

Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED
All

Highways and Transportation Scrutiny

8 October 2003

Three year Integrated Transport Capital Programme 2003/04 to 2005/06

Report of the Service Director, Highways and Transportation

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To allow Scrutiny the opportunity to comment on the draft programme and to forward any views to Cabinet prior to a decision being made about the letting of contracts for the reconstruction of the junction of Hinckley Road and the Outer Ring, and the construction of the A6030 Corridor Stage One improvements.

2 Summary

- 2.1 This year, the Government included, in its calculations for the size of the Single Capital Pot, an allowance in respect of Integrated Transport of £6.747 million, some of which was consumed by a small overspend on the previous year's programme. It is expected that similar allowances will be made next year and in 2005/06, which will then complete the delivery of the first five year Local Transport Plan.
- 2.2 Since the size of the allocations for Integrated Transport are not known until December of the previous financial year, it has been practice in the past for Cabinet to approve a detailed programme for one financial year each March. However, for two reasons, it is thought desirable now for Members to approve, in principle, a draft three year capital programme.
- 2.3 Firstly, in its Local Transport Plan, the Council made proposals to the Government for spending its allocations for Integrated Transport in a particular way. It is felt that the Council should review how well actual spending has reflected those proposals and consider what action, if any, should be taken to adjust spending in 2004/05 and 2005/06 in the light of the present position.
- 2.4 Secondly, following consultations with local residents and Members, detailed design for two large schemes - the reconstruction of the junction of Hinckley Road and the Outer Ring, and the A6030 Corridor Stage One - are complete, and the Council is physically in a position to let contracts for construction to start in January, subject to the availability of finance.

2.5 However, as the draft three year programme shows, it is probable that one of the contracts will have to be deferred in order to restrict spending in 2004/05 to the expected allocation of £6.7 million.

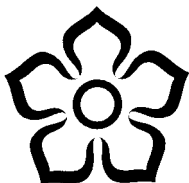
3. Recommendations

3.1 The views of Scrutiny are sought.

4. Headline Financial and legal Implications

4.1 Integrated Transport schemes are funded from the Basic Credit Approval for the Single Capital Pot.

5. Report Author/Officer to contact: Mike Pepper - Head of Transport Development (6520)



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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. The Local Transport Plan (LTP)

- 1.1 Under the provision of the Transport Act 2000, the City Council has a duty to prepare and implement a Local Transport Plan. The Council submitted its current plan, for the five years from 2001/02 to 2005/06, in July 2000, and the Government gave the Council notice of its intention to award borrowing approvals on the basis of that submission in December the same year.
- 1.2 Three borrowing approvals for Integrated Transport of around £6.7 million (2003 prices) have so far been given, and there is every indication that future approvals will be of a similar size.

2. Implementation so far

- 2.1 The capital bid table in the Local Transport Plan contains proposals to spend money on a range of measures. The largest of these are:
- a) bus measures
 - b) public transport interchange
 - c) cycling measures
 - d) walking measures
 - e) community safety lighting
 - f) local safety schemes
 - g) traffic calming
 - h) safer routes to school
 - i) urban traffic control and management
 - j) travel centre and information
- 2.2 Considerable progress, ahead of schedule, has been made in a number of areas.
- a) an accelerated programme of works at bus stops, to provide level access to low-floor

buses, is being successfully implemented, to tie in with the bus shelter replacement programme, which, together with the investment in star-trak and the new bus lanes on Narborough Road, forms the basis of a rapid implementation of the Council's proposed bus measures.

- b) New doors and level access at St Margarets Bus Station, together with the new bus-rail interchange outside London Road station, mean that the Council's proposed investment in public transport interchange is on schedule.
- c) Very rapid progress has been made in the delivery of new footways and footpaths, and, together with extra crossing facilities, many of them as part of larger schemes, means that the Council's proposed expenditure to help pedestrians is well ahead of schedule.
- d) Investment in community safety lighting, also principally targeted at pedestrians, is also well ahead of schedule.

2.3 In addition, good progress has been made with the implementation of new cycling measures and investment to improve the City's urban traffic management and control system, including, very shortly, the provision of a new variable message signing system.

2.4 Progress with the three key areas designed to improve road safety has not been so rapid. Consultations for the Council's safer routes programme has proved to be more time-consuming than expected. In addition, considerable staff time has been spent on developing, successfully, the Leicester and Leicestershire Road Safety Partnership, which has been overseeing the introduction of safety cameras to very good effect.

2.5 The end result has been, however, that whilst spending on changing road layouts to reduce road danger has not proceeded as fast as originally planned, the number of people killed or seriously injured on Leicester's roads has fallen faster than the Government's target. Nevertheless, it is proposed that, as far as possible, extra resources should be put into these areas during the next two years.

2.6 There has been no significant spending on the development of a travel centre, which the Council indicated should take place during the life of the current local plan. However, it is now intended to review the need for and development of a travel centre as part of the City Centre Access Strategy, which will mean that the proposed expenditure cannot take place until after the life of the current LTP.

2.7 Following submission of the LTP, the Government substantially increased the funding available for Integrated Transport. The larger levels of borrowing approval have meant that, for the first time, the Council can consider the construction of schemes over £1 million from the Integrated Transport allocation. Six such schemes are in various states of development, as follows:

a) Pork Pie Roundabout (£2.2 million)

Preliminary design of the scheme was completed, but, following consultations with local residents and Members, Cabinet decided not to proceed with detailed design and construction.

b) Narborough Road (£1.2 million)

Stage one has recently been completed and stage two is expected to be on site after Christmas with completion planned for April.

c) A6030 Corridor Stage One Victoria Rd East to St Saviours Road (£3.1 million)
Following consultations with local residents and Members, detailed design has been completed, and tender documents are in preparation. On the present timetable, construction could start in January.

d) Hinckley Road/Outer Ring (£1 million, plus developer contributions)
Similarly, following consultations with local residents and Members, detailed design has been completed, and tender documents are in preparation. On the present timetable, construction could start in January.

e) London Road (£1.3 million)
Consultations on the preliminary design for the scheme have taken place. However, in view of the rapid progress being made with the two previous schemes and their expected impact on the capital programme, it has been decided to defer proceeding any further until funding for construction can be identified.

f) Belgrave corridor
Unusually, funding for this scheme started before the current Local Transport Plan, by way of a specific increase in the Council's borrowing approval. Much of the work to improve the corridor had already been carried out when its proposals ran into considerable local opposition, despite earlier consultations. Following extensive further consultation and various scheme redesigns, the scheme is now back on track and is expected to be complete next financial year.

2.8 Each of these larger schemes, if implemented, is designed to contribute to a range of measures. All of them include facilities to help bus passengers, pedestrians and cyclists, as well as measures designed to reduce road danger, including, in several cases, a clear contribution to on-going safer routes programmes.

2.9 In addition to the above, there is an ongoing programme of work to provide level access at bus stops, which will cost around £1.4 million over a two year period, in order to tie in with the provision of new bus shelters.

3. Three year programme

3.1 It is in the context of the need to consider the delivery of the Council's five year LTP proposals, and the significant cost of the larger schemes, particularly that of the Hinckley Road/Outer Ring Road and A6030 corridor schemes, which are ready to build, that a need was seen to draw up a draft three year programme in order to inform decisions about letting contracts and determining future work programmes.

3.2 Appendix A shows the budget for the current financial year together with the currently forecast outturn expenditure. It also contains a draft programme for each of the following two years. The elements of the programme are as follows:

a) Measures to help travel by bus
In order to maximise the number of stops provided with level access prior to the new bus shelters going in, it is proposed to continue this work to an accelerated programme for one further year. Thereafter, in view of the rapid progress made in

delivering bus measures, it is suggested that expenditure on this measure is eased off for the remainder of the three year programme.

b) Public transport interchange

Following implementation of this year's programme no further work on interchange is shown in the programme. This is because most further improvements are dependent on the construction of the High Street bypass, for which some provision is made at the end of the section on major schemes under the heading of LRC schemes. However, improved information about bus services in the City Centre is to be provided by way of multi-route real time signs funded from the Supplementary Credit Approval for star-trak this financial year.

c) Major projects

The proposals shown in the draft programme assume that construction of both the Hinckley Road/Outer Ring and A6030 corridor schemes starts in January. It seems unlikely, at the moment, that the Council can afford to do this, as next year's draft programme currently shows a forecast overspend of over £1 million. I propose to ask Cabinet to decide which of these two schemes should be delayed, or whether they would prefer to see the problem tackled in another way altogether.

The Hinckley Road/Outer Ring Road scheme will bring considerable benefits to North Braunstone school students, who need to cross the busy Hinckley Road on their way to and from New College. Spending the money now will keep up the momentum of the on-going North Braunstone and Rowley Fields Safer Routes project, which is top of the Council's approved priority list, and tie in with other major investment in the area.

The A6030 corridor scheme is designed to protect local residents and other people who need to cross Victoria Road East, Tailby Avenue, the Portwey, and parts of Coleman Road and Broad Avenue from the impact of the extra traffic expected in this corridor following construction of the Victoria Road East Extension (VREE). Spending the money now should ensure that the works are complete prior to the opening of the VREE to traffic.

A provision is proposed for advance design work and other pre-construction activities on various schemes expected to arise from the proposals of the Leicester Regeneration Company, including the High Street bypass. It is anticipated that, if advance design can start this year, it should be possible to make a start on construction during 2005/06.

It is proposed that somewhat smaller amounts of money be spent over the next two years to permit the completion of the Belgrave Corridor and London Road schemes.

All of the major projects in this section seek to deliver a number of objectives, including helping pedestrians and cyclists, improving road safety and providing bus priorities.

d) Measures to help travel by bicycle

A forward programme has not yet been identified. There is currently no-one in the post of cycling officer, though I expect it to have been filled by the date of the

meeting.

e) Measures to help travel on foot

In view of the considerable progress made in this area of spend, it is proposed to spend nothing further specifically under this heading. A considerable number of new footways and footway improvements have already been constructed because of the relative ease with which such schemes can be brought to fruition, so that the Council has already spent considerably more on this measure than planned at this stage. It is, however, worth pointing out that many schemes in other sections, especially the major projects and the various safety measures, contain measures to help travel on foot.

f) Provision for people with disabilities

It is proposed to continue with the ongoing programme of introducing dropped kerbs to help people in wheelchairs in particular.

g) Local Safety Schemes

Despite the Council's success in reducing the number of people killed and seriously injured on the City's roads, it is proposed that money should continue to be invested in this and the other measures, traffic calming and safer routes, which are designed to reduce road danger. It is proposed that staff prepare a programme of Local Safety Schemes and carry out preliminary design and consultation during next financial year, with a view to re-starting the programme of construction in 2005/06.

h) Traffic calming

A forward programme has not yet been identified, but will be based on the approved priority lists.

i) Safer routes

The choice of some of the schemes in the forward programme has not, as yet, been identified. However, considerable consultation has already taken place in both South Leicester and in the areas on either side of Narborough Road, and it is expected that the bulk of investment will take place in these two areas.

j) Road network signing

It is proposed to continue with essential direction signing changes at the present rate.

k) Urban Traffic and Management Control

It is proposed to continue the programme of investment to develop and upgrade the systems. The key priorities are better traveller information, more priorities for late-running buses and better signal management, especially where roadworks are involved.

l) European projects

It is not known, at this stage, if there is a need for an ongoing programme, but, if the Council is successful with future bids, it may be necessary to adjust the programme in order to find some match funding.

m) Travel demand management

It is proposed to defer expenditure in this area until after completion of the City Centre Access Strategy.

n) Community safety lighting

The Council has been spending more in this area than it indicated it planned to do in the Local Transport Plan. Nonetheless, this remains an extremely popular activity, which contributes to transport, crime and disorder and regeneration strategies. Thus, whilst a reduction in expenditure is currently proposed in the programme next year, to make it easier for the Council to limit expenditure to within its likely borrowing approvals, it is suggested that expenditure should return to present levels the following year.

o) Local monitoring and administration

Scheme administration covers part of the cost of the Transport Development Section's staff, who are responsible for co-ordinating most schemes and carrying out consultations with Elected Members, the public and others prior to detailed design and construction.

p) Advanced design

Design and supervision costs are normally included in the price of each scheme, and, once a firmer programme of advance design work has been finalised, this is what will happen. However, on a temporary basis, advance design is shown separately to make sure that the programme can afford to start preliminary design in the years prior to construction.

q) LTP monitoring

The Council is required to produce an annual progress report each year, which involves considerable data collection and analysis, widespread consultations and significant printing costs.

r) Clear zone/Low Emission Zone

Council officers are currently in discussions with a manufacturer of equipment which allows the emission levels of old buses and taxis to be cut substantially, which may facilitate the introduction of a low emission zone in the City Centre.

s) Environmental network enhancements

The money identified in the Local Plan is mainly targeted at lorry movements in the County part of Central Leicestershire. However, it is intended to give consideration to the extent to which similar measures can be introduced within the city.

FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

4. Financial Implications

4.1 Integrated Transport schemes are funded from the Basic Credit Approval for the Single Capital Pot.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

6. Other Implications

6.1 OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph References With Supporting information
Equal Opportunities	No	
Policy	No	
Sustainable and Environmental	No	
Crime and Disorder	No	
Human Rights Act	No	
Elderly / People on Low income	No	

7. Background Papers

Report to Cabinet March 2002

8. Details of Research & Consultation

None, other than the background papers.

7. Report Author

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