an annual basis and due to be refresh in 2022/23. Further ad hoc highways and transport investment is secured through the following mechanisms:
- Section 278 agreements, which allow third parties to fund works to the existing public highway, usually as part of a new development.
 - Section 38 agreements, which have been used more recently to secure funding from developers to complete outstanding highway works on unfinished developments.
 - Section 106 agreements, which can be used to secure developer contributions to improve highways and transport infrastructure.
 - One off bids for grant funding such as the £3.2m secured from the DfT Challenge Fund in 2020/21.
- 4.13. Although rare, the council also considers offers from third parties to fund or jointly fund highway improvements. These are assessed on case-by-case basis to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the road network and that the council is not impacted financially or otherwise, such as costly maintenance liabilities.
- 4.14. Key achievements delivered through the current year's (2021/22) ITB and HMB capital programme, include: -
- Ongoing delivery of a congestion-busting scheme at M6 Junction 10, including the construction of new bridges and retaining walls.
 - Further progress relating to the re-opening of the Walsall to Wolverhampton rail line, which includes two new stations at Darlaston (James Bridge) and Willenhall.
 - Continued engagement with the West Midlands Rail Executive relating to the re-opening of the Walsall – Aldridge rail line, including an assessment of the rolling stock implications of this proposal.
 - Walsall's Highways Maintenance Block allocation, together with the DfT Incentive Fund, has been used to deliver 3,000m² of footway improvements and reconstruct 65,000m² of carriageway including sections of Great Bridge Road and the junction of Sutton Road and Longwood Lane.
 - Council capital budgets have been used to deliver 6,000m² micro-surfacing on footways and 78,000m² of preventative maintenance on carriageways including works on A454 Mellish Road and A4124 Lichfield Road.

Delivering a 2022/23 Local Network Improvement Plan Programme

- 4.15. Table 1 in Section 4 of the report sets out the budget allocations for transport capital funding available to the West Midlands Metropolitan Districts and Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) in 2022/23.

- 4.16. Table 2 in Section 4 of the report sets out the budget allocations for transport capital funding available to the Council in 2022/23.
- 4.17. The proposed split of funding as per Table 3 in Section 4 of the report will allow the Council to support the development of future major scheme business cases to give the Council the best opportunity to attract implementation resources; and allow the Council to continue to deliver a robust road safety and sustainable travel programme that addresses local transport needs and concerns.
- 4.18. The Strategic Transportation Team utilise their proportion of LNIP transport capital funding to develop and deliver 'major' and 'strategic'¹ schemes which meet the aims and objectives of the LTP and bring benefit to the Walsall transportation system.
- 4.19. Determining which strategic schemes are selected for development and delivery in Walsall is based on the output of a spreadsheet-based tool which scores potential schemes against the LTP aims and objectives, therefore making the selection non-subjective. This method of prioritisation was approved at Cabinet in December 2012.
- 4.20. **Appendix A** sets out the proposed LNIP transport capital programme for 2022/23, together with any confirmed complementary transport capital funding. **Appendix B** sets out the appraisal results for the major and strategic schemes proposed for inclusion in this programme.
- 4.21. The Road Safety and Sustainable Travel Team use an agreed appraisal methodology to rank and determine which schemes are delivered from their allocation of the ITB. This methodology relies upon the use of collision data records provided by West Midlands Police. This is supplemented with a range of additional locally-determined data (e.g. road speeds) providing the Council with a strong basis to rationalise their decision-making and provide confidence to the WMCA, BCLEP and DfT that the capital funding resources are being used appropriately.
- 4.22. Funding for Local Safety Schemes and Sustainable Travel Schemes will be awarded on a priority basis as set out in **Appendices C to G**. It will not be possible to fund all of the schemes detailed during 2022/23. Schemes have been prioritised and the identified reserve schemes will be considered for any resource which becomes available during the year.

Essential Specialist Services

- 4.23. As part of the development of major transport schemes, it has been identified that essential specialist services such as structural engineering, land acquisition, environmental impact assessment or traffic modelling services may be required, where there is no current availability in-house or via existing shared services with other local authorities.

¹ 'Major schemes' have traditionally been defined as those schemes over £5m in value (although post-2015 this threshold was removed). In this context, 'strategic schemes' are significant schemes, but below the £5m threshold e.g. large junction improvement schemes.

- 4.24. At times it may be necessary to utilise appropriate authorised frameworks in line with the Council's Contract Rules. It is proposed that use of these framework contracts is an efficient way of procuring the necessary specialist support services to help the delivery of future major transport schemes.

Council Corporate Plan priorities

- 4.25. Transport capital grant (LNIP) funding is allocated to the Council to deliver the West Midlands LTP, which supports the Council's vision that '*Inequalities are reduced and all potential is maximised*' as set out in the Corporate Plan 2021-22. Further, it underpins delivery against the Council's priorities, including: -
- Economic growth for all people, communities and businesses;
 - People have increased independence, improved health, and can positively contribute to their communities;
 - Communities are prospering and resilient with all housing needs met in safe and healthy places that build a strong sense of belonging and cohesion.
- 4.26. Improving the safety of the transport network and the security of people using the network are important considerations in the development and delivery of transport schemes and the overall composition of the capital programme. To date the Council has performed well, when compared to others nationally, in reducing the numbers and severity of accidents on the Borough's roads.
- 4.27. Environmental and safety factors are considered in the development and delivery of transport schemes. Care will be taken in the detailed design of schemes to minimise direct impacts on the local environment; where appropriate schemes will be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment. The West Midlands LTP has been subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment.
- 4.28. As future schemes are progressed, the Council will be identifying good practice for adapting to, and mitigating the effects of, climate change and promoting environmental and economic sustainability.

Risk management

- 4.29. The principal risk to Council is that if the LNIP transport capital grant funding allocated from WMCA is not spent or committed within the financial year there is a risk that any under spend may be 'clawed back' or future year allocations reduced. Utilising the Cabinet-approved prioritisation process allows better management of the programme and provides accountability at a regional level for those schemes selected for development and delivery.
- 4.30. Since April 2015 approximately half of the national ITB allocation has been pooled in the Local Growth Fund by the government to enable Local Enterprise Partnerships to deliver their Strategic Economic Plans. The Black Country Growth Deal announced in July 2014 includes an allocation to implement its transport projects and programme priorities. This means that the residual transport capital grant funding has been reduced by approximately 50%.

- 4.31. Paragraph 4.41 sets out the risk on staffing if grant is significantly reduced or removed in future years.
- 4.32. A further risk is that of the continued failure to increase revenue funding to support the maintenance and operating costs of capital investment. This has been a concern raised by the DfT in previous years and has not been addressed due to the severe financial pressures on Council revenue budgets. It is possible that DfT may reduce future capital settlements if it cannot be demonstrated that the Council has appropriate procedures and resources for future maintenance of transport assets.
- 4.33. There is a risk that if any spend on the projects within the proposed Walsall Transport Capital Programme 2022/23 become abortive and do not meet the criteria for capitalising spend, then that element of cost may have to be repaid to the programme by the Council from revenue funding, for which there is no existing budget. This is a risk associated with all multi-year capital funding programmes, but without taking such a risk there would be no ability to develop the necessary programme of transport projects. This risk is mitigated by the fact all schemes in the plan are aligned to the LTP and have been assessed as having a remote risk of becoming abortive, although Cabinet should note that this risk cannot be removed completely.
- 4.34. The change in the way funding has been allocated by government, WMCA and the BCLEP since April 2015 impacts on the Council's ability to deliver the priorities set by Cabinet. The Council risks losing-out on resource allocations if it is not successful in lobbying and negotiating a favourable position. Officers of the Council will seek to secure the position of our agreed transport priorities within both the government's and the BCLEP's programmes, together with the appropriate funding.

Financial implications

- 4.35. It is expected that the LNIP transport capital grant funding and highways maintenance grant funding is received in advance from WMCA i.e. first annual payment to be made in April 2022. This is a capital grant and all spend incurred must meet the eligibility criteria for capital accounting.
- 4.36. The capital grant funding settlement is indicative, pending final determination letters from the DfT and WMCA Board acceptance and approval. This is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – West Midlands Transport and Highways Maintenance Allocations 2021/22 and 2022/23

| Block | Budget Allocation 2021/22 (£000s) | Budget Allocation 2022/23 (£000s) |
|--|--|--|
| Integrated Transport Block | 17,755 | n/a |
| Local Network Improvement Plan Transport Capital Grant | | 21,500 |
| Highways Maintenance Block (Needs Element) | 9,043 | n/a |
| Highways Maintenance Block (Incentive Element*) | 2,261 | n/a |
| Pothole Action Fund | 9,043 | n/a |
| Challenge Fund | 0 | n/a |
| Highways Maintenance Capital Grant | n/a | 24,080 |

*The Department for Transport introduced an incentive element from 2016/17 where local authorities must demonstrate sound efficiencies and asset management practices to release these funds.

NB. All maintenance allocations exclude Birmingham City Council as provision is made through a separate PFI arrangement; WMCA does not have a maintenance allocation as it does not directly maintain any public highway.

- 4.37. Further to this, the WMCA confirmed the allocation per metropolitan district after 'top-slicing' for West Midlands joint initiatives. The Council's 2022/23 transport capital programme is set out at Table 2.

Table 2 – Walsall Transport Capital Programme 2021/22 and 2022/23

| Project/Programme | Carry Forward 2020-21 (£000s) | Budget Allocation 2021/22 (£000s) | Total Budget 2021/22 (£000s) | Spend to Date 2021/22 (£000s) | Forecast Carry Forward* (£000s) | Budget Allocation 2022/23 (£000s) |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Integrated Transport Block | 1,201 | 1,292 | 2,493 | 606 | 896 | n/a |
| Local Network Improvement Plan Transport Capital Grant | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 1,563 |
| Highways Maintenance Block (Needs Element) | 0 | 1,453 | 1,453 | 958 | 0 | n/a |
| Highways Maintenance Block (Incentive Element) | 0 | 200 | 200 | 91 | 0 | n/a |
| Pothole Action Fund | 0 | 1,340 | 1,340 | 934 | 0 | n/a |
| Highways Maintenance Capital Grant | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 3,569 |
| Total | 1,201 | 4,285 | 5,486 | 2,589 | 896 | 5,132 |

*Final carry forward will not be confirmed until early in the 2022/23 financial year. Carry forward was required from 2020/21 to support the ongoing delivery and management of risks for multi-year, multi-funded schemes (e.g. M6 J10 contingency allocation and NPIF programme). Carry forward from 2021/22 is required to both support the ongoing delivery and management of risks for multi-year,

multi-funded schemes (e.g. M6 J10 contingency allocation) and to allow projects delayed because of COVID-19 restrictions and resourcing to be successfully completed.

Allocation of Transport Capital Grant Funding

- 4.38. Walsall's transport capital grant funding is split between three headline programmes: -
- Major Scheme Development and Delivery Programme (managed by Strategic Transport Team, Highways & Transport)
 - Strategic Transportation Programme (managed by Strategic Transport Team, Highways & Transport)
 - Road Safety and Sustainable Travel Programme (managed by Traffic Safety & Operations Team, Highways & Transport)
- 4.39. Some 15% of LNIP transport capital funding is allocated as development funding to take forward key named schemes. This development funding will be allocated across the major scheme programme to enable schemes to be developed and business cases finalised.

Table 3 – Current and Proposed Capital Allocations by Programme (excluding carry forward)

| | 2021/22 (£000s) | 2022/23 (£000s) |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Major Scheme Development & Delivery Programme | 206 | 235 |
| Strategic Transportation Programme | 525 | 528 |
| Road Safety & Sustainable Travel Programme | 560 | 800 |
| Total | 1,291 | 1,563 |

- 4.40. **Appendix A** sets out the proposed overall LNIP transport capital programme for 2022/23, together with any confirmed complementary transport capital funding. **Appendix B** sets out the appraisal results for the major and strategic schemes proposed for inclusion in this programme. **Appendices C to G** provide detail of how the component local safety schemes and sustainable travel schemes have been appraised and prioritised for development and delivery within this programme.

Black Country Growth Deal Transport Programme

- 4.41. Since April 2015, government funding for major transport schemes; a proportion of transport capital funding has been pooled in the Local Growth Fund, which is controlled by the BCLEP.
- 4.42. Within the Black Country, the Local Growth Fund includes an allocation of £37.79m (over a 5-year period) towards the £78.0m cost of scheme implementation at M6 J10, which is currently being delivered and due to complete in summer 2022.
- 4.43. Whilst it is anticipated that LNIP transport capital funding resources and additional Local Growth Fund resources will be available to develop and implement capital transport schemes in Walsall in 2022/23 and beyond, there is always a small risk that these resources will not be available e.g. should a government emergency budget rescind these commitments. This would impact on staff in the Strategic

Transportation Team; Road Safety Team; and Major Projects & Minor Improvements (all Economy & Environment Directorate), some of whose activities in developing and implementing projects is legitimately capitalised through Engineer Assistants' Time (EAT). If sufficient grant funding was not made available to the Council by the DfT and the BCLEP, relevant Council services would need to be reorganised with the risk that a small number of redundancies may ultimately be necessary. This would require the Council to consider how it would deliver its statutory duties in the absence of this funding.

- 4.44. If government and/or WMCA increases or reduces future LNIP transport capital funding allocations for the Council, the allocation of resources to programmes and projects will be reviewed accordingly. Financing major scheme implementation costs in line with agreed funding profiles will have priority.

Legal implications

- 4.45. There are no direct legal implications as a result of this report.
- 4.46. The Council has various options by which to procure services, including calling off civil engineering frameworks, using the highways maintenance term contract or a Council-run procurement exercise to engage contractors to carry out work required in the implementation of the capital programme. All works will be evidenced by a written contract in a form approved by the Director of Governance or by a call-off from a suitable framework and shall be made and executed in accordance with the Council's Contract Rules. This may require the Council to engage external legal support. Should any legal implications arise during any procurement process, they will be considered and reported to the Transport Capital Programme Delivery Board and managed in accordance with the agreed delegations to officers.
- 4.47. In its role as Highway Authority, the Council has a statutory duty to identify and implement measures to address congestion and road safety concerns on the local highway network and to maintain the network in a reasonably safe condition. LTP funding is used in part to address these obligations.
- 4.48. Where any specific project requires the acquisition of land (by agreement or compulsorily) the Council's Legal Services Team will work with Highways & Transport officers and there may be a need to engage external legal support if compulsory acquisition of land is necessary.

Procurement implications/social value

- 4.49. Any contractual arrangements must be procured in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (if applicable) and the Council's Contract Rules. The Council's Procurement and Legal Services Teams will work with Highways & Transport officers to ensure that mini-tenders and call-offs from any frameworks are conducted in compliant ways and that all contracts for schemes procured under this capital programme will be validly entered into before any services are provided to the Council.

Property implications

- 4.50. All projects contained within the programme will either be delivered on land and assets already owned and managed by the Council, or on land acquired (by agreement or compulsorily) for the purpose of project delivery. Where necessary, agreements will be in place for the use or enhancement of third party land.
- 4.51. Each project will assess the implications on land and assets and a view will be taken by either the Highways Authority or the asset management function of the Council as to how any proposed enhancements or scheme designs impact on the Council's land portfolio, and how any impacts can be mitigated or managed.

Health and wellbeing implications

- 4.52. The Transport Capital Programme 2022/23 has been tested against the 'Marmot Objectives'. These are:-
- Giving every child the best start in life – *the programme includes measures to support travel to school by sustainable modes, which is part of a rolling programme across the Borough;*
 - Enabling all children, young people and adults to maximize their capabilities and have control over their lives – *measures to promote sustainable modes help promote healthy and independent travel choices;*
 - Creating fair employment and good work for all – *improved transport networks help people access employment and training opportunities;*
 - Ensuring a healthy standard of living for all – *access to paid employment is facilitated by improved transport networks;*
 - Creating and developing sustainable places and communities – *the programme includes active travel, public transport and road safety measures, which all support sustainable places and communities;*
 - Strengthening the role and impact of ill-health prevention – *healthy travel choices, such as walking or cycling, can help prevent ill health.*
- 4.53. The programme aims to make sustainable travel – cycling, walking and public transport – available to all residents and stakeholders, and ultimately seeks to align with the Health and Wellbeing Plan and objectives, and the aspirations of the Town Centre Master Plan.

Staffing implications

- 4.54. There are no intended implications on staffing by prioritising projects in the manner described in this report. However, it should be noted that LNIP transport capital funding helps support existing posts in Highways & Transport service because work programmes are managed by the Strategic Transportation Team and Traffic Safety & Operations Team. A significant proportion of legitimate scheme development (e.g. design and business case work) and supervision costs (i.e. managing contractors delivering improvements on behalf of the Council) are also incurred by transport planners and engineers via a timesheet management system.

- 4.55. As set out in paragraphs 4.41, if future grant funding is significantly reduced or removed altogether, it will be necessary to undertake a review of the service. This could result in a small number of staff that currently deliver statutory duties being placed 'at risk' of redundancy. Delivery of statutory duties by the Council are prescribed by legislation and must be delivered irrespective of any budgetary constraints.

Reducing Inequalities

- 4.56. As part of the delivery of the West Midlands LTP consideration has been given to ensuring that the needs of all sections of the community are considered in transport projects. Further, the West Midlands LTP was subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment, which informed the final published document.
- 4.57. The transport capital programme will assist in improving facilities for all modes of transport; plans will focus on improving access to key services and facilities such as education, job opportunities and health care facilities.

Consultation

- 4.58. The West Midlands LTP has been the subject of wide consultation with partners and stakeholders. Major public consultation was undertaken in summer 2015 on the strategies themselves, while partners and stakeholders are consulted with respect to individual transport projects.
- 4.59. The West Midlands authorities have been commended for the comprehensive nature of involvement in developing previous LTP strategies and when consulting on transport schemes.
- 4.60. Local consultation always takes place as part of individual scheme development.

Climate Change

- 4.61. Tackling and responding to climate change are at the heart of the West Midlands Local Transport Plan, with the recent LTP Green Paper setting out five 'Motives for Change' for transport:-
- **Sustaining economic success:** Support the building of an inclusive and green West Midlands economy, through better use of existing infrastructure, land, technology and sustainable transport options.
 - **Tackling the climate emergency:** Changes to where people travel to / from, reducing the frequency of travel and changing the vehicles we use to travel.
 - **Creating a fairer society:** How land is used, the availability and affordability of transport and the experience and usability of transport.
 - **Supporting local places and communities:** Re-imagining local neighbourhoods, reducing dominance of transport and providing quick and easy access to key local services.
 - **Becoming more active:** Enable safe, convenient and accessible walking and cycling opportunities and increase active travel for journeys.

- 4.62. Efforts to reduce carbon dioxide emissions include encouraging the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles through the provision of charging infrastructure (chargepoints and transit stations) and promoting sustainable transport modes (walking, cycling and public transport) with appropriate infrastructure, services and promotional activity.
- 4.63. The City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement from the DfT further incentivises local authorities to actively promote sustainable modes by only funding capital schemes that can demonstrate that they are placing the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and bus users ahead of other road users. Guidance to local authorities published in July 2021 highlights the importance of carbon reduction, the need to develop schemes in accord with Local Transport Note 1/20 - Cycle Infrastructure Design, and the importance of helping deliver against the objectives set out in the National Bus Strategy.

5. Decide

- 5.1. The options for the make-up of the LNIP transport capital programme have been considered as part of the assessment of potential projects / programmes as set out in paragraphs 4.15 to 4.20 above. The output of the appraisal of the various project ideas and suggestions is reported in **Appendices B to G**. The projects that are selected are those that have the best alignment with the LTP objectives; are supported locally; are affordable (or have the potential to lever-in other implementation funding, such as government grants); and are deliverable.
- 5.2. The appraisal processes utilised in the development of the programme ensure that it is compiled objectively and maximises the impact of limited transport capital funding by seeking to attract implementation funding from various other sources.
- 5.3. The proposed programme has been consulted upon amongst Council officers who are responsible for various technical disciplines, and has been developed in conjunction with the Regeneration Portfolio Holder.

6. Respond

- 6.1. The delivery of the agreed programme will be taken forward by project and programme managers within the Council's Highways & Transport service in the Economy & Environment Directorate.
- 6.2. The LNIP transport capital programme is a rolling programme of activity that supports the delivery of the West Midlands LTP within the Borough of Walsall, and many projects and programmes operate across several financial years and have multiple funding arrangements. Some key projects span different local authority boundaries e.g. corridor-based programmes, and are delivered in partnership with relevant stakeholders e.g. Transport for West Midlands, Network Rail, West Midlands Rail Executive, Highways England, Canal & River Trust, West Midlands Trains, bus operating companies, Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership, and neighbouring local authorities.
- 6.3. Officers of the Council attend various regional meetings and technical groups to ensure that projects are delivered in a coherent and consistent manner across the West Midlands Metropolitan Area.

7. Review

- 7.1. The LNIP transport capital programme is monitored by a group of Council officers that meet at least every two months to review progress and consider any recommendations to be put forward to the Transport Capital Delivery Board, which is made up of senior officers and the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration.
- 7.2. The Transport Capital Delivery Board meets at least every two months (aligned to the officer meetings) and considers performance against intended progress at regular intervals throughout the financial year. The Board can make decisions about remedial action; budget virements; and project full or partial completion.
- 7.3. The effectiveness of projects and programmes is monitored on an ongoing basis and is reflected in key data e.g. traffic counts; public transport patronage figures; air quality monitoring. The Council's monitoring activity is also supported by regional monitoring and reporting undertaken by the WMCA and BCLEP.

Appendices

- Appendix A – Walsall Council Local Network Improvement Plan Transport Capital Programme 2022/23
- Appendix B – Strategic Scheme Appraisal Results 2022/23
- Appendix C – Local Safety Scheme Ranking 2022/23
- Appendix D – 20mph Zones & Scheme Monitoring 2022/23
- Appendix E – Promotion of Community Health and Safety 2022/23
- Appendix F – Safer Routes to School Scheme Ranking 2022/23
- Appendix G – Measures to Encourage Walking 2022/23

Background papers

West Midlands Local Transport Plan 'Movement for Growth' 2015
Walsall Transport Strategy 'Transport in Walsall' 2017
City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement Submission, West Midlands Combined Authority Board report, 14 January 2022

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Signatures

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a final horizontal stroke.

Simon Neilson
Executive Director

7 March 2022

A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink, featuring a series of overlapping loops and a long, sweeping horizontal stroke.

Councillor Adrian Andrew
Portfolio holder – Regeneration

7 March 2022