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**Meeting:** Executive  
**Date:** 3 July 2012  
**Subject:** Local Sustainable Transport Fund – CBC Capital Programme  
**Report of:** Cllr Nigel Young, Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development  
**Summary:** To seek the Executive’s approval to include works funded through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) in Central Bedfordshire’s capital programme.

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**Advising Officer:** Trevor Saunders, Assistant Director Planning.  
**Contact Officer:** Ann Rowland, Team Leader Sustainable Transport Team.  
**Public/Exempt:** Public  
**Wards Affected:** Leighton Linlade, Dunstable and Houghton Regis wards.  
**Function of:** Executive  
**Key Decision** Yes  
**Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in (if appropriate)** N/A

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Council Priorities:**

Central Bedfordshire’s Local Sustainable Transport Fund was drawn up to deliver the aims set out in the Local Transport Plan. It supports the following Council corporate priorities by:

- Enhancing Central Bedfordshire – creating jobs, managing growth, protecting our countryside and enabling businesses to grow.
- Improved educational attainment.
- Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable.
- Better infrastructure – improved roads, broadband reach and transport.

### **Financial:**

1. £585,000 of capital works and £823,000 of revenue projects are due to be funded this year. Late commencement will result in a loss of unspent funds.

**Legal:**

2. There are no legal implications of this decision.

**Risk Management:**

3. The key risk to be mitigated through the Executive decision will be one of non delivery of schemes and loss of funding due to late commencement of work as a result of delays in the decision making process.

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

4. The main aims of the LSTF funded project are to boost the economy and create jobs whilst saving carbon/reducing car use. A successful project will see an increase in access to jobs and training. In order to achieve this however there will be a need to create a number of fixed term posts which will be fully funded through the project itself.

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

5. The increase in alternatives for journeys to work, education and training that will be funded through the LSTF programme will help redress the balance away from those with access to a car, providing increased opportunities for Central Bedfordshire residents to have access to work.

**Public Health:**

6. The promotion of 'Active Travel', including promotion and development of improved walking, cycling and public transport routes will contribute to improved public health.

**Community Safety:**

7. The works to be funded utilising these funds will have a positive impact upon community safety in that they will enhance and improve local infrastructure that in some instances is currently perceived as being unsafe by local residents. Improvements to local walking and cycling routes are particular examples.

**Sustainability:**

8. The main aims of the LSTF funded project are to boost the economy and create jobs whilst promoting sustainable transport, thus reducing carbon emissions. The project will work with existing partner and third sector organisations helping to make the work sustainable in the long term.

**Procurement:**

9. The LSTF project will be delivered in accordance with CBC procurement policies, although the main contractor for delivering the capital elements of the project will be Amey Infrastructure, Central Bedfordshire's highways provider.

**Overview and Scrutiny:**

10. Owing to the urgent nature of the report, this matter has not been considered by Overview and Scrutiny. See paragraph 18 for further details.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

### **The Executive is asked to:**

- 1. approve the inclusion of funding obtained from central government as part of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund in the capital programme.**

*Reason for Recommendation:*                      *To enable commencement of work such that funding is not put at risk.*

## **Executive Summary**

11. Central Bedfordshire has been awarded £4.9m to support sustainable transport initiatives in south Central Bedfordshire over the period 2012/13 to 2014/15.
12. Of this £4.9m, £1.995k is for capital measures with a planned expenditure of £585k for 2012/13, £1.015k for 2013/14 and £395k for 2014/15.
13. In order to ensure that the project is delivered to time and to budget Central Bedfordshire needs to be able to work with partners to commence work immediately.
14. Central Bedfordshire officers are therefore seeking approval from Executive to incorporate this funding in the capital programme rather than wait for full council approval in September.

## **Introduction**

15. This report proposes adding schemes valued at £1.995M to the Council's Capital Programme, including capital expenditure of £585k in 2012/13.
16. The Council's Code of Financial Governance allows the Executive to approve new capital schemes estimated to cost less than £500k (whole life cost) during the financial year. This scheme has a whole life cost of £4.9M (£1.995m capital + £2.959m revenue) and so requires approval by the Council.
17. The Executive can add the Scheme to the Council's Capital Programme on grounds of urgency. In this instance, the decision is urgent because the Council can claim, from the Department for Transport, what it has spent up to the sum of £1.4m (revenue and capital) during the financial year. If the Council does not claim the full £1.4M the remaining balance will be lost to the Council. For this reason, a decision to proceed cannot await the next meeting of the Council on 13 September 2012.
18. A decision on grounds of urgency can be taken provided that the Chairman of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee agrees that the decision is a matter of urgency. Councillor David McVicar has agreed that this proposal should be progressed in the most expeditious manner.

19. Before proceeding, the Executive should also be satisfied that it is not practical to convene a quorate meeting of the Council to make this decision. In those circumstances the Executive has power to approve the Scheme. This will be a key decision and normal call-in rules will apply.

### **LSTF Project – Smarter Routes to Employment**

20. This project will be focussed on Dunstable and Houghton Regis with some funding for Leighton Linlade, supporting the authority's growth agenda. The funding will enable Central Bedfordshire to fund improvements to walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure, work with businesses, the College and local communities to promote alternatives to the car and develop community champions.
21. Along with other schemes that are in the process of being delivered, such as the Guided Busway, the A5-M1 link and the Woodside connection, the money from this fund will play a key part in tackling congestion and regenerating Dunstable and Houghton Regis.
22. Further detail including the bid document itself can be found at:  
[www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/LSTF](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/LSTF)

### **Key Objectives of the Project?**

23. The main aims of the project are as follows:
- Improved access to employment by sustainable modes of transport.
  - Reduce the impact of commuting trips on local communities.
  - Maximising opportunities for training and education for those without access to a car.

### **Partnership Working**

24. Central Bedfordshire will be working closely with a number of partner organisations including Town Councils, NHS Bedfordshire, local businesses, Dunstable College, local community representatives and third sector organisations. Following extensive local consultation, all partners have demonstrated commitment and support to the project helping to make it sustainable in the long term.
25. Over the next three years Central Bedfordshire will work with these local partners provide the following:
- (a) Business support – work with businesses to introduce improvements that support the use of the bus, walking and cycling.
  - (b) Access to education and training – work with local education providers to encourage more active travel and improved choice for local journeys.
  - (c) Community liaison - work with priority groups in the local community to remove the barriers to travelling in a more sustainable way.

## **Conclusion and Next Steps**

26. The nature of the bid was such that it is only now possible to take the project, which is fully compliant with the Council's LTP, to Executive. With the approval of the Executive work can start immediately to ensure that Central Bedfordshire takes full advantage of the funding.

**Background Papers:** None

**Appendices:** None