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<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>7 MARCH 2022</b>
<b>REPORT OF THE:</b>	<b>PROGRAMME DIRECTOR – PLACE AND RESOURCES PHILLIP SPURR</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>MALTON AND NORTON INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY: POTENTIAL FUNDING ALLOCATIONS</b>
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>AMOTHERBY, DERWENT, MALTON, NORTON EAST &amp; WEST (DIRECTLY); OTHER WARDS (INDIRECTLY)</b>

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To propose an efficient and proportionate approval process for the allocation of allocated infrastructure and connectivity funding in order to support the effective delivery of interventions during 2022/2023.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 In relation to the remaining funding allocation, previously approved by Council for this area of work, it is recommended that Members grant delegated authority to the Programme Director – Place and Resources, in consultation with the S.151 Officer and the Chair of Policy and Resources Committee:
- a. to authorise appropriate allocations of funding not exceeding £50,000 towards each of the projects identified in 6.6 (subject to the provision of a project business case);
  - b. to authorise appropriate allocations of funding (subject to the provision of a business case) and subsequent contracting and expenditure for each of the following (in the event that contributions exceeding £50,000 are required):
    - i. the Swinton – Malton ‘Path for Everyone’ project; and
    - ii. A64 Broughton Road junction project development work.

### **3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 3.1 To ensure that the approval process is efficient and proportionate to the scale of proposals being considered and that projects / interventions can be implemented with minimal delay. This is particularly important having regard to the limited time remaining prior to Local Government Reorganisation and the need to ensure efficient use of Officer and Member resources, given the number of competing priorities being progressed in parallel with this work.

### **4.0 SIGNIFICANT RISKS**

- 4.1 It is recognised that Members expressed concern about the delegated authority previously sought due to the risk of reduced political scrutiny of potentially significant funding allocations. Officers have therefore sought to address these concerns via alternative delegated authority proposals (as set out in the recommendations) and providing initial outlines of the initiatives proposed.
- 4.2 There are not considered to be any other significant risks associated with the recommendations of this report.
- 4.3 Should the recommendation not be approved, however, full details of each individual project (no matter the scale or cost involved) would need to be reported to, and approved, by Committee – potentially involving several further reports. This process can take several months, with each report requiring a significant amount of Officer time to plan and prepare, resulting in less Officer time available for managing the programme of projects, in the time remaining prior to Local Government Reorganisation. This could result in an inability to utilise the remaining budget for the purpose originally identified.

### **5.0 POLICY CONTEXT AND CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 Council Plan priorities:
- Our Economy
    - Improving our road and rail connectivity to unlock economic growth
    - Working with partners to improve the A64, integrated public transport connections and station facilities
    - Supporting measures to cut congestion and improve traffic flow in our market towns
  - Our Communities
    - Working with partners to ensure a fair share of infrastructure investment
    - Championing sustainable public services that continue to meet the specific needs of Ryedale's communities
  - Our Environment
    - Improving air quality in our market towns by working with partners to tackle congestion and promote sustainable transport and commerce
    - Promoting sustainable transport by opening cycle routes and identifying new ways to link our communities in sustainable ways
- 5.2 Further details regarding the Council's Climate Change Emergency declaration; Local Air Quality Management Area; and consultations undertaken in relation to this area of work are detailed in the 11 November 2021 Policy and Resources Committee report.

## REPORT

### 6.0 REPORT DETAILS

#### Background

- 6.1 The background to this report is set out in the report to Policy and Resources Committee on 11 November 2021. This followed on from a previous report to Policy and Resources Committee on 24 Sept 2020, and Council on 03 December 2020, which made an allocation of £450k (£350k capital and £100k revenue) towards the development and delivery of identified infrastructure and connectivity schemes and included delegation to Policy and Resources Committee to approve expenditure on a scheme-by-scheme basis
- 6.2 The proposals outlined in this report were included as 'Part A' recommendations in a report to Policy and Resources Committee on 17 March 2022, but their consideration was deferred to the next Council meeting as they were considered to be at odds with the original delegation granted by Council to Policy and Resources Committee for approval of expenditure on a scheme by scheme basis. This report therefore seeks the appropriate approvals from Council for the revised delegation proposals as set out below.

#### Proposed allocation of funding

- 6.3 To date, £166k of the above allocation has been approved (to upgrade Butcher Corner traffic lights), with the remaining £184k (capital) and £100k (revenue) yet to be allocated to specific projects.
- 6.4 The original Committee and Council decisions in September and December 2020, respectively, were made before the full impacts and ramifications of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) became apparent. Since then, pressures relating to LGR have increased significantly, alongside the imperative to deliver during 2022/23. Given this change in context, alongside limited staff resources and capacity to progress the work, and various other competing priorities and projects (all being progressed in parallel), Officers consider that there are very strong reasons why a revised, more streamlined, approach to approvals should be adopted. It is not considered practicable to submit multiple reports to Committee seeking budget allocation for each potential proposal, as and when full details become available. As well as requiring a significant amount of Officer time to plan, prepare and submit reports, this process would inevitably build in a delay of approximately two to three months (depending on timing of Committee meetings) to the approval process for each project – with consequent knock-on effects on project timescales and programme deliverability within 2022/23.
- 6.5 In order to maximise the prospects of successfully implementing this programme, Officers therefore propose a revised Delegated Approval process for RDC allocations of up to £50k. This value has been selected as it ties in with the maximum contract value that the Chair of the appropriate Committee can authorise in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules. Officers have sought to address the concerns previously expressed by Members in the revised proposals as follows:
- i) limiting the amount of funding that could be allocated to each project via the delegation proposals;
  - ii) making proposals subject to a project business case;

- iii) providing initial outlines of the specific initiatives to which the delegation proposals would apply so Members have an opportunity to scrutinise the nature of projects being proposed.

6.6 In consultation with colleagues at NYCC, officers continue to discuss potential proposals to which funding allocations could productively be made. The projects listed below are those that have been proposed to date and which may be deliverable prior to the end of 2022/23:

*B - Behaviour change: development and implementation of a Publicity & Communications programme to encourage a reduction in the use of private cars in the towns and to promote active, sustainable, or public transport alternatives;*

*D - Improved Walking & Cycling Links:*

- *Adjustments to the existing kerb build-out / pedestrian crossing point opposite the Mount Hotel, on Horsemarket Road, Malton to avoid the need for cyclists to pull out into on-coming traffic when travelling north east;*
- *New zebra crossing point on Railway Street (e.g., in the vicinity of the entrance to Water Lane Car Park);*
- *Detailed project development for prioritised cycling / walking corridors (following completion of Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan - Phase 2);*
- *Implementation of Swinton – Malton ‘Path for Everyone’;*

*E - Car Parking: Improved vehicular signage to car parks to encourage the most appropriate route;*

*I (& C & H) - Second Rail Platform & Bridge & Forecourt / Interchange at Malton Rail Station:*

- *contribution to initial feasibility work for a planned Levelling Up Fund Round 2 Bid;*
- *contribution towards development of a Full Business Case for implementation;*

*J - A64 junction at Broughton Road: contribution towards project development;*

*\* - Development of a new Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP). The existing AQAP was introduced in 2012 following declaration of the Malton Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in response to levels of nitrogen dioxide, caused by road traffic, which were in breach of the statutory limit. The last breach was in 2016 so in theory the Council could request that the Malton AQMA order be revoked, however, we are conscious of proposals for additional rail services, traffic flow and priority changes at the junction of Church Street/Welham which modelling has predicted will have a significant impact on air quality in the AQMA. A new air quality action plan would be in response to these changes.*

*[NB: The upper-case letters above refer to the ‘Preferred Package of interventions highlighted in the Infrastructure and Connectivity Report – see background paper below. NB - Some of these will be subject to further consultation.*

*\* - indicates a more general proposal which was not specifically listed in the original Preferred Package of measures]*

- 6.7 Further work is required to establish specific details of the proposals and funding required, however, the majority are small-scale interventions, expected to require an RDC contribution below £50k. In reality, it is expected that the majority will be significantly below this amount and officers will seek to ensure the best value for money for each proposal.
- 6.8 Any projects not identified in 6.6 above would be the subject of a further report to Committee.
- 6.9 Two of the above proposals, however, may require a contribution exceeding £50k from RDC and a further delegated approval is sought to address such an eventuality. It is understood that Members may be concerned about granting delegated approval for an unspecified level of funding, however, it should be noted that the budget availability is limited (particularly once funding allocations have been made to the above schemes) and so *unspecified* does not mean *unlimited*. The two schemes which may require a contribution greater than £50k are outlined below:

*[NB – should Members approve Recommendations under 2.1 a. but **not** wish to approve those under 2.1 b. then it is proposed that the provisions of 2.1 a. would still apply to the projects outlined below (i.e., for funding not exceeding £50k)]*

6.10 Implementation of Swinton – Malton ‘Path for Everyone’

- 6.11 This proposal would form part of a longer-term project for a Hovingham – Malton ‘Path for Everyone’ (see link provided under Background Papers for details) providing a multi-user route greatly improving accessibility for walkers, wheelchair users, cyclists and horse riders. Ryedale Cycle Forum and community volunteers have already done a lot of work to develop detailed designs for a section of the route between Swinton and Malton. A notional cost of £300k is assumed and will require fundraising and grant applications to secure funding for implementation. A significant contribution from RDC would act as vital seed funding to ensure the project’s success.

- 6.12 The project covers part of the ‘Amotherby Strategic Route’ as identified in the Malton & Norton Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (approved by NYCC, November 2021) and will provide the following benefits:

- significant and long-awaited improvements to the safety of pedestrians and cyclists on this section of the route,
- encourage greater adoption of more active and sustainable modes of travel,
- contributing to reduced numbers of local journeys undertaken by car,
- contribute towards improved air quality in the towns.

- 6.13 Any contribution would be subject to:

- confirming delivery arrangements,
- confirming project costs and an appropriate RDC contribution,
- securing the remaining funding,
- negotiations with landowners to secure agreement for an alternative route for a section where the existing footpath is too narrow.

6.14 A64 Junction at Broughton Road – contribution to project development

- 6.15 NYCC have appointed consultants to progress further development work on proposals to upgrade the A64 Musley Bank junction to enable ‘all direction movements’. Whilst NYCC are also committed to supporting project development for a new A64 Broughton Road junction, there is currently no budget allocation to progress this work.

- 6.16 This work would develop proposals and business case for a new junction. At this stage the scope and cost of work required is not clear and is subject to further discussions with National Highways (a notional cost of £100k is suggested). A significant contribution from RDC would increase the chances of NYCC committing their own funding to progress the scheme: helping to ensure the work progresses and, crucially, that it progresses *in parallel* with work already commissioned for Musley Bank. Without such a contribution it is not clear when NYCC might be able to fund the work.
- 6.17 Whilst this work will not result in immediate improvements to congestion or air quality within Malton / Norton, it is clear that alternative and more appropriate routes to and from the A64 are required in order to remove significant volumes of traffic from the towns (particularly in the AQMA / Butcher Corner and Pasture Lane / Highfield Road).
- 6.18 Construction of the new junction (as with upgrading the Musley Bank junction) will require major investment and take many years to achieve. An RDC contribution to project development costs could, however, bring this prospect a significant step closer.

## 7.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The following implications have been identified:
- a) *Financial* - The recommended approvals are from within the existing budget and so there are no new financial implications.
  - b) *Legal* - The Council has a duty to fulfil its obligations under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 Local Air Quality Management and continues to meet these obligations through joint work with NYCC. There are not considered to be any other significant legal implications of the recommendations set out in this report – although legal agreements may be required on specific projects as project development progresses.
  - c) Other (Equalities, Staffing, Planning, Health & Safety, Environmental and Climate Change, Crime & Disorder)

*Environmental & Climate Change:* All projects are expected to have positive environmental impacts: by encouraging more use of active, sustainable and/or public transport and/or helping reduce numbers of vehicle journeys through the town centres.

*Equalities:* All projects are expected to have positive benefits in terms of equalities as they will be designed to improve accessibility for all.

No other implications have been identified.

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**Background Papers are available for inspection at:**

- [Report to Policy and Resources Committee on 11 November 2021 \(see ITEM 10\)](#)

- [Malton & Norton Infrastructure and Connectivity Improvements Study Executive Summary \(Appendix\)](#)
- [Malton & Norton Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan](#)
- [Hovingham – Malton Path for Everyone Update \(Dec 2021\)](#)