

<b>13 January 2015</b>		<b>ITEM: 15 (Decision 01104343)</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>		
<b>Highways and Transportation Works Programme and Policies Update</b>		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Key	
<b>Report of:</b> Cllr. Oliver Gerrish, Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transportation		
<b>Accountable Head of Service:</b> Ann Osola, Head of Transportation and Highways		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> David Bull, Director of Planning and Transportation		
<b>This report is Public</b>		

### **Executive Summary**

This report seeks Cabinet approval of a number of interim Works Programme Outputs within the Highways and Transportation portfolio. Specifically, it seeks:

- 1) The endorsement of the prioritisation principles which will be used to determine the schemes put forward for delivery within the Maintenance Block of the 2016/17 Highways & Transportation Capital Programme;
- 2) Agreement to progress, with partners, a Considerate Contractor Scheme to reducing the inconvenience resulting from works on the highway.
- 3) The endorsement of a programme of cycle network improvements to support the aspirations for cycling set out in the 2013 - 2016 Thurrock Transport Strategy;
- 4) Approval to consult on the introduction of a pilot project similar to a lower emission zone which will:
  - i) manage heavy goods vehicles,
  - ii) improve air quality,
  - iii) make it easier and safer to walk and cycle in residential areas unsuitable for HGVs and
  - iv) support improved health of local people.

#### **1. Recommendation(s)**

**That Cabinet:**

- 1.1 Agrees planned maintenance prioritisation criteria in line with Government guidance on cost-effective asset management as set out in Appendix 1.**

- 1.2 Approves the development, for future approval, of a considerate contractor scheme to improve traffic management within the Borough and reduce the inconvenience to businesses and residents resulting from works on the highway;
- 1.3 Agrees the programme of cycling network improvements contained in Appendix 2 as the basis for the Business Case for the draw-down of Local Growth Funding from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) in April 2016, and delegates authority to the Director of Planning and Transportation, in consultation with the Cabinet Member and Chief Executive, to agree the final business case for SELEP approval.
- 1.4 Gives approval to consult on a pilot project to provide more effective management of HGV movements in sensitive areas, as a means of improving air quality and reducing conflict caused by freight vehicles in residential areas.

## **2. Introduction and Background**

- 2.1 This report seeks approval of number of policy updates and work programme outputs to progress the 2015/16 Transportation and Highways service delivery programme including annual capital programme, Considerate Contractor Scheme, cycle infrastructure delivery plan and air quality improvement pilot project.

## **3. Highways Asset Maintenance**

- 3.1 Thurrock Council, as a Local Highways Authority has a statutory obligation under 1980 Highways Act to maintain the highway network as a public asset  
Thurrock's highway network includes:
  - 560km of carriageway;
  - 1000km of footway;
  - 133 structures;
  - 168 roundabouts;
  - 50 traffic signals;
  - 17,500 lighting columns;
  - 3,500 illuminated signs;
  - 1,500 illuminated bollards;
  - 30,000 signs; and
  - 20,000 gullies
- 3.2 All of the above are used by Thurrock's residents, businesses and visitors. As Thurrock grows and evolves it is important to continue to maintain its existing highway assets as well as new infrastructure to accommodate new developments.

3.3 In 2011 the Council published the Transport Asset Management Plan which set out how the Council prioritises planned maintenance investment in line with a whole life approach to asset category maintenance. Guidance issued by the Department for Transport (DfT) states that a Local Authority's asset management policy should be reviewed bi-annually. Appendix 1 sets out the core principles for prioritisation for each of the blocks within the annual Highways & Transportation capital programme. Cabinet is asked to endorse these principles as the basis for the 2016/17 delivery programme which will go forward for approval to the full Council in March 2016.

#### **4. Highways Network Management**

4.1 Under 2004 Traffic Management Act, Thurrock Council as Local Highways Authority has a statutory responsibility to manage its local road network to support free movement of traffic both on Thurrock roads and on the roads of neighbouring Authorities.

4.2 A particular challenge in recent months has been the need to reconcile the requirement of utility companies, building and civil engineering contractors to undertake emergency repairs and infrastructure improvements with the needs of road users seeking to access local businesses and amenities.

4.3 The 1991 New Roads and Street Works Act and its associated Code of Practice for the Co-ordination of Street Works and Works for Road Purposes and Related Matters places statutory obligations on all parties undertaking works on the highway to reinforce public safety, and ensure that undertakers consider the needs of other road users. However, a number of Local Authorities (including London) have established Considerate Contractor Schemes to encourage utility companies and other contractors on the highway to 'go the extra mile' to accommodate the needs of other road users, and of local businesses and residents in the way that they conduct their works. For example, the Code requires works on the highway to have information boards providing contact details for the entity undertaking the works and the anticipated duration of the disruption. This does not apply to works of an emergency or temporary nature. However, in London Boroughs, entities undertaking works use generic boards to identify themselves, with slots in the sign where site specific information can be added, and these are used for all works undertaken.

4.4 Cabinet is therefore asked to endorse the development of a Thurrock Considerate Contractor Scheme. This would be developed in collaboration with statutory undertakers and others conducting works on the highway for the purpose of reducing negative impacts of road works to road users, local businesses and residents. This scheme would then be brought back to Cabinet for approval in summer 2016.

## **5. Transport and Health**

- 5.1 Thurrock's Community Priorities include a commitment to improving health and well-being within the Borough. The Highways and Transportation Work Programme supports this priority in a number of ways. This report will focus on the work which is being undertaken to support and encourage cycling as part of a healthy lifestyle, and on the development of measures to mitigate the contribution of traffic, and particularly heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) to air quality.

### *Cycle Infrastructure Delivery Plan*

- 5.2 The 2013-26 Thurrock Transport Strategy sets out the Council's commitment to support and encourage higher levels of cycling in Thurrock as a means of improving accessibility, reducing congestion and pollution and encouraging healthy lifestyles. The programme of initiatives to deliver this commitment includes the development of a Thurrock Cycle Network which connects communities with key work, education and leisure destinations and which helps make better use of the Thames riverside and other cultural attractions across the Borough.
- 5.3 In summer 2014, the Government announced its allocation of funding for the first round of Local Growth Fund bids. This included a list of named schemes within the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) area which have been provisionally allocated capital funding for delivery in the period 2015-2019. This included an allocation of £5M for Cycling Infrastructure Development in Thurrock for commencement in 2016.
- 5.4 Over the last few months, work has been undertaken to develop the programme of works which will be delivered with this funding. A cycle audit was undertaken to review the existing routes and identify missing links and barriers to cycling, as well as new routes that would lead to increased uptake in cycling. Partners were contacted to seek their views and aspirations for the development of Thurrock's cycle network. Schemes were prioritised based on their potential to bring about modal shift in more congested areas, particularly on the home to work or school journey and focussed in areas where access to housing, jobs and future growth is vitally important.
- 5.5 The result of this audit has fed into the production of a Cycle Infrastructure Delivery Plan as set out in Appendix 2.
- 5.6 The next steps to progressing the plan are to develop the first tranche of schemes to detailed design stage, and set out the details of the schemes to be delivered, along with a quantification of the benefits of delivering them in a report which will be submitted to the SELEP Accountability Board in March 2016, so as to allow funds to be drawn down from April 2016 onwards.
- 5.7 Cabinet is asked to endorse the work to date, and delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Transportation, in collaboration with the Chief

Executive and the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation to agree the final business case submission for the SELEP Accountability Board.

### *Air Quality*

- 5.8 In June 2015, Thurrock's Health and Wellbeing Board received a report on the Health Impacts of Air Pollution in Thurrock. The report noted that poor air quality has significant adverse impacts on public health and that, within Thurrock's 16 Air Quality Management Areas, traffic movements, and in particular the movements of heavy goods vehicles, are a significant contributor to the problem. The Transportation and Highways Service has an ongoing work programme to identify and evaluate potential initiatives to improve the situation, and a comprehensive report on this subject will be brought to Cabinet in due course. However, it has become clear that there are particular problems when large number of heavy goods vehicles use unsuitable routes through residential areas. This has been an ongoing problem in a number of areas across the Borough, and the Council has introduced weight restrictions in an attempt to address it. However, to date, weight restrictions (i.e. lorry bans) rely on police officers for enforcement. With rising demands on limited police manpower, it is desirable that an alternative arrangement be explored.
- 5.9 It is therefore proposed that a pilot project, similar to a lower emission zone, is undertaken which uses camera enforcement to control freight on unsuitable routes. A number of possibilities will be explored:
- Camera enforcement of existing width restrictions with bus bypass facilities at London Road/Askews Farm Lane and High Road, North Stifford;
  - Introduction of new width restrictions with bus bypasses with camera enforcement in Aveley High Street/Stifford Road;
  - Investigation of spot HGV camera enforcement (with bus exemptions but excluding other 'except for access' rights) at London Road, west bound from its junction with Devonshire Road, London Road/Motherwell Way, South Road in South Ockendon, and Rectory Road/Towers Road.
- 5.10 This report seeks the approval of Cabinet to explore these options, in consultation with local residents, Essex Police, local businesses and the Safer Essex Roads Partnership and delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Transportation, in consultation with the Chief Executive and the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation, to progress a pilot initiative. The results of the pilot would be reported to Planning, Transportation and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration and comment, to inform decisions on larger scale initiatives across the Borough.

## **6. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 6.1 The recommendations of this report support the delivery of community priorities, statutory obligations and the draw-down of grant funding.

## **7. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

- 7.1 The prioritisation methods for Highways and Transportation Maintenance Programme have been discussed at Transportation, Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee.
- 7.2 Strategic Partners (e.g. DP World, Sustrans, local cycling groups) have been consulted during the identification of schemes for the Cycling Infrastructure Implementation Plan.
- 7.3 The Considerate Contractor Scheme and Lower Emission Zone freight initiative will be the subject to extensive further stakeholder consultation as they are developed.

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

- 8.1 This report is consistent with all five corporate priorities:
- **Create** a great place for learning and opportunity
  - **Encourage** and promote job creation and economic prosperity
  - **Build** pride, responsibility and respect
  - **Improve** health and well-being
  - **Promote** and protect our clean and green environment

## **9. Implications**

### **9.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Jo Freeman**  
**Management Accountant**

The Highways and Transportation Capital Programme will be subject to a separate report to Full Council.

The Full Business Case on Cycling Infrastructure will be subject to S151 Officer sign-off.

The revenue costs of the development of a Considerate Contractor Scheme and Lower Emission Zone Pilot proposal would be met within existing Service budgets.

## 9.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Vivien Williams**  
**Planning & Regeneration Solicitor**

More effective engagement with third parties undertaking works on the highway will support the Council in the delivery of its statutory obligations under the 2004 Traffic Management Act and minimise disruption to highway users.

All cycle-ways will be subject to statutory consultation and creation of orders to legalise the use of bicycles on the pavement. The Council will ensure that the necessary orders are in place before construction works are completed on any routes. Any 'Shared Use Routes for Pedestrians and Cyclists' will be established in accordance with Department for Transport Local Transport Note 1/12 of that name dated September 2012.

The legal implications of a Thurrock Considerate Contractor Scheme and a Lower Emission Pilot will be evaluated once detailed plans have been agreed with partners.

## 9.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Price**  
**Community Development Officer**

Cycling provides an affordable and accessible mode of transport, providing significant environmental, health and well-being benefits. It is not envisaged that particular diversity or equality issues will be raised through the implementation of the cycle plan; however, further consultation with the diversity and equality team will be undertaken if the funding bid is successful, to identify and mitigate any risks as appropriate.

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

Initiatives to improve air quality and accessibility will have a positive impact on public health

**10. 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):

- Cabinet 17 December 2014 Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme – Strategic Review and Recommendations for Improvement
- Council 11 March 2015 Cabinet Member Report – Highways and Transportation Capital Programme 2015/16
- Thurrock Transport Strategy 2013 - 2026
- Health and Wellbeing Board 15 June 2015 Health Impacts of Air Pollution in Thurrock Council
- Planning, Transportation, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee 4 November Highways Maintenance Update

**11. Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 – Highways Maintenance Prioritisation Principles
- Appendix 2 – Cycle Infrastructure Delivery Plan Scheme and Scoring Matrix

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**Appendix 1 – Highways Maintenance Capital Prioritisation Principles**

Scheme Type	Method of prioritisation
LTP Maintenance - Bridges	In accordance with the results of the bridge Inspections, prioritisation based on safety/risk.
LTP Maintenance - Principal Maintenance (Resurfacing / Reconstruction)	Results of the annual scanner machine surveys that are undertaken on Classified Roads, are processed to give the overall condition of each carriageway.
LTP Maintenance - Other Classified Road Maintenance (Resurfacing / Reconstruction)	<p>Results obtained are of defects present and measured against set criteria, such as cracking, rutting, chip loss. The scores from the condition surveys give a prioritised list based on the condition of the carriageways.</p> <p>The scoring for individual schemes is weighted in relation to safety, economic significance (i.e. HGV route), accessibility (i.e. bus route), environmental sensitivity and public acceptance.</p> <p>Works to manage the asset condition through whole life cost optimisation will be included.</p>
Unclassified (resurfacing / reconstruction)	Unclassified roads undertake a similar process with the exception that the surveys are of visual nature undertaken by independent accredited surveyors. 25% of roads inspected annually (i.e. a 4 year cycle).
LTP Maintenance - Footway & Cycleway Maintenance	<p>Heavily used footways surveyed by Essex detailed visual inspections (DVI's)</p> <p>Produces BV187</p> <p>Prioritised list by Inspectors' reports</p>

LTP Maintenance – Street lighting	In accordance with the reports received as a result of the electrical testing carried out every 6 years.
LTP Maintenance - (drainage)	Prioritised according to safety/risk associated and nature of the problems caused, in conjunction with the Flood Risk Manager.
LTP Maintenance - Other infrastructure (e.g. Safety Barriers road markings)	Prioritised by safety risk posed to all road users.
Traffic Signals	Signal Upgrade Programme prioritised on road classification and according to the level of queue/congestion problems.
Rights of Way	In conjunction with walking/rambling associations and demand for routes to be provided/improved.
Road Safety Engineering - Traffic Management	AIP programme - Accident prioritisation 4 accidents in 50m over previous 3 years survey data
Safer Routes to Schools	a) TRACCS accessibility planning modelling b) Travel Plan objectives from Mode Shift STARS
Parking	a) Prioritised by Safety, free flow of traffic movement and accessibility b) HGV parking in accordance with the HGV Action Plan
Integrated Transport - Congestion	a) Transport Impact Assessments b) Traffic Master Data
Integrated Transport - Area Traffic Management	a) Cyclic area based review of service requests b) Cyclic area based review of existing traffic calming and sign clutter

Integrated Transport -Freight Management	In accordance with the HGV Action Plan
Integrated Transport - Accessibility	a) TRACCS accessibility planning modelling b) Major development Travel Plan objectives
Public Transport Infrastructure	a) TRACCS accessibility planning modelling b) Major development Travel Plan objectives
Walking & Cycling	a) TRACCS accessibility planning modelling b) Cycle Infrastructure Delivery Programme
Air Quality Management Areas	In accordance with the AQ Strategy