

11 March 2020		ITEM: 17 Decision: 110526
Cabinet		
Integrated Transport Block Capital Programme 2020/21, DfT Block Maintenance Capital Programme 2020/21 and A126 Safer Roads Programme		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: No	
Report of: Councillor Ben Maney - Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport		
Accountable Assistant Director: Leigh Nicholson – Interim Assistant Director Planning, Transport and Public Protection & Julie Nelder – Assistance Director Highways, Fleet and Logistics		
Accountable Director: Andy Millard – Director of Place & Julie Rogers – Director of Environment and Highways		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report sets out the recommended programme of work which will utilise the funding allocations available to the Transport Development Service and Highways Infrastructure within the 2020/21 financial year.

The report covers the Integrated Transport Block Capital allocation that is allocated to the Council through the Department for Transport's (DfT) annual capital settlement of £971,000 and DfT Block Allocation for Maintenance of £1,938,000.

It sets out the proposed programme of expenditure for 2020/21, to implement improvement and enhancement schemes covering the following strategic priority areas as set out within the Council's Transport Strategy and Implementation Plan.

Public Transport Infrastructure	Walking, Cycling & Rights of Way
Parking Management	Minor Works
Freight Management	Road Safety Engineering
Safer Routes to Schools	Traffic Management

In addition, DfT have confirmed that the Council will receive a further £2,488,792 (over the next 3 years) to deliver safety improvements on the A126 section of the road network. This funding has been allocated through the Safer Roads Fund with £907,194 allocated to the 2020/21 financial year.

With respects to the DfT Block Maintenance Allocation the Council achieved its full allocation by obtaining Band 3 via Highway Maintenance Efficiencies Programme (HMEP) which secured an additional £334,000.

This report was presented to Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny on 21/01/2020. The Committee's comments are summarised in section 5 of this report.

1. Recommendations

Cabinet approve the report and the following Cabinet recommendations:

- 1.1 Approve the Integrated Transport Block Capital Programme for 2020/21 (as detailed in Appendix 1) and notes the process by which the Safer Routes to School and Road Safety Engineering programme are assessed and prioritised for implementation.**
- 1.2 Approve the A126 Safer Roads fund programme for the next 3 years (as detailed in Appendix 2).**
- 1.3 Delegate authority to the Director of Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, to review and make local changes to the ITB and Safer Roads programmes taking into account local views and priorities.**
- 1.4 Approve the DfT Maintenance Block Allocation programme for 2020/21 (as detailed in Appendix 2).**
- 1.5 Delegate authority to the Director of Environment and Highways, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, to review and make local changes to the DfT Maintenance Block Allocation programme.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 This report seeks approval for the 2020/21 Integrated Transport Block (ITB) Capital Programme. The programme sets out how the Council will prioritise funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) to enhance transport infrastructure and service provision within the Borough. It also establishes the provision for variation to the programme and the means by which requests for additional works are considered and authorised.**
- 2.2 This report also identifies the DfT Safer Roads fund allocation that will be used to deliver safety improvements on the A126 section of the road network. Funding will be allocated over the next 3 years.**
- 2.3 This report also seeks approval for the 2020/21 DfT Block Allocation Programme which is prioritised in alignment with Thurrock Council Highways**

Assets Management Strategy. This is the key document which ties into the HMEP programme.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

2020/21 Integrated Transport Block Capital Programme

- 3.1 The DfT annual settlement provides the allocation for Integrated Transport Block (ITB) schemes and Maintenance Block Allocation depending on HMEP banding. The total Integrated Transport Block capital programme allocation for Thurrock in 2020/21 amounts to £971,000 and £1,938,000 for Maintenance.
- 3.2 The ITB programme has the ability to deliver an extensive range of transport improvements which reflect the vision and aims set out within the Council's long term Transport Strategy (2013-26). Tackling congestion, delivering accessibility, improving air quality and making Thurrock's roads safer are core elements of the Transport Strategy, which support sustainable growth and regeneration in the Borough.
- 3.3 It is recommended that the 2020/21 ITB programme focuses on Road Safety, Freight Management, Walking, Cycling and Rights of Way, Public Transport, Traffic Management and Safer Routes to Schools. It should be noted that the benefits of some schemes will overlap due to the nature of work delivered. For example, traffic management schemes will deliver air quality benefits while rights of way and safer routes to school schemes can encourage walking and cycling and help to reduce congestion and improve local air quality.
- 3.4 It is important to identify a consistent methodology for prioritising and delivering certain elements of the ITB Capital Programme. As previously agreed, Safer Routes to Schools (SRTS) and Road Safety Engineering proposals will continue to be delivered by applying set criteria in order to prioritise and deliver these schemes over a five-year period.
- 3.5 Members are advised that the allocation is not 'ring fenced' for spend in the specific areas set out by DfT and therefore, Local Authorities have some flexibility to manage these allocations. As a result, the funding allocations may be amended within the total allocation to meet local needs on the network.
- 3.6 The table below provides a summary of how the DfT funding is allocated across the Council's ITB works programme. These allocations are informed by the Council's Transport Strategy and Implementation Plan. The full programme of works is attached at Appendix 1.

Table 1

Integrated Transport Block (ITB) allocation	
Public Transport Infrastructure	£45,000
Walking & Cycling (RoW)	£71,000
Parking Management	£45,000
Minor Works	£70,000
Freight Management	£240,000
Road Safety Engineering	£250,000
Safer Routes to Schools	£250,000
Total	£971,000

- 3.7 The Maintenance Programme is built around the good practice principals set out in the Code of Practice for Well Maintained Infrastructure. The Council's adopted approach to this is via Highway Maintenance Strategy, which focus on maintaining and prioritising the asset in the most efficient way. Not just focusing on the financial element, but also the end user. It is therefore generated on a data lead approach.

A126 Safer Roads fund

- 3.8 The A126 has been identified, through the Safer Roads Foundation assessment, as being one of 50 'A' roads in the United Kingdom where there is the highest risk of collision resulting in death or serious injury.
- 3.9 The Council will receive £2,488,792 to deliver a range of measures aimed at improving safety for all road users along the A126 – between the A13 (Lakeside) and Tilbury with implementation programmed over a 3 year period.
- 3.10 The funding allocation for the next 3 years is set out below.

Table 2

A126 Safer Roads allocation			
2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
907,194	790,799	790,799	2,488,792

- 3.11 Measures will include improved lining, signage, roadside clearance, cycle lanes, new and upgraded signalised crossings and traffic calming. More detail information from the Safer Roads funding submission is attached in Appendix 2.
- 3.12 In November 2019 the Transport Development team made a number of 'capital bids' for additional funding to support priority traffic improvement schemes which would go beyond the funding allocation by DfT. These schemes include A1306 enhancements, which coupled with the A126 funding would significantly improve capacity and safety on the road network in this part of the Borough.

Variation

- 3.13 The Council receives regular requests for improvements to be carried out on the transport network. These requests are prioritised using the agreed scheme determination process. The responsibility to authorise recommendations is delegated to the Director of Place and Director of Environment and Highways in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport.
- 3.14 Whilst there is limited flexibility within the programme once agreed, in some cases requests will need to be implemented within the current financial year rather than held pending a future programme. This might include works to protect the public from risk of injury for example.
- 3.15 Similarly, delegated authority can be used if schemes are subject to cost changes as a result of increasing scope or unforeseen revisions to schemes.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 Approving the recommendations set out in this report will enable the ITB Capital Programme, Maintenance Block Allocation Programme and the Safer Roads programme to be implemented to ensure ongoing improvements to transport infrastructure and service provision within the Borough.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The ITB Capital Programme and Maintenance Block Allocation Programme has been developed in line with the priority areas identified and agreed in the Council's Transport Strategy and Highway Maintenance Strategy, following extensive community and stakeholder engagement.
- 5.2 Local residents, interest groups and key stakeholders (including the Thurrock Road User Group, Congestion Taskforce, Bus User Group, Local Access Forum and Your Place, Your Voice etc.) have been influential in providing regular input for the evidence base that has informed the development of the ITB Capital Programme. Input and feedback from these groups has also supported the direction of the Safer Roads funding submission, although focused engagement (including site exhibitions) will be explored and progressed in 2020. Ward Members will be advised of works affecting their respective wards.
- 5.3 The ITB Capital Programme and Maintenance report was submitted to PTR Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 21 January 2020. At the meeting Members of the Committee queried the package of measures that could be introduced as part of the A126 safety improvement scheme. Officers explained how the allocated funding would be utilised over the next three

years, including survey work to identify the root causes of accidents along the A126 and developing interventions based upon a data led approach.

5.4 Members of the Committee also requested further information on the roads to be resurfaced which was provided at the meeting. Members commented that some parts of South Road in South Ockendon are in a poor condition and in need of resurfacing.

6. **Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

6.1 The ITB Capital Programme, Maintenance Block Allocation Programme and Safer Roads fund will help improve and enhance the transport network across the Borough making it safer, less congested and more accessible, thereby promoting and supporting People, Place and Prosperity within Thurrock.

7. **Implications**

7.1 **Financial**

Implications verified by: **Mark Terry**
Senior Financial Accountant - Corporate Finance

The Council will be allocated capital funding of £971,000 for ITB and £1,938,000 Block Allocation for Maintenance in 2020/21.

In June 2018 the DfT confirmed Thurrock Council's funding allocation of £2,488,792 from the Safer Roads fund. Funds will be received in advance of the 2020/21 financial year and are to be apportioned as set out in Section 3.4 of this report. Further information is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/road-safety-recent-progress-and-future-work>

The cost of implementation will be contained within the funding announced by Government or built into future capital programmes.

7.2 **Legal**

Implications verified by: **Tim Hallam**
Acting Assistant Director of Law & Governance, Head of Legal, and Monitoring Officer

The legal implications are included in the body of the report.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Smith**
Strategic Lead - Community Development & Equalities

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the 2020/21 ITB Capital Programme and the Safer Roads fund. The EQIA recognises the transport interventions that will support improved quality of life in the Borough and its social and economic regeneration as well as transport priorities for, congestion & CO2 mitigation, accessibility, safety, air quality and climate change adaptation.

Access to services and the safety of residents have been highlighted and will be addressed throughout the plan period. The ITB and Safer Roads programme takes account of specific areas of the borough and population where implementation will be prioritised to improve road safety, air quality and access to services, taking account of legislative considerations such as the Equality Act. These have been applied to the capital programme.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

None

8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Thurrock Transport Strategy
- Implementation Plan
- DfT Safer Roads funding application
- Highway Maintenance Strategy

9. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1 – 2020/21 ITB Capital Programme
- Appendix 2 – Safer Roads budget schedule, severity map and Project Plan
- Appendix 3 – DfT Maintenance Block Allocation Programme

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