

Market and Coastal Towns Rural Foundation Programme/Devon and Torbay Local Transport Plan 2011 to 2026: Proposed Programme 2012/13 to 2014/15

Report of the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Please note that the following recommendation is subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the transport capital programme for the North Devon HATOC area agreed by Cabinet on 11 July 2013 is noted.

1. Summary

This report summarises the 2013/14 and 2014/15 schemes relevant to the North Devon HATOC area that were agreed by Cabinet in July 2013. The programme takes account of the additional funding awarded by the Department of Transport (DfT) for various schemes across the County.

2. Background/Introduction

The June 2013 meeting of this Committee received a report on the Local Scheme programme funded through the Local Transport Plan Integrated Block only. That report noted that Cabinet approval for the wider programme from all capital funding sources would be sought in July 2013 and the approved programme reported to the HATOCs at the next round of meetings.

The July report to Cabinet took account of anticipated DfT funding decisions on a number of bids by the County Council. This included the Local Pinchpoint Fund and Linking Communities funding for National Parks as well as DCC supported Highways Agency bids for pinch points on the strategic network.

3. Proposal

Appendix I sets out the schemes that are expected to be constructed or design progressed in North Devon in 2013/14 and 2014/15 in addition to those noted in June's report.

The £1.2m Roundswell roundabout junction improvement on the A39 south of Barnstaple is expected to start construction in January 2014. This will improve journey times and reliability for local and long distance journeys and enable future housing and employment development in the area to go ahead. It will also reduce the pressure on the Bickington Road/Sticklepath Hill route by encouraging drivers to stay on the A39, thereby also improving the reliability of this important bus route.

Since the main scheme was approved by Cabinet the Government has awarded the County Council £1.1m towards the scheme which will allow the authority to implement phase 2, a second smaller roundabout on the B3232 Torrington Road. This will provide access into the proposed employment land allocation to the south of the A39 in the North Devon and Torridge Local Plan. This will be subject to scheme design approval by Cabinet.

Work is also due to start in September 2013 on the Watermouth Castle footway scheme which will complete a major missing link in the South West Coast footpath. The South West Coast Path Association is contributing £50,000 towards the scheme alongside further funding from the Government's Rural Development Programme for England and the Local Transport Plan.

Smaller scale improvements are planned for a bus shelter in Ilfracombe and walking/cycling access to Barnstaple railway station. These are in addition to the local schemes reported to this committee in June.

Design work will be progressed on a number of future schemes to prepare them for external funding bids. These include schemes linked to the emerging North Devon and Torridge Local Plan to enable economic growth through development including junctions on the A361 and A39 around Barnstaple and Bideford. This will include the consideration of options to improve journey time reliability on the A361 between Barnstaple and South Molton and access to phase 4 of the Pathfields industrial estate at South Molton. Initial design of improvements to the Westaway Plain junction, North Road, Barnstaple is being carried out in 2013. This will enable developers to implement a scheme that will allow developments identified in the Local Plan to come forward.

Work will also continue to progress on designing and implementing new sections of cycle route. Good progress is being made on obtaining land for the missing link in the Tarka Trail between Braunton and Ilfracombe (Knowle and Willingcott). Some initial works to facilitate access will take place in 2013. Design is also being progressed on new cycle and pedestrian bridges in Barnstaple. A new link between the proposed Larkbear development and Seven Brethren at Barnstaple will create an attractive, mostly traffic free access for students travelling from Roundswell and Larkbear to Park School as well as employees from the Newport, Forches and Whiddon Valley areas to Roundswell Business Park. Similarly work will continue to progress on the design for a pedestrian and cycle bridge linking new development at Anchorwood, the Tarka Trail and the town centre via the Strand.

There are no casualty and severity reduction schemes in the North Devon area in 2013/14. The 2014/15 programme is currently being reviewed and this HATOC will be notified of any potential schemes in the area when it is available.

There are a number of countywide schemes being progressed that will benefit North Devon. The South West Smartcard project is now almost complete with the majority of bus operators having now installed smart card reading equipment. These accept the National Bus Pass for older people and in some cases those with disabilities. Operators are now working with the County Council to introduce new smartcard bus tickets for all users that offer greater flexibility and value for money as well as greater convenience.

The County Council is working jointly with Torbay Council to introduce real time bus information across Devon which will be available through a variety of mediums including the internet and mobile phones. Screens will be provided at a limited number of locations across the County and the proposed sites will be confirmed in 2014. The service will replace the current limited system for Exeter. It is hoped that the service will be made available from mid-2014. It is intended that the system will also support bus priority at selected traffic signal sites across the County. This will improve the punctuality of services by reducing late running and also help improve their financial viability.

A programme of public rights of way improvements will be made across the County but the detailed locations were not available at the time this report was written.

4. Consultations/Representations/Technical Data

The overall shape of the programme has been based on the Devon and Torbay Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2026 which included extensive consultation. This has been supplemented by consultation on the North Devon and Torridge Devon Local Plan including the infrastructure necessary to support growth and development.

Reports to Cabinet and HATOC for detailed design approval include information on the detailed consultation undertaken for each individual scheme.

5. Financial Considerations

The programme of schemes in the area is funded by a combination of sources including Local Transport Plan Integrated Block, developer contributions and external funds.

6. Legal Considerations

There are no specific legal considerations affecting the programme of schemes. Individual scheme approval reports will detail any legal issues specifically affecting them.

7. Risk Management Considerations

The programme has been planned to minimise risks to delivery by making prudent assumptions about funding, consultation and technical risks associated with individual schemes.

Each individual scheme is regularly assessed for risks at its different stages of design and construction with appropriate mitigation measures introduced where possible. Individual scheme reports to Cabinet and HATOC will include information on relevant risks.

8. Options/Alternatives

The programme for the area has been developed on the basis of the strategies within the Devon and Torbay Local Transport Plan 2011 - 2026. The phasing of schemes over the period is based on a number of factors including available funding and technical requirements.

Some schemes are linked to specific locations/types or funding sources such as S106 agreements. Options for individual schemes will be explained in the relevant scheme design approval report.

9. Reason for Recommendation/Conclusion

The programme agreed by Cabinet supports the twin major Local Transport Plan objectives of economic growth and carbon reduction whilst also making a contribution to improving public health by encouraging increased levels of walking and cycling. It presents good value for money whilst also making effective use of external funding sources.

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Electoral Divisions: All in North Devon

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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Background Paper	Date	File Reference
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1. Nil		
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**Appendix I
To PTE/13/90**

2013/14 and 2014/15 Programme of Schemes in North Devon

North Devon			
Scheme	2013/14	2014/15	Total
A39 Roundswell Roundabout	500,000	950,000	1,450,000
Taw and Seven Brethren Pedestrian/Cycle Bridges, Barnstaple	60,000	0	60,000
Completion of previous year schemes including Barnstaple Western Bypass	421,000	0	421,000
Scheme Preparation: A361 Rumsam Roundabout; A361 Portmore Roundabout; A361 Barnstaple-South Molton; A361 Borners Bridge junction; B3232 Roundswell Employment Access; Pathfields Phase 4 access, South Molton	<i>tbc</i>		
Bus waiting infrastructure improvements: Bus shelter - Wilder Road Ilfracombe	10,000		10,000
Highway improvements: A39 Westaway Plain Junction, Barnstaple	15,000		15,000
Local Walking and Cycling Improvements:			
Watermouth Castle South West Coast Path Diversion	260,000	0	260,000
Strategic Cycle Network - Rural Routes: Tarka Trail, Willingcott to Knowle	100,000		100,000
Devon Metro Station Programme - Barnstaple Station forecourt improvements	30,000	0	30,000

See also the programme of local schemes included in the June report to this committee.

Countywide			
Scheme	2013/14	2014/15	Total
Smarter Travel - South West Smartcard Project	20,000	0	20,000
Countywide Bus Real Time Information System (Back Office)	50,000	161,000	211,000
Countywide Bus Real Time Information System (On-street signing)	50,000	100,000	150,000
Countywide Bus Real Time Information System (bus priority at traffic signals)	50,000	100,000	150,000
Public Rights of Way Improvements	150,000	100,000	250,000