



# Northumberland

## County Council

### **ASHINGTON AND BLYTH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL**

**12 FEBRUARY 2020**

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#### **LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN PROGRAMME 2020-21**

**Report of the Interim Executive Director: Regeneration, Commercial & Economy**

**Cabinet Member: Environment and Local Services, Councillor Glen Sanderson**

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#### **Purpose of report**

This report sets out the details of the draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme for 2020-21 for consideration and comment by the Local Area Council prior to final approval of the programme.

#### **Recommendations**

Members are asked to comment on the proposals, so that their comments can be considered in the finalisation of the LTP Programme for 2020-21.

#### **Link to Corporate Plan**

This report is relevant to the following key themes in the Corporate Plan for 2018-2021:

- 'Connecting - We want you to have access to the things you need'
- How - "We want to be efficient, open and work for everyone"
- 'Living - We want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for'
- 'Enjoying - We want you to love where you live'
- Success Measures - "We want to make a difference"

#### **Key issues**

1. The Local Transport Plan grant allocation from the Department of Transport (DfT) is expected to be £18,654,000 based upon indicative settlement figures previously determined for the Council by the DfT as part of their funding plan 2015-2021.
2. The highway maintenance element of the allocation will include a contribution from the Highway Maintenance Incentive fund initiative. The capital funding from this element within the expected allocation assumes that the Council retains the highest possible band 3 status and receives

the maximum available funding. Confirmation of the funding settlement from the DfT is expected by the end of March 2020.

3. A sum of £62,500 of the funding allocation is to be retained by the North East Joint Transport Committee to cover central transport costs of the Joint Transport Committee Regional Transport Team, leaving funding available for the programme of £18,591,500.
4. In June 2019 the Council declared a “climate emergency” and pledged to halve its carbon footprint by 2025 and make Northumberland carbon neutral by 2030. The Council has now approved a Climate Change Action Plan 2020/21 that details a range of on-going, immediate and future actions that will be progressed over the next financial year and beyond. This includes a commitment to progress work to make walking and cycling more attractive and accessible.
5. In order to reflect the priorities of the “climate emergency” the shape of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme has changed significantly this year. An £18,591,500 Local Transport Plan Programme has been developed for 2020-21, consisting of improvements and maintenance schemes to address four key areas: Walking and Cycling; Safety; Roads; and Bridges, Structures & Landslips.
6. Appendices A to D set out the details of the recommended LTP Programme for 2020-21.
7. This report forms part of the consultation process with County Council members, as well as Town and Parish Councils, in the development of the proposed LTP Programme for 2020-21.

## **Background**

8. In June 2019 the Council declared a “climate emergency” and this was followed in January 2020 by the approval of a Climate Change Action Plan 2020/21. The Council is committed to making Northumberland one of the greenest counties in the UK and has vowed to halve its carbon footprint by 2025 and make Northumberland carbon neutral by 2030.
9. In order to reflect the priorities of the “climate emergency” the shape of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme has changed significantly this year. Rather than categorising schemes as Integrated Transport and Maintenance projects, the programme has been reframed to reflect the needs of the user and the asset and to give greater emphasis and priority to schemes that will make walking and cycling more attractive and accessible.
10. The £18,591,500 LTP Programme that has been developed for 2020-21 has therefore been set out in four key areas and each area of the programme includes both Integrated Transport and Maintenance schemes. The four key areas in this year’s programme are:

11. - Walking and Cycling;  
- Safety;  
- Roads; and  
- Bridges, Structures & Landslips.
12. This report sets out the details of the recommended draft LTP Programme 2020-21. Appendices A to D contain the proposed schemes which total £18,591,500.
13. The summary of proposed expenditure in 2020-21 across scheme types is as follows:

<b>App.</b>	<b>Scheme Type</b>	<b>Proposed Expenditure</b>
<b>A</b>	Walking and Cycling	£1,587,000
<b>B</b>	Safety	£1,992,500
<b>C</b>	Roads	£12,347,000
<b>D</b>	Bridges, Structures and Landslips	£2,665,000
	<b>Total Programme</b>	<b>£18,591,500</b>

9. The LTP programme has been developed following a comprehensive review of the needs for the maintenance of the highway asset, identified road safety issues and potential improvement of the highway and transport network. Requests for improvements and maintenance received from the local community over time are recorded in the Directory of Requests database. County Council Members and Town and Parish Councils are provided with details of the requests that have been made within their own areas throughout the last year and they are asked to take these into account when considering their priorities for the programme.
10. Priorities for the 2020-21 programme were invited from County Council Members and Town and Parish Councils during summer 2019 and those put forward have been assessed against criteria from our Local Transport Plan (LTP) and Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP). These are then combined with consideration of road safety improvement needs, based on accident statistics and other data source, and the asset management needs of the overall highway network based on inspections, condition data and the network hierarchy, to determine an overall programme of capital investment.
11. It should be noted that in some cases the budget allocations contained in the Appendices to this report are estimates only. At this stage it is the issue or problem that has been prioritised for inclusion in the programme and the design process will provide options for finding a solution. The assessment of options takes account of a number of factors including value for money and affordability. Costs will be firmed up as the proposals proceed through

the design process.

12. It should also be noted that any schemes from the 2020-21 programme which are not completed by the end of the financial year will continue to be implemented in 2021-22.
13. A brief description of the types of highways and transport issues addressed by the LTP programme is set out below.
14. Priority for transport improvement schemes is given to schemes that contribute to the achievements of the LTP objectives. The objectives reflect local needs and are related to national transport goals. These goals are:
  - to support economic growth;
  - to reduce carbon emissions;
  - to promote equality of opportunity;
  - to contribute to better safety, security and health; and,
  - to improve the quality of life and a healthy natural environment.
15. The improvement part of the programme is aimed at creating improvements for all types of users of the highway network. The allocations are split between different types of proposals aimed at making improvements for walking and cycling, as well as improvements for vehicular users such as public transport and road users. The improvements are designed to make the highway environment more attractive to pedestrians and cyclists, address areas of congestion and meet new and increasing demands.
16. The Highway Capital Maintenance programme is split between different types of proposals aimed at maintaining the highway infrastructure in order to achieve the objectives set out in the Council's Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP). Funds are allocated across the programme by applying a scoring process that has been developed following asset management principles in order to deliver the TAMP objectives.
17. The majority of the highway maintenance programme is aimed at addressing the structural decline of our roads as they form the largest part of our highway assets. We also take account of the needs of the other asset groups such as footways and cycleways, drainage, structures and traffic management assets. A risk based approach is used to determine priorities for maintenance and is based on priorities at a strategic level, transport network level and asset maintenance level.

## **Walking and Cycling**

18. Improvements for walking and cycling are a significant feature within the LTP programme. This year the draft LTP for 2020/21 has a specific allocation of £1,587,000 for walking and cycling.
19. This allocation includes £666,000 for schemes that directly improve the environment and provision for walking and cycling as well as £921,000 for maintaining existing footpaths (rights of way), footways (along the side of the road) and cycleways (either part of the road or adjacent to it).
20. Alongside these specific allocations, it should also be noted that much of the Safety element of the programme in appendix B will also contribute to ensuring that the highway environment is improved in a way that will encourage more walking and cycling, for example, £400,000 for the continuation of the 20mph programme at schools will support cycling and walking by creating a safer environment for cyclists and pedestrians.
21. It should be noted that the Council continues with its initiative to produce Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) for each of the main towns in Northumberland (Berwick Upon Tweed, Alnwick, Amble, Ashington, Morpeth, Bedlington, Blyth, Cramlington, Prudhoe, Ponteland, Hexham, Haltwhistle). The LCWIPs will provide an evidence base for future investment in walking and cycling. The key outputs of LCWIPs when completed will be:
  - A network plan for walking and cycling which identifies preferred routes and core zones for further development;
  - A prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements for future investment;
  - A report which sets out the underlying analysis carried out and provides a narrative which supports the identified improvements and network.
22. Focussing on the main towns will ensure that key employment sites, travel to work areas, schools, transport interchanges and significant new housing developments are all considered. It is anticipated that as the LCWIPs develop then they will become a key consideration in future when bidding for external funding, seeking developer contributions and allocating funds within future LTP programmes for cycling and walking schemes.
23. The details of the draft LTP Walking and Cycling Programme of £1,587,000 for 2020-21 is set out in Appendix A, attached to this report.

## **Safety**

24. An allocation of £1,992,500 has been made to improve Safety on the highway network.

25. £657,500 is aimed at reducing the number and severity of road traffic casualties, through a programme of local safety schemes. Funding available for safety improvements to High Risk Sites will remain at the increased level of £350,000 compared to £220,000 in 2017-18. The amount for Rural Road Safety Improvements has increased to £200,000 and we have introduced an allocation of £57,500 for Urban Road Safety Improvements.
26. £1,015,000 is allocated to improve traffic management and provide traffic calming. Much of this funding will also create safer conditions where road safety concerns have been identified which will in turn encourage more walking and cycling. Specifically, £400,000 for introducing 20mph limits outside schools will address safety concerns and should encourage more children and their parents and carers to walk or cycle to school.
27. The allocation to renew existing signs and lines to help improve safety in locations requiring renewal and replacement has been doubled to £320,000.
28. The details of the draft Safety Programme of £1,992,500 for 2020-21 is set out in Appendix B, attached to this report.

## **Roads**

29. This section of the programme is the largest part of the programme with an allocation of £12,347,000 which covers improvements for road users as well as maintenance of existing roads, including drainage and safety fencing.
30. This includes an allocation of £266,000 to make improvements for road users, such as improving disabled access and other facilities at bus stops, addressing parking issues in some locations and minor junction improvements.
31. The rest of the programme is guided by the principles of asset management and is made up of: £5,525,000 for named carriageway repair and drainage schemes (of which £2,299,000 is on major roads and the resilient road network and £3,226,000 on other local roads); £2,269,000 for surface dressing; £837,000 for micro surfacing and retexturing and finally £3,450,000 of general refurbishment which includes drainage, traffic signals, car parks and footways as well as preparatory work for next year's programme.
32. The details of the draft Roads Programme of £12,347,000 for 2020-21 is set out in Appendix C, attached to this report.

## **Bridges, Structures and Landslips**

33. An allocation has been made for bridge maintenance. Again, asset management is the main driver, however, the programme also addresses the maintenance backlog by providing bridge strengthening to a number of bridges as this continues to remain a priority.
34. There is also an allocation for addressing landslips to enable stabilisation work and prevent the deterioration and potential loss of use of the network at critical locations throughout the county.
35. The details of the draft Bridges, Structures and Landslips Programme of £2,665,000 for 2020-21 is set out in Appendix D, attached to this report.

### **Next Steps**

36. Following consideration by Local Area Councils at their meetings in February, any comments received will be considered and the final 2020-21 LTP Programme will be prepared for consideration and approval by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Local Services and the Interim Executive Director: Regeneration, Commercial & Economy.
37. Following agreement of the final programme, all County Council Members and Town and Parish Councils who put forward priorities for the LTP Programme will then be provided with further information regarding the outcome of the assessment of their submission and whether it has been possible to include their priority schemes within the programme for this year.

## Implications

<b>Policy</b>	The proposed programme is consistent with existing policies
<b>Finance and value for money</b>	Programme allocations are within the overall budget available for 2020-21. The £18.654m quoted in this report is an indicative figure and is normally confirmed after the Chancellor's budget announcement. Whilst we don't expect any changes to the allocation, if there are any this would require amendments to the programme.
<b>Legal</b>	None
<b>Procurement</b>	Not applicable
<b>Human Resources</b>	None
<b>Property</b>	None
<b>Equalities</b> (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	As a key issue for Northumberland, the needs of those that are socially excluded have been taken into account in the development of this programme.
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	The programme has been developed to minimise risks to the travelling public.  Risks to the delivery of any individual scheme within the programme will be considered during scheme development. By managing risk at scheme level risk to delivery of the programme will be controlled.
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder</b>	The implications of Section 17, Crime and Disorder Act 1998 have been considered whilst developing this proposal, there are no perceived adverse effects.
<b>Customer Consideration</b>	The delivery of the programme will improve the highways and transport network in Northumberland for the benefit of the travelling public.
<b>Carbon reduction</b>	Schemes to encourage walking and cycling, as well as road safety and those which aim to reduce congestion will encourage modal shift and reduce overall carbon levels making a positive contribution to the achievement of the Council's Climate Change targets.
<b>Wards</b>	All

**Background papers:** None



**Report sign off.**

***Authors must ensure that officers and members have agreed the content of the report:***

	Full name of officer
Monitoring Officer/Legal	N/A
Executive Director of Finance & S151 Officer	Chris Hand
Relevant Executive Director	Rick O'Farrell
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**Appendices**

Appendices A to D - LTP Programme 2020-21