

6 June 2013

Agenda Item:

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR HIGHWAYS

LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides information to the Committee on the proposed Nottinghamshire County Council major schemes for consideration by the D2N2 Local Transport Body (LTB).
2. Approval is sought to promote these schemes as the priorities for Nottinghamshire when considering an agreed programme of works to be submitted by the LTB to the Department for Transport (DfT) before the end of July 2013.

Information and Advice

3. Nottinghamshire County Council continues to progress and deliver a programme of major transport projects to provide an efficient and reliable transport and highway network supporting residents and road users and economic growth across the County. Current projects have seen Mansfield Bus Station (£11million) completed in March 2013 and Hucknall Town Centre Improvement (£13million) due for construction in 2014/15.
4. The DfT is devolving funding for local major transport schemes for local determination. Briefly DfT will
 - a. Devolve capital funding for local major transport schemes to new democratically accountable local transport bodies;
 - b. Allocate budgets to the Local Transport Bodies by formula based on population;
 - c. Within a common approach to assessing value for money and priority Local Transport Bodies will determine their own programmes of local major transport schemes;
 - d. Put both local transport authorities and local enterprise partnerships (LEP) in influential roles in the decision making arrangements of Local Transport Bodies over which transport schemes are delivered.

5. On 23rd January 2013 the DfT provided indicative funding allocations for the LTB of approximately £46.8million over a four year period, i.e. £11.7million/year for D2N2 LEP geography. However where the D2N2 LEP overlaps the Sheffield City Region (SCR), the Secretary of State for Transport determined that the allocation for all 4 districts within the overlapping LEP area be shared 50:50 between the D2N2 LTB and the SCR. This share, for the D2N2 LTB, is included in the above figures.
6. On 28th February 2013 D2N2 provided its draft governance arrangements and assurance framework to the DfT in line with their specified deadline. Details of these were approved by Policy Committee on 13th February 2013. The LTB is still awaiting final comments from the DfT with respect to this document and it will need formal ratification by the Members of the Board, as and when it first meets. This was not scheduled prior to the local County Council elections of May 2013.
7. The next stage of the process is a DfT requirement for all LTBs to submit their preliminary programmes for funding, in line with indicative budget allocations, by the end of July 2013.
8. Officers at Nottinghamshire County Council have reviewed potential schemes to be promoted through this process. The starting point for this review was taken as the current approved list of major and significant schemes as agreed by the Council on 27th January 2011. Schemes with any existing commitments (e.g. Worksop Bus Station) or under the LTB devolved major funding limit of £2million (plus local contributions – minimum 20%) were immediately excluded from the exercise. As the funding has to be spent in a set time period (2015/16 – 2018/19) deliverability has been a major selection criterion along with the need to provide high value for money (minimum anticipated benefit / cost ratio [BCR] of 2). This reduced the pool of schemes for consideration to just 10 and these were then subjected to the approved DfT Early Assessment Sifting Tool (EAST). This places a significant priority on the likely economic benefits of the individual schemes and effectively reduces the number of eligible remaining schemes.
9. A pool of six schemes has been left as the most suitable schemes for Nottinghamshire as assessed on the approved LTB process from this source of available funding. It must be recognised that not all of these schemes could be funded in the first round of devolved LTB funding, as their total value exceeds the entire D2N2 pot of available money. The six do though provide a range of scheme types and geographic location and include some schemes which could be delivered relatively quickly, as well as others that would require additional work to enable them to be delivered later in the period. These are detailed below in no particular order.

Gedling Access Road (£12-15m)

10. This scheme will complement proposals underway with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and together provide a new access road proceeding to the east of Gedling village, Nottingham and thereby enabling

the former Gedling colliery and adjoining lands to be redeveloped for a mix of residential and employment uses (1100 houses and 6Ha of employment land). Provides a relief road to Gedling village for through traffic. Gedling village is located on the eastern side of the Nottingham conurbation and straddles the A6211. The volume of traffic on the A6211 has increased significantly over recent years particularly since the opening of the A612 Nottingham Eastern Outer Loop Road. Gedling village residents suffer from the adverse environmental impacts of through and Heavy Goods Vehicle traffic. The A6211 is narrow and in places has no footways which compounds the environmental problems and has led to a poor road safety record. The principle objectives of the scheme are two fold, firstly to accommodate additional traffic generated from the colliery redevelopment and secondly to provide traffic relief from through traffic using this part of the Strategic Road Network.

11. A cost benefit appraisal (COBA) would be undertaken to establish the likely transport benefits to society. A minimum BCR of between 1.5 and 2.0 is anticipated. In addition to these travel and transport benefits there would be wider economic benefits accruing from the construction activity on the site and the employment opportunities created thereon.

Kelham Bypass (£15-20m)

12. A proposed bypass crossing the River Trent immediately south of Kelham village. The objectives of the scheme are to promote and improve economic prosperity by upgrading strategic transport links (A617) and thereby removing sources of traffic delay and business inefficiency. A further objective is to improve the environment in Kelham village by removing heavy traffic and their associated problems. A BCR of over 4.0 is anticipated due to the combination of shorter journey distance for the majority of existing journeys together with predicted quicker journey times.

Dukeries Railway Line (£10m)

13. Re-opening of the Shirebrook to Ollerton railway line to passenger traffic. This scheme will help overcome problems of connectivity to major centres of employment for the settlements of Ollerton, Edwinstowe and Warsop. A secondary objective is to improve accessibility nationally to the Sherwood Forest visitor centre and Center Parcs (Nottingham). A social cost benefit analysis would need to be undertaken to establish the likely return on investment. Initial expectation is that the BCR will be in the range 2.0 to 2.5. However this could be exceeded as experience nationally shows that patronage and revenue on new rail services usually exceed that which has been predicted. It should be noted that there will be a 3 year revenue support of around £0.5million per annum required to support this proposal.

A60 Bus priority Mansfield (£2-3m)

14. The introduction and extension of bus priority measures on the A60 both north and south of Mansfield town centre. The main arterial routes into and out of Mansfield, especially the A60, suffer from peak period traffic congestion

which impacts adversely on the performance and reliability of bus travel. This inefficiency in turn stifles the use of public transport. The scheme objective is to remove the sources of traffic congestion for public transport, speeding up bus travel times, improving journey time reliability and thereby increasing the levels of public transport patronage. This scheme will complement the provision of a new public transport interchange facility in the town centre (which opened 31st March 2013), add to existing bus priority measures already introduced on part of the A60 Leeming Lane North, and complements the introduction of the Mansfield Ashfield Regeneration Route (December 2004). A social cost benefit analysis would need to be undertaken to establish the likely returns on investment. A medium rate of return (BCR 1.5 to 2.0) is anticipated.

Worksop A57/A60 Roundabout (£2-3m)

15. An at-grade improvement to the junction of the A60 / A57/ B6024 / St Anne's Drive, Worksop. The proposal is to enlarge and convert the existing 5 arm roundabout to traffic signal control thereby providing both additional entry capacity for traffic and further traffic signal controlled pedestrian and cycle crossings. The A60 / A57/ B6024 roundabout junction in Worksop is a key traffic 'hotspot' on the County Council's Strategic Road Network. Peak period traffic congestion is significant which in turn leads to drivers seeking unsuitable alternative routes through adjoining residential areas. The primary objective of the scheme is to remove the peak period congestion, improve journey times and journey time reliability and hence improve local business efficiency and productivity. The scheme will also support economic growth objectives i.e. proposed regeneration / development proposals in Worksop being promoted through the Bassetlaw Local Development Framework. A COBA has not been undertaken at this time however a significant return on investment is predicted (BCR of 2.0+).

Ollerton Roundabout (£4m)

16. An at-grade improvement to the roundabout junction of the A614/A616/A6075 in Ollerton. The A614 / A616 / A6075 roundabout junction at Ollerton is a key traffic 'hotspot' on the Council's Strategic Road Network. Peak period congestion is severe leading to traffic seeking unsuitable alternative routes through the village centre. The attendant delays and journey time unreliability is often cited by businesses and bus operators as one of their most significant problem spots in this part of Nottinghamshire. A COBA has not been undertaken at this time however a significant return on investment is predicted (BCR of 2.0+).

Other Options Considered

17. These are requirements of the Department for Transport to access future government grant funding for local major transport schemes

Statutory and Policy Implications

18. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

19. The Capital funding made available through the LTB will be managed through the annual capital programme. As under current arrangements a local capital contribution of at least 20% will be required for all individual schemes, which will be considered on an individual scheme basis through the usual annual capital budget process. It should also be noted that there will be a 3 year revenue support of around £0.5million per annum required to support the Dukeries rail proposal.

Implications for Service Users

20. The continued monitoring and management of performance will ensure that quality standards are maintained and appropriate services provided to meet local needs.

Recommendation

21. That Committee approves the six schemes to be put forward to the LTB steering group for consideration in developing the D2N2 programme for 2015/16 to 2018/19. A further subsequent review of longer term priorities should be undertaken following completion of the LTB priority list.

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For any enquiries about this report please contact:
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Constitutional Comments (SHB 21.05.13)

22. Committee have power to decide the Recommendation.

Financial Comments (TMR 22/05/2013)

23. The financial implications are set out in paragraph 19 of the report.

Background Papers

24. None

Electoral Divisions

25. All