

Meeting of the Council – 18th April, 2011

Report of the Cabinet

West Midlands Local Transport Plan (LTP3) - Transport Settlement and Proposed Transport Capital Programme for 2011/12 – 2014/15

Purpose of Report

1. To seek the Council's support of the new West Midlands Local Transport Plan (LTP3).
2. To inform the Council of the allocation of monies for the Transport Capital Programme for the four year period 2011/12 – 2014/15.
3. To seek approval to the Transport Capital Programme for 2011/12 – 2014/15.

Background

West Midlands Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) – “Making the Connections”

4. LTP3 has a clear purpose to set out a transport strategy delivered through prioritised transport interventions across the Metropolitan Area which will support private sector led growth, sustainable economic activity and development in the Metropolitan Area, as well as the move to a low carbon economy.
5. The plan consists of :-
 - The 15 year Long Term strategy with detailed supporting appendices and;
 - The implementation plan setting out how we will deliver the Strategy over 15 years, with a more detailed programme for the first five years, incorporating Centro's five year Public Transport Plan.
6. The plan has a clear set of transport priorities, which are aimed at not only improving local but also national connectivity. Such improved transport links will have a central role to play in supporting the economic recovery in the Metropolitan Area by promoting economic development and regeneration, encouraging job creation and inward investment and making the Metropolitan Area accessible and connected for all.
7. The priorities within LTP3 are:-
 - Maintaining our assets effectively;
 - Making the best use of existing transport capacity through a combination of transport interventions to improve journey times, public transport quality, and reductions in traffic congestion;

- Encouraging people to move away from car use through providing attractive, effective and efficient alternatives, reducing carbon emissions;
- Cost-effective transport investments creating maximum economic benefit through improved Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and jobs;
- Improving international connectivity and surface access at Birmingham Airport; and
- Supporting business needs for freight transport.

8. The Local Transport Plan reflects the Black Country Core Strategy, which sets out clearly the importance of transport connectivity to aid jobs, regeneration and growth. Equal in size to Birmingham, the Black Country differs due to its polycentric nature, resulting in a complex set of journey patterns across the multi-centred sub-region. Transport has a key role in attracting investment to the Black Country and widening the travel horizons of its local labour markets. The principal transport challenges for the Black Country are:

- Improving public transport connectivity between the four strategic centres of Brierley Hill, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton;
- Improving connectivity with the M5 and M6 and tackling localised congestion at the motorway junctions;
- Improving road freight access to employment areas; and
- Improving rail freight inter-modal facilities and connectivity linking Black Country businesses to the national rail freight network.

9. The Implementation Plan is split into two delivery periods the first being 2011/12 to 2015/16, which includes committed and previously approved transport investment as well as new transport investment that is seen as essential to drive economic growth and reduce carbon. For Dudley the committed schemes include:

- Brierley Hill Sustainable Access Network (BHSAN) – Complete
- A4123 Burnt Tree Island – Under way
- West Midlands Urban Traffic Control Major Scheme, which includes significant investment across Dudley's strategic highway network – Under way

A number of new schemes have been identified in the 2011/12 – 2015/16 period that will impact on Dudley borough, these include:

- M6 (Junction 5-8) Active Traffic Management (Highways Agency Scheme)

10. Scheme priorities included in Phase 2 (2016 – 2026) that will either directly or indirectly impact on Dudley's transport networks include:

- Black Country Rapid Transit Spine Phase 1 (Wednesbury to Brierley Hill)
- Black Country Rapid Transit Spine Phase 2 (5W's – Wolverhampton to Wednesbury via Wednesfield, Willenhall and Walsall)
- Bridge upgrades across the Metropolitan area to improve accessibility
- Red Routes Package 2 (now included within the SMART routes initiative)
- M5 and M6 junction improvements (Highways Agency Schemes)
- Walsall – Stourbridge Strategic Freight Route (also supports delivery of Black Country Rapid Transit Spine Phase 1 using tram-train technology)

11. The Coalition Government is changing the way Local Authorities receive transport funding and for the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) period to 2014/15 there will be just four grant streams of funding. An analysis of the four grant streams available to Local Government is shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1 – Government Funding Grant Streams up to 2014/15

	Base 10/11 £m	2011/12 £m	2012/13 £m	2013/14 £m	2014/15 £m
Local Sustainable Transport Fund (Revenue)	-	50	100	100	100
Local Sustainable Transport Fund (Capital)	-	30	40	60	80
Highway Maintenance Block	871	806	779	750	707
Integrated Transport Block	450	300	320	320	450
Major Schemes	199	418	364	335	427

Local Sustainable Transport Fund

12. The Government has announced, as part of the Local Transport White Paper, the creation of a Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) to help build strong local economies and address the urgent challenges of climate change. The Department for Transport (DfT) plans to make £560 million available to the LSTF over the 4 year period to 2014/15. The funding will comprise both revenue and capital funding as outlined in Table 1 above. In metropolitan areas, the DfT will expect an application to come from the Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) unless it is agreed by partner authorities that applications should be made directly by the respective Metropolitan District Councils. At the time of preparing this report West Midlands district authorities were in discussions with Centro regarding a joint bid based on the further development of the SMART routes network and supporting smarter choices initiatives.

Maintenance Block

13. This funds carriageway and footway surfacing, bridge strengthening and structural maintenance, street lighting improvements and de-trunked roads, and although distributed to the ITA by Government this will be provided directly to the district authorities. The maintenance block allocations for Dudley are set out in Table 4 of this report.

Integrated Transport Block

14. The Integrated Transport Block (IT Block) is used in different ways by different authorities and historically has supported minor highway improvements, road safety schemes, general maintenance and can support major scheme development and delivery. Table 2 sets out the IT Block funding allocations for 2011/12 to 2014/15 for the West Midlands Metropolitan Area as advised in the Local Transport Funding Settlement letter:

Table 2 West Midlands Metropolitan Area IT Block Allocation

	Final		Indicative	
	2011/12 £m	2012/13 £m	2013/14 £m	2014/15 £m
West Midlands Metropolitan Area IT Block Allocation	24.930	26.592	26.592	37.395

Major Schemes

15. £1.5 billion has been made available across the country for major schemes of which the A4123 Burnt Tree Island and the West Midlands Urban Traffic Control Major Scheme are currently under way in Dudley as detailed in paragraph 9.

Distribution of IT Block Allocation

16. The ITA at its meeting on 7th February, 2011 agreed the level of top slicing for a joint LTP Technical Development Budget to support such activities as joint transport modelling, traffic surveys and information and operating costs of the Core Support Team, which provides technical support to the Planning and Transportation Sub-Committee and Monitoring Group and on LTP3 preparation. Table 3 shows the level of top-slicing and the allocation remaining for distribution across the West Midlands.

Table 3 – IT Block Allocation available for re-distribution

	Final		Indicative	
	2011/12 £m	2012/13 £m	2013/14 £m	2014/15 £m
West Midlands Metropolitan Area IT Block Allocation	24.930	26.592	26.592	37.395
LTP Development Budget	1.1782	0.9859	0.9859	0.9859
Allocation available for re-distribution	23.7518	25.6061	25.6061	36.4091

17. It was also agreed that with regard to the remaining allocation available for distribution that the same share out (60% to Districts and 40% to the ITA) that was used in 2010/11 will be applied to the 2011/12 allocation. The Districts 60% share has been divided between the seven West Midlands districts using the Government's Mid 2009 Population Estimates.

18. As funding generally within Metropolitan Local Authorities will be more constrained, the ITA has decided to allocate £5m per annum from the ITA's allocation of IT Block between 2011/12 to 2014/15 to contribute towards increasing the proportion of local contributions required for Major Schemes.

Dudley Settlement Breakdown

19. After the adjustments discussed above, in particular to the IT Block allocation, the local transport capital allocations for Dudley are as follows:

Table 4 – Local Transport Block Allocations for Dudley

Block	2011/12 £000's	2012/13 £000's	2013/14 £000's	2014/15 £000's
Integrated Transport Block	1656	1785	1785	2538
Bridges	438	422	2595	2445
Roads	1783	1660		
Street Lighting	540	522		
Detrunked Roads	165	159		
Total Maintenance Block	2926	2763	2595	2445

20. The indicated figures for 2012/13 to 2014/15 may be subject to adjustment. An indicative split for the maintenance block allocations is currently only available for 2011/12 and 2012/13. Any future adjustments will be reported to the Cabinet at the appropriate time.
21. It is proposed that for the future years 2011/12 – 2014/15 the distribution of allocation to headings within funding blocks as set out in Table 4 be agreed by the Cabinet Member for Transportation in consultation with the Director of the Urban Environment.
22. It is proposed that for future years 2011/12 – 2014/15 the approval of schemes within funding block headings be agreed by the Director of the Urban Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transportation.
23. It is also proposed for future years 2011/12 – 2014/15 the Director of the Urban Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transportation be authorised to agree virements between headings contained within the block allocations identified in Table 2 where this is to ensure the best use of resources.
24. The Integrated Transport Block will be assigned to assist in delivering LTP3 outputs and outcomes. As set out previously the 'Heading' allocations and detailed programmes of work for 2011/12 – 2014/15 will be approved as set out in paragraphs 21 and 22 respectively.
25. The Maintenance Block contains four categories; Bridges, Roads, Street Lighting and Detrunked Roads, and the indicative split for 2011/12 and 2012/13 is shown in Table 4. The Cabinet resolved that the approval of schemes for all years 2011/12 – 2014/15 be agreed by the Director of the Urban Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transportation.

Local Resources

26. In order to support the block allocations for maintenance set out in Table 4, local resources have been identified for Carriageway Maintenance, Footway Maintenance and Street Lighting. Details regarding these budgets are contained in table 5 below and approval to schemes will be as set out in paragraph 25.

Table 5 - Local Resources

Local Resources	£000'S
Carriageway Maintenance	2000
Footway Maintenance	564
Street Lighting	2150
Total Local Resources	4714

27. On consideration of the information contained in this report, the Cabinet at its meeting held on 16th March, 2011, resolved to recommend the Council as set out in paragraphs 39 to 43 below and, acting under delegated powers, also resolved as follows:
- a) That the allocation of monies to the Council for the Transport Capital Programme for the four year period 2011/12 – 2014/15, be noted.
 - b) That the Director of the Urban Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transportation be authorised to identify, and where appropriate, implement any remedial works to IT Block schemes of a minor nature, such as the introduction of antiskid material, the provision of variable message signs and other measures designed to improve road safety.
 - c) That any scheme within the Local Safety Schemes, Safer Routes to School or Pedestrians programmes of work, including reserve schemes, which cannot be implemented within the relevant timescale or financial resources available for that particular programme of works be deferred and submitted for re-assessment for possible inclusion in a future programme of works.
 - d) That the Director of the Urban Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transportation be authorised to approve the maintenance block programmes for Bridges, Roads, Street Lighting and De-trunked Roads for 2011/12 – 2014/15.

- e) That the Director of the Urban Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transportation be authorised to approve the local resource funded programmes for Carriageway Maintenance, Footway Maintenance and Street Lighting for 2011/12 – 2014/15.

Finance

28. The Local Transport Plan Settlement is the means by which transport capital resources are distributed to Transport Authorities in the form of direct grant. Other resources are provided locally via prudential borrowing or revenue budgets.

Law

29. Under the Local Transport Act 2008 the preparation and management of the third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) became the responsibility of Integrated Transport Authorities (ITA). For the West Midlands Metropolitan Area, Centro is the ITA. It is the duty of the ITA to ensure that LTP3 takes effect from 1st April, 2011, following the expiry of LTP2.
30. The Council's budgetary process is governed by Local Government Finance Acts 1988 and 1992 and the Local Government Act 2003.
31. The Council carries out its functions to provide, improve and maintain highways under Sections 24, 41 and 62 of the Highways Act 1980 and exercises traffic regulatory powers under Section 1 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
32. The acquisition for highway purposes of rights over land whether by agreement or by compulsion are dealt with under Part 12 of the Highways Act 1980.
33. Pedestrian crossings are provided under powers contained in Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, subject to regulations laid down by the Secretary of State for Transport.

Equality Impact

34. One of the 5 Key objectives of LTP3 is 'Equality of Opportunity' – to tackle deprivation and worklessness, so enhancing equality of opportunity and social inclusion by improved access to services and other desired destinations within and adjacent to the Metropolitan Area.
35. The Capital Programme includes specific provision to benefit pedestrians and other vulnerable users of the highway; assist social inclusion and the mobility of the less able together with measures to improve access for young people to schools and education.
36. Road Safety elements of the programme will help to address the incidence of road casualties amongst young people.

37. Young people and children are consulted on a regular basis through pupil surveys and meetings with school and Eco councils. Every school has an approved travel plan. Secondary school plans require a questionnaire to be completed by each pupil. In primary schools the questionnaire goes to the parents and key stage 2 pupils.
38. The school Councils of both primary and secondary schools are invited to champion school travel and safety matters.

Recommendations

39. That LTP3 be supported.
40. That the 2011/12 – 2014/15 block allocations be included in the Capital Programme as set out in paragraph 19 - Table 4 of this report, and that for the IT Block allocation the Cabinet Member for Transportation in consultation with the Director of the Urban Environment be authorised to approve the distribution of block allocations to headings.
41. That the approval of schemes within the funding block headings of the IT Block for 2011/12 – 2014/15 be agreed by the Director of the Urban Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transportation.
42. That budget virements as required between block headings contained within block allocations for 2011/12 – 2014/15 be agreed by the Director of the Urban Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transportation.
43. That a Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council bid and a joint ITA/Metropolitan Local Authority bid for funding from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund be endorsed.



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Leader of the Council