

REPORT TO: Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 23 January 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment

SUBJECT: Local Transport Plan Settlement 2008/09

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise members of the announcement of the three year Local Transport Settlement (2008/09 – 2010/11) that was made on 27 November 2007.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the 2008/09 – 2010/11 Local Transport Settlement be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Members will recall that in previous years Local Transport Plan (LTP) funding has been dependent, in part, on annual assessments on the progress transport authorities had made on the delivery of their LTPs. However, the situation has changed significantly following the commencement of the second round of LTPs. New guidance issued recently by the DfT has confirmed a much less rigorous reporting requirement, based on a more collaborative approach between the DfT and local authorities to enable weaknesses in progress to be jointly addressed and strengths to be built upon. In addition, the guidance makes it clear that the levels of funding allocated throughout the remainder LTP2 are not dependent on progress made.

3.2 The DfT has also indicated that it is vital that local authorities, along with Government Offices and local partners, incorporate local transport issues adequately and sufficiently in local area agreements.

3.3 The December 2006 Local Transport Capital Expenditure Settlement Letter provided indicative allocations for the Integrated Transport Block for the period 2008/09 – 2010/11, which were enhanced by reward funding of 25%, due to the quality of Halton's delivery report for the first LTP and its second LTP; both achieving 'Excellent' status. However, the Highways Capital Maintenance allocations were not provided for this period, as they were to be subject to the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review and a reassessment of the formula on which allocations were made.

3.4 The November 2007 Settlement letter confirmed the LTP Integrated Transport Capital Block allocations for the period 2008/09 – 2010/11 as

being unchanged from that previously indicated in the December 2006 letter. These allocations are as follows:

LTP Integrated Transport Capital Block 2008/09 – 2010/11

2008/09 £000s	2009/10 £000s	2010/11 £000s	Total £000s
1,885	1,831	1,767	5,483

- 3.5 As indicated above, the allocation of the Highways Capital Maintenance block is based on a new formula. This has resulted in a reduction of £959,000 to Halton, over three years, to that previously indicated as the Provisional Planning Guideline to be used in the preparation of LTP2. The comparative allocations for each year are given below:

Highways Maintenance Capital Block 2008/09 – 2010/11

	2008/09 £000s	2009/10 £000s	2010/11 £000s
LTP2 Provisional Planning Guideline	2,237	2,349	2,467
Nov 2007 Settlement Letter	1,881	2,023	2,190
Reduction (%)	356 (16%)	326 (14%)	277 (11%)

- 3.6 Importantly, Halton has also been allocated substantial additional funding from the Primary Route Network (PRN) Bridge Strengthening and Maintenance allocation. The total awarded over the three years is £14.288m, which is over 12% of the total available. This funding was top sliced from the national pot available for Highways Capital Maintenance and it should offset the reduction identified in 3.4 above. The funding will enable much needed maintenance and inspection work on the Silver Jubilee Bridge (SJB) complex to commence in 2008/09 and will replace some of the funding required from the Regional Funding Allocation (RFA) for the SJB major maintenance scheme. This major scheme bid was submitted to the DfT in March 2006; however, a decision is still awaited on its entry into the DfT's programme of works. The specific details of the PRN maintenance funding allocated, which is to be provided as a direct capital grant, is as follows:

PRN Bridge Strengthening and Maintenance Capital Allocation 2008/09 – 2010/11

2008/09 £000s	2009/10 £000s	2010/11 £000s	Total £000s
4,402	4,906	4,980	14,288

- 3.7 It should be noted that both the Integrated Transport and Highway Maintenance Capital Blocks are part of the single capital pot and are not ring-fenced. However, the DfT has advised that it will review how much authorities have spent on transport at the end of the LTP2 period and

where spending on integrated transport does not match the capital allocations, it would consider the level of future funding allocations.

- 3.8 The settlement for the Integrated Transport and Highway Maintenance Capital Blocks is in response to the Council's LTP2 submission and therefore the schemes to be implemented over the coming years are to be drawn from the programmes included in LTP2. This will be in line with the capital budget to be agreed by the Council.
- 3.9 It was agreed at the Executive Board meeting of 2 March 2006 that authority to agree each year's detailed implementation programme of the LTP 2006/7-2010/11 be delegated to the Strategic Director, Environment, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning Transportation and Development (Minute EXB181).
- 3.10 The final agreed implementation programme will be included in the Highways, Transportation and Logistics Department Service Plan.
- 3.11 Halton's Road Safety Grant, which is the funding, used to help support the Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership was also confirmed unchanged from that indicated in the 2006 decision letter. The revenue element of this grant will be included in the area-based grant, whilst the capital element will be paid as a direct capital grant. The Road Safety Grant allocated is detailed below:

Road Safety Grant 2008/09 – 2010/11

Funding	2008/09 £000	2009/10 £000	2010/11 £000	Total £000s
Specific Road Safety Grant (Capital)	69.424	72.167	75.114	216.705
Specific Road Safety Grant (Revenue)	312.024	324.350	337.597	973.971
Total £000s	381.448	396.517	412.711	1,190,676

- 3.12 Halton has also continued to be allocated an element of Detrunked Roads Maintenance grant. This grant is used to maintain the Widnes Eastern Relief Route and will also be included in the area-based grant. The funding is as follows:

Detrunked Roads Maintenance Grant 2008/09 – 2010/11

Funding	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Detrunked Roads Maintenance (Revenue)	208,614	213,830	219,175

- 3.13 The DfT also advised in its letter that a decision has yet to be made on the grants for buses and concessionary fares.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The settlement is to deliver the strategies contained within the Council's second Local Transport Plan, which was approved by the Executive Board on 22 June 2006.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The report details approved levels of funding to be allocated during the life of LTP2, which will be used to deliver the interventions, described within the approved LTP2 capital programme.
- 5.2 The LTP is targeted at improving transport opportunities for those without access to private cars and has therefore positive impacts on social inclusion and sustainability issues.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 6.1 The report details the funding allocations for the period 2008/09 – 2010/11 and therefore the respective implementation programmes can now be planned with certainty to ensure effective delivery of schemes and initiatives.
- 6.2 A risk associated with the report is the failure to deliver against the implementation programmes. This risk will be managed through regular progress meetings with senior managers to enable early action to be taken, should the need arise.
- 6.3 In addition, there is a risk that the transport related funding that has been pooled into the area based pot will not be fully allocated for transport measures. If this is the case, then it will not be possible to undertake all of the works proposed.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 7.1 Accessibility and connectivity are essential issues for equality and diversity and every effort is made to facilitate barrier free movement around the Borough. Particular emphasis is given to improving access to education and training, employment, health, shopping and leisure facilities, which are key services impacting on quality of life.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Letter from DfT 27 November 2007	Highways, Transportation & Logistics Department Rutland House, Runcorn	Phil Cornthwaite