



Meeting: Transport Working Party

Date: 31 January 2013

Wards Affected: All Wards

Report Title: Local Transport Board

Executive Lead Contact Details: Robert Excell

Supporting Officer Contact Details: Les Crump

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report concerns the Local Transport Board (LTB) which will be responsible for future transport funding for major schemes. The Authority must bid to this Board in order to be granted any funding required.
- 1.2 This report seeks a recommendation on the proposed schemes to take forward to the LTB.

2. Proposed Decision

- 2.1 The recommendation to this Working Party is that the four proposed schemes are supported and taken forward to the LTB.
- 2.2 The prioritised list has been considered by Officers and with agreement from the Mayor.

3. Action Needed

- 3.1 There are three options for a recommendation on this matter. Councilors could (1) agree with the Proposed Decision to support and agree the proposed four schemes; (2) recommend the promotion of different schemes or a reduced list or; (3) recommend that no schemes are taken forward to the LTB for major scheme funding.

4. Summary

- 4.1 The LTB will administer funds for Major Transport Schemes across the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area from 2015-2019. It will be responsible for prioritising schemes, deciding on individual scheme approval, governing funding and monitoring delivery.
- 4.2 All schemes must have a minimum cost of £3million in order to be considered as a Major Transport Scheme, with a high value for money and deliverable within the timescale. Additionally the Authority would be responsible for at least 10% of match funding for each approved scheme.

- 4.3 Following an assessment of the bid requirements for the LTB and consideration of the budgetary constraints and implementation period four schemes have been considered reasonable and realistic for Torbay to not only develop but also fund.
- 4.4 The schemes are
- (i) Western Corridor (*schemes between Churscombe Cross and Long Road*)
 - (ii) Edginswell Rail Halt
 - (iii) Cycling Infrastructure
 - (iv) Torquay Gateway and Town Centre
- 4.5 The LTB will have a representative from each of the Local Authorities (Torbay, Devon, Somerset and Plymouth) as well as two representatives from the LEP.
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Supporting Information

5. Position

- 5.1 Currently the LTB is in formation with a technical officer's group meeting regularly to make the necessary arrangements and agree on the principles of the Board and its key objectives.
- 5.2 The precise funding is at the time of writing still unknown with a final announcement awaited from Central Government on the allocation.
- 5.3 A 'long list' of schemes is being formed by the Local Authorities which will be presented to and considered by the LTB with advice from an independent assessor.
- 5.4 From that 'long list' a 'short list' of prioritised schemes will be decided upon by the Board, taking into account the agreed objectives, value for money, deliverability, environmental and social impact, and public acceptability, as well as other factors which may be applicable to the scheme.
- 5.5 Following inter-departmental discussions within the Authority and consideration of the associated objectives and existing policy a list of potential schemes was presented to and discussed with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. The above list of schemes, further detailed below, comes as a result of those discussions.
- 5.6 Some aspects of the proposals remain broad and the detail will continue to be worked on with necessary time and resource given following confirmation of this Working Party and, if appropriate, the LTB that the schemes have potential for funding.

6. Possibilities and Options

- 6.1 As explained above there are three options available;

- (i) To recommend the support of the four schemes presented (detailed below)
- (ii) To recommend a different set of schemes
- (iii) To recommend no schemes are considered for funding

6.2 The first three schemes each have at least elements contained within the Local Transport Plan and are explained as:

- (i) Western Corridor – With various schemes to be delivered in phases ranging between Churscombe Cross and Long Road the majority of the works will extend from Tweenaway Cross to Long Road. It will enable the continuation of the project to increase the capacity of Tweenaway junction, increase junction capacity at Yalberton Road, widening of highway around Yalberton Road and south to Long Road. This will improve the accessibility of the area around the 'Western Corridor', unlocking Growth potential for investment in Torbay. It is considered that the scheme will meet with all of the criteria and have significant and positive impact on existing infrastructure and economic growth.
- (ii) Edginswell Rail Halt – To provide a new station on the existing main line in the vicinity of Scott's Bridge. The implementation of the station is part of wider Devon Metro and European Citizens Rail projects which support improvements on the line and increased frequency between Paignton and Exeter. The project will be delivered jointly with Devon County Council, thereby reducing the cost to the Authority. A new station has been identified at this location within the Local Transport Plan and Local Plan. This project has been considered as a viable solution to providing access to alternative modes and it is deemed that it could have far reaching benefits in terms of modal shift along the Paignton to Exeter line.
- (iii) Cycling Infrastructure – The project is Torbay wide providing connections with the National Cycle Network (NCN) around Totnes. With a connection established to the NCN at both Newton Abbot (existing) and Totnes (proposed) a loop is formed which would attract cyclists to Torbay, increasing visitor numbers and attractiveness as a cycling destination. The connections around Torbay would be equally important and improved links to Brixham, along the Sea Front incorporating Parkfield, and to associated project routes including the Riviera Trail as well as in Ocombe and Cockington would also be established. This project will need to be worked up into a much greater level of detail with a supporting evidence base in order to achieve the necessary criteria. Officers have been advised that it may be difficult to achieve the required benefit/cost ratio and that on that basis it could be difficult to achieve funding through this bidding process.
- (iv) Torquay Gateway and Town Centre – Developed around establishing easier and more direct access to Torquay Town Centre, this scheme has expanded to include the junctions along the A3022 Newton Road and the public transport interchange on the Harbourside. The proposal will include redirecting traffic to allow more direct access to the Town Centre, junction capacity enhancements to reduce congestion towards the Town Centre, and improvements around the Harbourside which enhances the public transport

interchange and public realm. This scheme is given no detail within the Local Transport Plan and would need a wider consultation. The proposal will need to be further developed with a far greater level of detail and evidence base to have a realistic chance of progression onto the prioritised list.

7. Preferred Solution/Option

- 7.1 The preferred option presented in this report is that the recommendation of the Working Party is to continue with the four detailed schemes as a 'long list' for Torbay.
- 7.2 Officers will then continue to assess the schemes and present them, firstly to the independent assessor, and then to the LTB. Those schemes then accepted by the LTB for the 'short list' would then be worked on in detail with all appropriate consultation to establish the precise nature of the proposals.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 The principles of the schemes are included within the Torbay Local Transport Plan and as such have undergone consultation during the period leading up to the adoption of that document.

9. Risks

- 9.1 There are associated risks dependent on the recommendations by the Working Party. If the additional schemes are recommended there is a risk that further resources, at a cost to the Authority, would be invested with no certainty as to the likelihood of funding being achieved, the public acceptability, or if the scheme would meet the criteria of the fund.
- 9.2 Any schemes on the prioritised list will have a budgetary implication as the preparation costs would fall on the authority.
- 9.3 Furthermore the risk of not supporting any funding bid is that the Authority will not have access to the necessary finances to deliver any major transport scheme which could deter investment within Torbay and reduce the attractiveness to businesses and visitors alike.

Appendices:

None

Additional Information:

None

Documents available in Members' Rooms:

None

Background Papers:

Devon and Torbay Local Transport Plan 3