

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 15 April 2020

Highways and Transport Capital Programme 2020/2021



Cllr Helen Fisher, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport said,

“It is vital that we have a well-maintained road network and good transport infrastructure to support a well-connected and prosperous county. It helps to ensure that people are healthy and safe and that we continue to attract inward investment to Staffordshire. We’re pleased to set out our £42.7 million investment over the current financial year. This will enable us to deliver a comprehensive package of improvements that will bring long-term and value for money improvements.”

Report Summary:

Approval of the Highways and Transport capital investment programme for 2020/21. The Highways and Transport capital grant block funding is made up of Highway Maintenance (including Bridges) and Integrated Transport improvements. They are not ring-fenced and precise allocation can be determined locally.

Additional capital funding for Highways and Transport comes from other government bid grants, the County Council’s own investment decisions, contributions from developers through S106 agreements and other stakeholders. Major schemes like the A50 Phase 1, Stafford Western Access Route (SWAR) and Lichfield Southern Bypass are funded and monitored separately.

Recommendations

I recommend that:

- a. Cabinet considers the report and approves the Highways and Transport capital investment proposal set out in the supporting appendices.
- b. The Project Team monitors progress and any significant in-year alterations are approved by the Assistant Director for Highways and the Built County in agreement with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation.

Local Members Interest
N/A

Cabinet – Wednesday 15 April 2020

Highways and Transport Capital Programme 2020/2021

Recommendations of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

I recommend that:

- a. Cabinet considers the report and approves the Highways and Transport capital investment proposal set out in the supporting appendices.
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Report of the Director of Economy, Infrastructure and Skills

Reasons for Recommendations:

1. It is widely recognised that a well maintained, functional built environment is an essential ingredient to a prosperous, safe, well-connected and sustainable society, which encourages inward investment and promotes healthy lifestyles and social cohesion. Staffordshire's Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (HIAMP) and District/Borough Integrated Transport Strategies ensure capital spending is clearly aligned to corporate priorities and delivers value for money.

Summary

2. The Highways and Transport capital delivery programme is made up of:
 - a. Highway Maintenance (including Bridges)
 - b. Integrated Transport improvements
3. The funding available to deliver the 2020/21 capital programme includes:
 - a. Government Capital Grant Allocation for Maintenance including:
 - i. Highways Maintenance Block – Needs Element
 - ii. Highways Maintenance Block – Incentive Element
 - iii. Additional Maintenance funding announced in the March 2020 budget for which confirmation from the Department for Transport (DfT) is awaited
 - b. Government Capital Grant Allocation for Integrated Transport
 - c. County Council capital investment
 - d. Section 106 contributions from developers
 - e. Contributions and awards from stakeholders
 - f. Contributions from other Government grants and bids

4. Table 1 provides the profile of the government capital grant allocations for 20/21. Integrated Transport Block, Maintenance Block – Needs Element and the Pothole Action Fund are allocated by formula. From 2016/17 an Incentive element of the maintenance block grant is conditional on demonstrating efficient management and delivery.

Table 1: Government Allocated Capital Grant Funding 2020/21

Allocation	20/21 (£'000)
Maintenance Block – Needs element*	15,346
Incentive Element	3,365
Additional March 2020 Budget Allocation***	11,140
Total Maintenance	29,851
Total Integrated Transport	3,423
Total	33,274

* Maintenance allocation after the 5% internal top slice (see note below).

*** Chancellor's March 2020 Budget announcement – details to be confirmed

Note: The Allocations for Highways and Education Block are not ring-fenced, and their precise allocation can be determined locally. There are significant areas of County Council activity, such as Economic Development, Waste Management, Libraries etc., which receives no such allocation and the County Council is required to identify alternative sources of funding to undertake any capital projects in these areas. The prime source of such funding has traditionally been capital receipts although the availability has been diminishing in recent years.

For a number of years, Cabinet has agreed that this funding should be enhanced by a 5% top-slice of Highways Maintenance and Education capital resources in order to provide Cabinet with some flexibility and 'headroom' to facilitate projects in other areas.

Highway Maintenance

5. Staffordshire County Council has been a front runner in the development of whole-life-cost Asset Management for highway infrastructure, as advocated by the All-Party Parliamentary Group in October 2013. Staffordshire's current Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (HIAMP) was approved by Cabinet in November 2019.
6. Historically, capital maintenance grant falls somewhat short of the threshold required to achieve optimum whole-life-cost management of carriageways and footways. Since 2009/10 a number of actions have been taken to help address this:

- a. Varying amounts of grant funding have been diverted each year from the Integrated Transport Block allocation
 - b. Between 2009/10 and 2013/14 an extra £50m capital was also invested from the Council's own reserves
7. The impact of Staffordshire's HIAMP together with the additional funding from the Council has been significant. The condition of Staffordshire's road network (proportion where maintenance should be considered) improved by more than 10% between 2009 and 2015, with the improved durability ensuring that the network was better able to withstand the increasing frequency of wet and cold weather that has had a devastating effect on road condition elsewhere across the UK.
8. This added durability then enabled an ongoing reduction in revenue contributions to the capital programme since 2011, in support of the Council's wider Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). However, in 2016/17 Road Condition data showed deterioration across all classifications. Together with the associated pressure on reactive maintenance operations, reduced public satisfaction levels and increasing trend in 3rd party damage and injury claims the Council invested an additional £5m/year in capital maintenance during 2017/18 to 2019/20.
9. Road Condition data for 2019/20 continues to show a slight deterioration across 'A' and 'B' classified roads although there was a slight improvement across 'C' classified and Unclassified roads due to the increased use of innovative 'additional lifecycle' treatments. It should be noted that these treatments, also being used on 'A' and 'B' roads, extend the life of a road by a final 10 year period and a 'cliff edge' for maintenance need is materialising and will continue to do so over the next 6 years. Following the damage caused by the prolonged 2017/18 winter and continual underfunding of capital maintenance, the County Council is committing a further £5m towards capital maintenance during 2020/21. Additionally, it is also proposed to divert £1m of the £3.423m Integrated Transport Block allocation towards capital maintenance during 2020/21.

Table 2: Available Maintenance Budget (2020/21)

Maintenance Budget	(£'000)
Total Maintenance Provision after internal top-slice	18,711
Additional March 2020 Budget Allocation from DfT***	11,140
SCC Extra investment	5,000
Contribution from Integrated Transport	1,000
Total Available	35,851

*** Chancellor's March 2020 Budget announcement – details to be confirmed

10. Appendix 1 provides the recommended capital maintenance investment strategy for 2020/21. It is based on the knowledge that preventative maintenance offers the most effective use of resources over the asset lifecycle as promoted by DfT.
11. County Council additional funding is allocated to additional patching works to reduce potholes, the formation of potholes and in readiness for increasing preventative maintenance treatments in 2021/22 to help manage the recent proliferation of structural failures occurring on the aging network, along with repairing damage caused by the 2019/20 autumn and winter flooding. A specific allocation has also been made to accelerate the collection of tree inventory and condition data to enable us to reduce the risk of danger in relation to highway trees.

Integrated Transport Programme

12. The 2020/21 Integrated Transport programme will help to deliver the eight Integrated Transport Strategies that have been developed for the District/Boroughs. The Transport Strategies are updated to support the District/Borough Local Plans and the County Council's Strategic Plan for 2018 to 2022 which has three interconnected priority outcomes that have been refreshed, as follows:
 - a. Have access to more good jobs and share the benefits of economic growth
 - b. Be healthier and independent for longer
 - c. Feel safer, happier and more supported in their community
13. The Integrated Transport programme will help to support the housing and employment allocations in Local Plans and the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) objectives of creating Competitive Urban Centres and a Connected County. A priority for the LEP up to 2021 is to develop our local transport networks to provide sustainable connections and unlock housing, town centre and employment growth.
14. Schemes to be included in the programme are assessed by a Project Team of senior officers bring together expertise in Communities and Road Safety, Strategic Asset and Network Management, Highway Technical Services, Connectivity Strategy, Infrastructure Development and Improvements and Delivery. Progress on delivery is monitored monthly through the Infrastructure+ contract governance arrangements, with amendments reported to the Assistant Director for Highways and the Built County and approval for significant changes provided by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation.
15. As well as contributing £1m towards highway structural maintenance, the Integrated Transport Block is funding the maintenance and refurbishment of traffic signal assets to help reduce the growing number that are in a very poor condition.
16. The combined capital funding available for the Integrated Transport programme for 2020/21 is summarised in Table 3. From experience, it is suggested that the Integrated Transport Block should be over-allocated in order to provide contingency for programme slippage that may occur from unforeseen events,

including delays in land acquisition and outcome of local consultations. Out of the funding available, it expected that schemes totalling around **£5.8m** will be delivered through the County Council's Infrastructure+ partnership with Amey.

Table 3: Total 2020/21 Integrated Transport Funding

Source	Funding (£'000)
Integrated Transport Block Grant	2,423
Integrated Transport Block Grant over-allocation	179
Other capital funding *	
S106 developer contributions	1,720
Cannock Chase Council Community Infrastructure Levy	162
DfT/Sustrans grant award	508
Heritage Lottery Fund	200
Highway England	75
West Midlands Railway (CCIF fund)	80
East Staffordshire Borough Council	1,300
Bus lane enforcement revenue	150
County/District/Borough/Parish Councillor contributions	73
HS2 Phase One Road Safety Fund	50
TOTAL	6,920

**Note: funding opportunities may also be available from the Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) to support local road safety initiatives.*

17. Appendix 2 includes the detailed schedule with descriptions, justifications and an assessment of the contribution each scheme makes towards the three Strategic Plan outcomes.
18. The Integrated Transport Block supports road safety with an overall allocation of £0.459m, including targeted engineering improvements and wet road skidding sites. It supports the devolved Local Member Initiative Divisional Highway Programme of £7,000 per County Councillor (£0.434m), with a further £0.587m allocated to higher value community liaison schemes recommended through this Member's Programme.

19. Other countywide commitments (excluding road safety) total £0.964m, including £0.634m towards the refurbishment of traffic signals, leaving £0.158m funding available to contribute towards the delivery of the wider Integrated Transport Strategy schemes, including traffic management, public transport, walking and cycling improvements, with a focus on the main urban areas and locations that have accommodated housing / employment growth.

Other Capital Funding

20. As identified in Table 3, a significant level of other capital funding is available in 2020/21 to contribute to the overall programme of transport improvements in Staffordshire detailed in Appendix 2.
21. Bids for additional transport funding have been made during 2019/20 resulting in awards totalling £1.025m. These funds will enable the delivery of enhanced public realm and cycle facilities on South Walls, Stafford, and improved connectivity to Rugeley Town rail station, Codsall rail station. A cycle route to the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas, is expected to be completed in 2021/22, with contributions already available from Highways England and Heritage Lottery Fund. East Staffordshire Borough Council is progressing the regeneration of Burton upon Trent town centre by committing a further £1.3m for major public realm enhancements on Station Street between Worthington Way and High Street.
22. The HS2 Phase One Road Safety Fund allocation of £2.975m available to Staffordshire County Council will be delivering a programme of works between 2020/21 and 2025/26. The schemes to be funded will benefit communities in Lichfield District that stand to be most affected by HS2 construction traffic. As well as road safety schemes, the Department for Transport encourages use of the fund to support cycling projects. In 2020/21 the fund is expected to deliver a road safety scheme at the A51/Borough Lane junction, Longdon where collision cluster analysis has identified a safety concern. The funding is in addition to the £40 million of HS2 Community and Environment Fund and the Business and Local Economy Fund.
23. The programme includes S106 contributions of around £1.720m that are expected to deliver a range of transport schemes throughout Staffordshire to help mitigate the impact of new housing and employment developments. A separate programme of S278 highway works is also delivered through the Infrastructure+ partnership with Amey to facilitate development as part of the planning approval process.
24. In addition, the rail industry is delivering a separate programme of improved access to rail stations, including Lichfield Trent Valley and Kidsgrove, and Highways England are responsible for delivering a separate programme of improvements on the Trunk Road network in Staffordshire.

Legal Implications

25. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Resource and Value for Money Implications

26. The majority of activities for the highway and transport works programme are delivered through the Infrastructure Plus Strategic Partnership or, other procurement routes.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Proposed Maintenance Investment Strategy 2020/2021

Appendix 2 – Proposed Integrated Transport Improvements 2020/2021

List of Background Documents:

- [Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Plan \(HIAMP\)](#)
- [Cannock Chase District transport strategy](#)
- [East Staffordshire Borough Transport Strategy](#)
- [Lichfield District Transport Strategy](#)
- [Newcastle Borough Transport Strategy](#)
- [South Staffordshire District Transport Strategy](#)
- [Stafford Borough Transport Strategy](#)
- [Staffordshire Moorlands Borough Transport Strategy](#)
- [Tamworth Borough Transport Strategy](#)

Contact Details

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