

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (Regeneration and Skills)		
Councillor	Portfolio	Date
John Fairclough	Cabinet Member Locality Services	October 2023

Highway Asset Management

Winter Maintenance

- The winter maintenance policy for 2023/24 was approved at Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills) on 19th September.
- Salt stocks have now been delivered to ensure that we are at maximum capacity for the start of the season.
- All pre-season calibration checks have been completed in readiness for the season which starts on Monday 30th October.

Street Lighting LED retro fit scheme

- The high – wattage bulb replacement scheme is 95% complete with the remainder on track to be done by the end of November. This is helping maximise earlier reductions in energy savings to the Authority.
- The updated business case for the LED project is still being worked on by officers. Unforeseen energy and borrowing costs have impacted on the original forecasts.
- Cabinet have now approved a 2-year extension on the Street Lighting Contract. This will allow the LED project to be completed by the incumbent contractor, ensuring continuity of work and greater certainty on future works costs.

Traffic signals LED retro fit scheme

- Programmes are being worked on for the 2nd phase of the traffic signal LED project and discussions are being held to ensure there are no works clashes and delays.
- The project is providing further energy and financial savings to the Authority.

- This project is being externally funded through the Combined Authority.

Highway Maintenance

- Planned and routine maintenance operations are still progressing well and in accordance with allocated programming timeframes.
- To date, key maintenance improvements have been completed, which include the following:
- Application of footway surface treatments commonly known as “slurry Seal” has been applied to 41,000 M2 of bituminous footways with a spend value of £130,000.00.
- Surface treatments in the carriageway known as “Micro Surfacing” has been applied to 50,000M2 of defective carriageway with a spend value of £385,000.00.
- Surface treatments in the carriageway known as “Surface Dressing” has been applied to 73,000M2 of defective carriageway with a spend value of £530,000.00.
- Resurfacing which involves the removal of one or more surfacing layers in the carriageway has been completed, totalling 68,000 M2 with a spend value of £2,100,000.00.
- Works undertaken using CRSTS funding is being reported to the CA on monthly dashboards in accordance with the funding requirements.
- Routine safety inspections and other maintenance functions such as grass cutting, and drainage renewals continue to operate daily which identifies isolated defects and repairs in accordance with the council’s safety inspection policies and other industry guidelines.

Strategic Transport

Port Access

- A series of rail improvements have been set out in Liverpool City Region Investment Programme. These include a number of schemes within the ‘Rail Freight Investment Programme’ including projects aimed at improving freight capacity, including to the Port of Liverpool. Programme ‘roadmaps’ are currently being developed for all the proposed improvements.
- The Government has announced that the Port Access Route will now be considered as part of the Road Investment Strategy 3 (RIS3). The Transport

Secretary confirmed, in March 2023, that the 'A5036 Port of Liverpool Access in the Roads Investment Strategy faces a range of challenges including environmental considerations and ongoing design changes, and so will be developed in RIS 3 (covering 2025-2030) to allow time to ensure stakeholders' views are fully considered' The scheme had previously been in the RIS2. It is understood that modelling and survey work is ongoing. This process is likely to take a further 10 months to complete.

LTP and Growth Plan

- Sefton is continuing to work with the LCR Combined Authority/Merseytravel and the other local authorities on the delivery of the transport capital programme. Having achieved the agreed spend in Year 1 of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) programme despite the challenges the increased settlement has created, progress is now being made on the delivery of Year 2 . Recruitment for new staff to help deliver the programme is ongoing.
- The entire current CRSTS programme has been re-baselined by the LCRCA to ensure that the projects originally identified on the list submitted with the Business case are still capable of delivering within the current programme. It has also revised the funding allocations for each project. This follows consultation with all the local authorities.
- The Year 2 CRSTS scheme was set out in the 2023-24 Transport Capital Programme Report approved by Cabinet Member.
- The Government have indicated that funding previously allocated to HS2 will be allocated to the Combined and Local Authorities so a larger settlement is anticipated in the next CRSTS programme (CRSTS2) which will provide spending for projects from 2027 onwards. The Department for Transport have indicated that the CRSTS2 package will be [£1.581bn](#), which is over double the current allocation of £710 million between 2022-2027
- To help define these projects that will be included in CRSTS2 the LCRCA are in consultation with all the Local Authorities to understand current programmes and needs. Some analysis work has been completed to review 'access to transport, future housing, health and deprivation and economic development. This is to help shape future investment. It is expected that a Pipeline of projects will be developed in 2024.
- Work is progressing on the development of the next Local Transport Plan for the City Region. The target date for completion is Autumn 2024. Development has been impacted by the delay to the DfT providing the current guidelines. All future projects should be developed in accordance with the key themes within the LTP. These include a recognition that transport must support Placemaking and projects must aim to achieve a reduction in vehicle trips whilst growing the alternatives.

- **Low Carbon Strategy:** In response to the Council's climate emergency declaration and an increased focus on active travel measures, work is continuing on the development of Low Carbon Transport Strategy for the borough. Some initial baselining work has been completed and a report completed. Plans are currently being developed for member engagement in advance of a wider consultation. The report will provide a quantification of the current transport related carbon position for the Council and a future trajectory for reductions towards Net Zero. Progress is also being made on the development of an Active Travel and E-mobility Strategies for the Borough. WSP have now been engaged to complete an assessment of the Carbon impact of the Capital Programme and to provide advice and instruction on carbon assessment of transport schemes. This work should be completed by early 2024.
- In order to identify potential improvement to the Councils walking and cycling network a local cycling and walking infrastructure plan is being developed. Proposals for stakeholder engagement were presented to the Consultation and Engagement Panel in early November. A number of engagement sessions were held with specific interest groups and some initial plans developed for helping inform the engagement process. Detailed plans for further engagement, initially planned with Members, are being developed. It is envisaged that these will follow engagement on the LCTS which hopefully should provide some context to the need for an LCWIP.
- **Southport Eastern Access and Maritime Corridor Business Cases:** The detailed design work is now progressing on both schemes and the final details will be included within the Full Business Case submission as requested by the LCRCA. Part of the Maritime Corridor scheme will be funded from the Levelling Up Fund, following the success of the transport bid. There is some pressure to have the scheme delivered as soon as the FBC is approved, and therefore a contractor, Balfour Beatty, have been appointed to complete some feasibility work on both schemes from which, subject to formal approval, some formal Early Contractor Involvement will follow. It is expected that LUF projects will be delivered by March 25. Some further engagement to ensure that local Members, businesses and residents are sighted on the proposals and have an ability to shape them is ongoing, with the public element of Maritime Corridor scheme just completed. Analysis work has been undertaken of the responses. Engagement has taken place with some key stakeholders, including land owners on both schemes. The re-baselining process has been undertaken to determine the realistic programme and costs of all projects in the current CRSTS settlement period; this will determine whether all or some of the designed schemes under both business cases will be delivered under the current programme. The agreed allocations are £21.2m (MC) and £16.8m (SEA)
- **A59 Junctions and Corridor:** Design work is continuing on improvements the junctions at Kenyon's Lane and at Hall Lane on the A59 Northway, these will be developed in the context of a wider improvement of the cycle route between Switch Island and Robins Island. A package of funding including Government grant funding for improvements to traffic signals, developer

contributions and Sefton transport capital programme will be used to deliver these improvements. ATE are supportive of the project and are encouraging the Council to consider the link to the wider communities and the potential for improvement east and west on the A59. Discussions have been undertaken with local Ward Members and Maghull Town Council and Lydiate Parish Council on the details of both schemes and further consultation with the wider public has been completed. The works are programmed for delivery in early 2024.

- **Scarisbrick Avenue:** In Southport, improvements to Scarisbrick Avenue in conjunction with the Townscape Heritage Initiative have been completed, including the installation of lighting. Some defects were undertaken in April with some further work planned in last 2023. The scope of this work has been reviewed by landscape architects.
- **Southport Town Deal:** Preliminary Design work on the first phase of public realm project identified within the Southport Town Deal (*Les Transformation de Southport*) has been completed and detailed design commenced and should be completed by the end of 2023. Construction will be undertaken in early 2024 with the programme being defined. Early Contractor Involvement has been sought, using Balfour Beatty through the SCAPE framework.
- A hard landscaping report has been completed which sets out the proposed materials to be used. This has been considered by the tourism, consultation, maintenance, Green Sefton and cleansing teams and comments provided and plans reviewed accordingly. The material adopted will then be used in further phases of improvement. A report highlighting potential changes to the highway to facilitate improved pedestrian accessibility and public realm to be delivered under subsequent phases has been developed and work is ongoing to define a second phase of public realm work.
- **Crosby Town Centre:** The highway works which will support the new library development proposed for the Green Car Park are on site with a view to being completed by the end of November 2023. The works are aimed at reducing severance and improving access to the town centre. Work has also been developed for some paving and public realm enhancement which are likely to be delivered, under the main contract, with works undertaken in early 2024. These works should set that standard for the external works associated with the planned new development. The Planning application for the Hub development has been submitted as a hybrid development. This includes all the traffic and transport work associated with the development. Ward Members, residents and businesses have been kept informed.
- **Bootle Town Centre:** - Work was commissioned to review access to the Strand in Bootle, in order to help shape initial work associated with the re-imagining of the centre. A Transport Framework has been established, some detailed work has been completed to look at the servicing of the Strand with a view to enabling the Vermont Way entrance to serve as access and egress. Consultation with residents and businesses on the changes was undertaken in September. The detailed design of this work has been completed and work

ordered for the works necessary to enable demolition work which is scheduled for early 2024. Some Master planning work will be undertaken looking at parking and bus waiting facilities. A series of parking surveys have been commissioned to help determine both current parking provision within the town and current demand.

Local Transport Schemes

- The Transportation Capital Programme for 2023/24 has been agreed and published. This report sets out the allocations to Local Safety Schemes, which include interventions at Crosby High School – zebra, Northern Road (Gt Crosby), Hawthorne Road and Prescott Road. These works will be delivered before March 2024, subject to formal approval.

Sustainable Transport

- **Crosby Coastal Park:** Works have been undertaken to provide lighting and an improved surface between South Road, Great Georges Road and the Lake House.
- **Formby By-pass:** Works to deliver an improved cycleway on the A565 south of Woodvale have been completed. Detailed design works are being undertaken on improvements to the junction of the A565 with the Coastal Road at Woodvale. Further design work is continuing on the section from Southport Road and through Ince Woods.
- **Revenue funding** received from the Active Travel Fund for the development of projects capable to improving cycling and walking throughout the borough. Works is currently progressing the A59 cycleway, the remainder of the A565 corridor to complement the improvement to the links identified above, junction on the A565, including Woodvale and the development of a Local Walking and Infrastructure Plan to compliment the City Region Strategic Plan. Further revenue money has been successfully bid for to continue this work and a Grant Funding Offer received.
- **School Streets:** Consultation work has been undertaken on three School Street Pilot schemes in Southport. Two of the schemes were formally launched in July and further engagement events have been planned. The further scheme, at Stanley High School is more complicated and will be subject to further consultation development before implementation in early 2024. Funding has been secured to develop other school streets initiatives throughout the borough and a dedicated officer, seconded from Sustrans, has recently commenced the selection and engagement work. A priority list of 10 schools has been chose for further engagement and discussions are ongoing to determine the appetite from schools for engaging in this work. The initial response has been disappointed so some other schools are being approached.
- **Green Bus Corridor:** The LCRCA commissioned consultants to develop and appraise options for potential bus priority measures commence works on a

number of routes in the City Region , including the No 53 bus corridor which travels between Crosby and Liverpool, passing on Stanley Road. Officers have provided some initial comments and a report is expected shortly setting out the results. The LCRCA are now engaging further consultants to develop schemes based on the initial options. Opportunities for 'quick wins' are also being established.

- **Great Georges Road:** Final design work to complete the previous cycle lane scheme along Great Georges Road has been completed and dates are being established for implementation.
- **Birkdale Village** – Some funding from the CRSTS programme has been established to enable proposals to be developed to improve accessibility in Birkdale. These will be subject to consultation within Autumn 2023.

Highway Development Control

Planning Applications

- The team continue to process large numbers of planning applications despite ongoing challenges associated with the recent turnover in staffing resources, increased by the fact that no suitable applications were received for the vacant senior highway development engineer post. This has been exacerbated by more staff leave being undertaken over the spring and summer months and an increase in more complex and major applications. There is more of a backlog for highway responses than usual as a result. The applications include sites identified in the Local Plan and continue to involve close liaison with case officers from the planning department. A total of 155 applications have been responded to between July and August 2023. This number is based on per planning application and does not include the numerous responses that are provided for a particular planning application (there can be typically up to 5 responses for a major planning application and ones with significant highway issues).

Section 38 Highways Act 1980 legal agreements

- Submissions for s38 agreements have continued requiring the subsequent processing of these at times, lengthy and complex applications, particularly following the approval of planning applications for Local Plan sites.
- The report is as follows: -
 - No of live s38 and current developments subject to a s38 application – 51
 - No of stalled or no activity (on the part of a developer) – 2 where the developer appears to have ceased trading.
 - Number of development sites adopted within the last 3 months - 0
 - No of submissions awaiting technical approval – 28

- Number of new and recent submissions awaiting administrative set up – 0

Section 278 Highways Act 1980 legal agreements

- The numbers of this type of application also remains high, including the approval of planning applications for Local Plan sites. The team are currently managing 94 live s278 HA 1980 highway works schemes in various stages of development on behalf of the Council. The successful delivery of these schemes is dependent on close liaison with the Legal, Finance and Planning Departments.

Public Rights of Way (PROW)

- England Coast Path/Coastal Access –the route is now a national trail and in the short-term Sefton Council is responsible for its maintenance but are able to apply to Natural England for a grant towards this. A grant application is currently be put together for the remaining part of this financial year. In the long-term Natural England requires the Local Authorities to set up a national trail partnership for the Merseyside and Cheshire West area with all the relevant Local Authorities, in order to manage and maintain the route. Work to establish this partnership is on-going and initial feedback from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority indicates that they may be willing to be part of the partnership and have the lead administrative role.
- Definitive Map Modification Applications – two of the seven applications submitted by the British Horse Society (BHS) were validated in May, meaning they must be determined by May 2024. The BHS has requested that one application be put on hold while they, the affected landowners and Sefton negotiate possible alternative routes and the remaining four applications have yet to be validated.
- Section 31 (6) Submissions – the Warden and Fellows of Nuffield College in the University of Oxford has submitted a deposit under section 31 (6) of the Highways Act 1980 for 11 parcels of land in and around the Lunt/Sefton area of the borough. This is currently being reviewed and if it is considered correct the details must be added to the register of Section 31 (6) Submissions for the borough and be made publicly available on Sefton's website.

Statutory Highway Orders

- A Highways Act section 116 extinguishment Order for a section of highway at Muttocks Rake is due to be considered at the Magistrates Court in August. The Council are presenting the case on behalf of the applicant.
- The Council has been consulted on two proposed section 257 Town and Country Planning Act highway extinguishment orders.

- An application for a section 247 Town and Country Planning Act highway extinguishment Order for a footpath along Chapel Lane, Melling has been received.
- An application for a section 116 extinguishment Order for a section of highway at Station Road has been received.
- There is a requirement for a Highways Act s228 application for Aldi, Northway to add a missing section of adopted highway from the s278 agreement.

Strategic Highways Development and Future Planning

- The team is continuing to work closely with the Planning Department to provide a strategic approach to development to ensure that the necessary new transport infrastructure is in place to support new developments coming forward in future years.
- The team continues to request construction traffic management plans for new developments so that we can manage the highway network efficiently and effectively with minimum disruption to users of the highway and with the important benefit of highway safety. Once plans have been agreed, the team is collaborating closely with colleagues in network management and planning to ensure that the plans are being adhered to.