



**REPORT TO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE
SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 2 MAY 2023**

**SUBJECT: TRANSPORTATION CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUDGETS
2023/24**

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND
FINANCE)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of plans to deliver the capital and revenue programme in Transportation for 2023/24.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (F) (33) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the provision, development and monitoring of the Council's Economic Development and Infrastructure Services.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- (i) **approve the plans to deliver the capital and revenue programme for 2023/24 as contained in this report;**
- (ii) **delegate authority to the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services to apply for grants for the funding areas set out in this report at paras 5.13 and 6.16; and**
- (iii) **approve the plans for expenditure of the additional revenue funding for Road Safety as set out in para 7.6.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Transportation team delivers the council services and duties in relation to public transport, home to school transport, transport development, traffic management, road safety, sustainable and active travel, car parks and harbours, as well as advising and preparing recommendations to members on matters of transport strategy.
- 3.2 This report sets out plans for each team within Transportation to deliver those services and duties in line with the approved revenue and capital budgets for the financial year 2023/24.

4. PUBLIC TRANSPORT UNIT

- 4.1 The 2023/2024 revenue budget for the Public Transport Unit is £5,628k. As is normally the case, the major element of the budget relates to the statutory provision of entitled home to school transport. The budget is factored to 191 school days, which reflects the projected school calendar. The major areas of expenditure are set out below.

Category	£k
Home to School Transport	4,947
Infrastructure, Systems and Services	70
m.connect	328
Minibus Contract	0
PTU Staff Costs	283
Total	5628

Home to School Transport

- 4.2 The Council has a statutory duty to provide transport between home and school for entitled pupils travelling to and from their zoned schools. The service was retendered in February 2019 for five years with an optional one year or two year extension. Home to school transport is provided by a mix of external coach and bus suppliers, taxi companies, bolstered by the use of the Council's own fleet. School routes are commissioned to maximise efficiency of vehicle provision in line with the requirements of individual schools. This includes transport for pupils with varying degrees of Additional Support Needs to enhanced provision centres across Moray.

The budget for this service is £4,947k and provides home to school transport for 2,550 pupils per year. Income of £7K is budgeted in relation to Privilege Transport, which offers pupils not entitled to free provision access to a seat on a closed contract school bus. The Under 22 free bus travel scheme launched in January 2022 does not cover closed school contracts.

Infrastructure, Systems and Services

- 4.3 This area of expenditure covers statutory maintenance for roadside passenger shelters and bus stops plus software licensing and maintenance fees for the m.connect demand responsive booking system and on bus ticket machines.

Minibus Hires and Social Care Transport

- 4.4 Transport is provided by the Public Transport Unit to a number of projects, day care centres and respite centres for vulnerable social care clients. Costs of this transport are recharged back to the various social care teams and project managers across the Council. Income is also generated by the hire of minibuses to external sources viable under the Section 19 Community Bus Permit scheme. Revenue from this is gradually recovering from the lack of confidence following the Covid pandemic.

m.connect

- 4.5 This is the budget allocated to m.connect, the council's bus services which includes a proportion of the overall vehicle and property costs associated with the delivery of public transport. This line also factors in predicted income, an area still facing some uncertainty as the country comes out of the Covid era of restrictions. Budgeted external income is £378K, made up of m.connect

£280K (concessionary fare reimbursement, on bus fares paid, Network Support Grant) and Minibus £98K (Network Support Grant). The Dial M brand is being replaced this year by the m.connect brand in line with the additional services and vehicles as part of the Growth Deal project.

Income

- 4.6 Income is generated from a number of sources including adult concession fare reimbursement, the under 22's free bus scheme reimbursement, the Network Support Grant (which replaced the Bus Service Operator Grant), and other service user income. The income figure is factored in the m.connect figure.

5.0 HARBOURS

- 5.1 The total revenue maintenance expenditure can be split into categories as follows:

Description	£
Dredging services	180,000
Maintenance	49,500
Inspections & surveys	25,000
Port Marine Safety Code compliance	6,500
Total	261,000

Infrastructure Maintenance

- 5.2 This will include the following items, although the full amount is not allocated to enable reactive repairs such as winter storm damage to be carried out:

- Ladder repairs / replacement
- Repairs to pier and harbour surfaces (potholes, storm damage etc.)
- Repairs to safety railings and barriers
- Maintenance and upgrade of all LSA (Life Saving Appliances)
- Upgrade of harbour signage
- Pontoon repairs (including replacement sections, chains, hinges, and decking)
- Refurbishment and painting of quayside furniture and equipment e.g. lighthouses, bollards and toe rails.
- Repairs to and replacement of navigation lights
- Repairs to various items of equipment e.g. fish barrow wheels, chiller doors and curtains, replacement of water hoses
- Harbour property repairs as managed by Estates
- Cleaning and maintenance of ice plant and associated equipment
- Cleaning and maintenance of slipways
- Repairs to harbour lighting in conjunction with Street Lighting
- Pest control, drain clearance
- Replacement of oil spill response equipment
- Maintenance and upgrade to Lifejackets and PPE for staff
- Annual Service and Calibration of Weighbridge at Buckie Harbour
- Annual Service and Calibration of Scales in the Fishmarket building
- Staff medical examinations (ENG 1)
- Upgrade and replacement of items of equipment such as VHF radios
- Maintenance of Pilot Boat

Maintenance of Dredger
 Maintenance of Fork Lift
 Maintenance and repair of quayside fendering.

Inspections & Surveys

- 5.3 Engineering surveys, including underwater work, are carried out periodically by an external contractor to determine the state of the harbour structures. This work is now managed by Consultancy in close co-operation with the harbours team. These detailed surveys of the harbour structures are vital to assist in programming capital works effectively, and are normally carried out every 2 years. The survey plan for the next 6 years is detailed in the following table.

Harbour	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27
Buckie		Dive			Boat	
Burghead			Boat			Dive
Cullen	Boat			Dive		
Findochty	Dive			Boat		
Hopeman		Boat			Dive	
Portknockie			Dive			Boat

Boat – visual inspection from a vessel

Dive – in water inspection

- 5.4 Bathymetric surveys were been carried out in Buckie harbour in 2022/23 and it is proposed that Buckie is surveyed twice annually and Burghead annually to link in with dredging activity. Surveys are also carried out periodically on the harbour estate when required and other required surveys such as asbestos, contaminated land surveys completed when necessary.

Port Marine Safety Code Compliance

- 5.5 A marine consultant is engaged as Designated Person to ensure that the council is fully compliant with the Port Marine Safety Code, which is the industry guidance document for good practice produced by the Department for Transport and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. The duty of Designated Person is a prescribed post in the Port Marine Safety Code. PMSC training for ED&I Committee Members was carried out in August 2022 to ensure understanding in the role of duty holder held by Committee Members.

Income

- 5.6 Income generated by harbours has generally been increasing year on year, since 2015. There has been a slight decrease in income in the financial year 2021/22 due to reduced harbour fee income as a result of a covid delayed pontoon replacement project. The general pattern of increase however has returned with a healthy increase in income over the last financial year as detailed in the chart below.



5.7 The 2022/23 income figure used for the graph is a projection based on latest income for February and an estimate for March.

5.8 The steady increase is the result of benchmarking and rationalisation of harbour fees and charges, and the hard work put in by the team on the front line to deliver quality services to all our customers.

5.9 The outline dredging plan for Moray Council harbours for 2023/24 is as follows:

Days dredging 2021/22							
	Burghead	Buckie	Findochty	Portknockie	Cullen	Hopeman	Total
Budget	60K	60K	12K	12K	6K	30K	180K
Days	20	20	4	4	2	10	60

5.10 On average the dredger will load approximately 180 tonnes into the hopper per dig, and aim to carry out 2 digs per day. However, this will depend on the specific gravity of the material being dredged, the tides, and the prevailing conditions on the day - not only at the dredge location but also at the sea disposal site.

5.11 Actual days worked at any of the harbours will depend on weather and tide, and availability of crew, vessel and machinery. Therefore the final split of days across the harbours will change over time. The priority of the harbourmaster will always be to maintain the depth of the channel and approaches to the commercial harbours at Buckie and Burghead. Hopeman, Findochty and Cullen are classed as drying harbours. However, the harbour authority has a duty and responsibility to ensure safe passage of vessels to and from their berths. Portknockie always has a good depth of water and needs minimal maintenance dredging. It is the intention to deliver the number of days planned in each harbour over the financial year.

The current 3 year dredging licences for the commercial harbours at Buckie and Burghead are valid until 2024. The licences for the leisure harbours at Cullen, Portknockie, Findochty and Hopeman are valid until 2023. These are being renewed and relevant authorities including SEPA and Marine Scotland are handling the new dredging licences which are planned to include abilities to dispose of some spoil to suitable land based sites. This will provide an ability to carry out land based dredging activities in areas especially Hopeman and Cullen which are providing a challenge to access.

- 5.12 There is a capital dredging programme agreed upon which is planned to be completed in second quarter of 2023/24. This will provide a large scale dredge of Buckie to provide 3.0m of depth in basins 1/2/3 and channel and in Burghead entrance channel. The work in Burghead will be accompanied by capital work to fix the beach groyne defence at Burghead beach. The cost of the capital dredging programme is £300,000 and the groyne repair works £575,000 (this is a joint budget including repair works to Findochty quay sink hole).
- 5.13 In line with the Transportation team's remit to develop the harbours sustainably there can be mid-year opportunities to benefit from grant funding to deliver these priorities. The deadlines often preclude submission of a report to the service committee. It is requested that delegated authority is granted to the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services to approve grant funding applications where these fit with clear 'business as usual' work priorities, and do not required any other unbudgeted expenditure by the council.

6. TRANSPORT DEVELOPMENT

- 6.1 The transport development team has a revenue budget of £37,224 for 2023/24 (excluding staffing costs). This budget is for required licences such as Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and the Trip Rate Information Computer System (TRICS). A modest amount is included in this budget for the commissioning of transport studies – principally for runs of the Elgin Traffic Model to support the team's role in assessing the impact of changes to the road network and to commission specific transportation studies/surveys for which there is no grant funding available. There is also £250,000 approved for the update of the Elgin Traffic Model and preparation of the Transport Appraisal required to support the review of the Local Development Plan, which has commenced during April 2023 and continue through the next two financial years.

7. TRAFFIC

- 7.1 The Traffic Team has a net revenue budget of £262,047. This covers the statutory duties in relation to road safety, street works and road construction consents. The planned expenditure for the team is set out in more detail below.
- 7.2 The revenue budget includes an anticipated income of £263,528. This comprises £173,008 for processing Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders and issuing permits such as Road Opening Permits. £90,520 is budgeted for income relating to Road Construction Consent inspections.

- 7.3 The budget also includes allowances for licences for Road Traffic Accident software (£6.7k) and software for the collection and analysis of traffic count and vehicle speed data (£3.5k) from permanent and temporary counter sites across Moray. Accident and traffic data is important information required to enable Transportation's statutory duties in relation to road safety and the preparation of transport strategies to support the Moray Local Development Plan.
- 7.4 The Council has a statutory duty to carry out studies of road accidents and "take such measures as appear to the authority to be appropriate to prevent such accidents". The Road Safety budget of £366k in the Capital Plan provides funding to deliver works in priority areas and a small allowance for minor interventions. This year's budget includes monies deferred from 2022/23 budget.
- 7.5 During 2023/24, the Road Safety capital budget will be used to complete the works commenced during 2022/23 for the installation of a Toucan crossing on Thornhill Road at School Walk and the replacement of the existing pedestrian crossing on Thornhill Road with a central pedestrian island. Other works being pursued include a new Toucan crossing on Coularbank Road, Lossiemouth along with supporting works to routes to the crossing point.
- 7.6 An additional £50k for Road Safety measures was agreed during the budget discussion at the Council meeting of 3 March 2023. This additional revenue funding will be used to refresh faded road markings at junctions and at locations where on-street parking presents a hazard to road safety, which have deteriorated to an extent that they are now unclear (due to limited revenue budgets for the re-fresh of road markings over the past five years in the region of £35k to £40k).
- 7.7 Furthermore, an application to the Scottish Government Road Safety Fund will be made once this fund opens (anticipated to be in May). Should the application be successful funding will be available to improve the A940 Edinkille/U88e Divieside Road junction at and to undertake upgrades to road markings and 'cat's eyes' on the A941 Lossiemouth to Dufftown Road and the A940 Forres to Grantown Road.
- 7.8 The Council also has a statutory duty to provide disabled parking spaces near the homes of eligible people when they apply. The Council also receives requests for dropped kerbs to assist people with mobility disabilities and parents/carers with pushchairs at places where they need to cross the road. The Disability Adaptation capital budget enables the Traffic Team to deliver appropriate improvements. This £76k budget provision will enable in the region of 60 parking spaces and approximately 25 dropped kerbs. This year's budget will also be utilised to remove on-street disabled person's parking spaces where the person for whom they were created no longer resides at the property in question.
- 7.9 The New Road Signs and Markings Capital Budget of £57k is for the provision of new road signs, markings and the like to allow the Traffic team to react to changes to the road network – often highlighted by communities, elected members and council officers. This will include new signs and road markings

replacing life expired elements with a particular focus on the continued removal of centreline markings on rural roads narrower than 5.5 metres and replacing them with edge markings on both sides of the road. Undertaking this particular change, which is compliant with Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 5, has resulted in reductions in verge overrun on these rural roads and has added road safety benefits of defining the edge of the carriageway during the hours of darkness and periods of weather related poor visibility.

- 7.10 There is a small capital allocation of £27k for the replacement of life expired traffic signals and traffic data equipment. Councils are required to provide Transport Scotland with some data and regularly carry out surveys to help respond to concerns raised or to inform design decisions. The collection and analysis of data is also a key part of providing an evidence base in relation to the Local Development Plan. The budget enables the replacement of life expired items such as batteries, and for the repair of permanent automatic traffic counter sites. In the long term, there is a requirement to review and upgrade the count equipment itself, which is dated and no longer supported by manufacturers. This requires research with costs to be identified as part of the 10 year Capital Plan.
- 7.11 Each year Moray Council is awarded ring fenced funding for Cycling, Walking and Safer Routes (CWSR). For 2023/24 the grant to be awarded has been confirmed as £616,000. The grant is to be used only for the purposes of undertaking a programme of works for local cycling, walking and safer routes projects, with a recommended minimum spend of 36% and preferably over 50% of the grant being used for works to promote cycling and walking for both short and long distance journeys. An allocation of £50k from the award forms part of a Participatory Budgeting exercise, where communities are being asked to identify locations for additional cycle parking and/or cycle repair stations. The first communities to participate are Buckie and Keith.
- 7.12 It is proposed to use this year's CWSR budget to design and implement projects. The projects include the provision of a new footway in Rafford to connect properties to the village hall, a footway and pedestrian island on St Leonard's Road, Forres. Smaller schemes include new sections of footway in Garmouth near the War Memorial and in Roseisle at the Village Hall (deferred from last year due to contractor issues).
- 7.13 The CWSR grant can also be used to develop designs for interventions. This year design projects will include footway and pedestrian island provision on Boroughbriggs Road, Elgin, further development of options for improving pedestrian and cycle routes through the Victoria Road roundabout at Forres, options for improving the pedestrian route at the Barhill Road/Golf View Drive/St Peters Road junction in Buckpool and design of the active travel route along Coularbank Road, Lossiemouth.
- 7.14 In 2022/23 Scottish Government introduced a new supporting grant for the CWSR, the CWSR Direct Resource grant, which provides revenue funding to support for active travel. The grant is for the removal of barriers and to improve the quality of existing cycling infrastructure and/or to fund additional staff to deliver cycling projects. Should this grant be awarded for 2023/24, it will be used to provide the Council's contribution towards funding the existing

Sustrans Embedded Officer and for works to improve the Elgin to Lossiemouth cycle path and repairs to other existing cycle paths.

- 7.15 An application has been made to the Smarter Choices Smarter Places (SCSP) fund for £90.8k for support to deliver active travel promotions in relation to schools, support for the Moray Council operated bus services and for the continuation of the Moray Bothy project. The Moray Bothy project focuses on promoting accessible and inclusive cycling and walking opportunities to the residents of Elgin, Buckie, Keith, Forres and Lossiemouth. The fund is for behaviour change activities, which promote the use of sustainable transport modes. The fund is allocated to all Local Authorities based on population size. An application was submitted in January with the grant expected to be awarded in May.
- 7.16 In line with the Transportation team's remit to promote road safety, sustainable and active travel, and public transport, there can be mid-year opportunities to benefit from grant funding to deliver these priorities. The deadlines often preclude submission of a report to the service committee. It is requested that delegated authority is granted to the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services to approve grant funding applications where these fit with clear 'business as usual' work priorities, and do not required any other unbudgeted expenditure by the council.
- 7.17 The Traffic Team is responsible for a revenue budget for traffic signals, signs and lines for general maintenance and the refreshing of road markings. The delivery of the budget is the responsibility of the Roads Maintenance Manager and will be reported separately. Appropriate well-maintained road markings, cat's eyes, junction markers and signage all contribute to the safety of road users on rural roads.
- 7.18 However, it should be noted that over the past five years this revenue budget has significantly reduced with only prioritised maintenance of these assets being carried out. The additional Road Safety revenue budget agreed as part of the budget for 2023/24 is therefore being allocated to the refreshing of road markings (see para 7.6 above).

8. CAR PARKS

- 8.1 The 2023/24 revenue budget for car parks is £(293)k, taking into account budgeted income of £(765)k. This maintains the car parks in Moray governed by the car park order and fund the enforcement of the regulations governing the use of the pay and display in Elgin.
- 8.2 The infrastructure and maintenance of grounds includes the following items:
- Guardrails and Barriers
 - Grounds Maintenance
 - Gully Emptying
 - General Maintenance
 - Patching and Kerbing
 - Roads Markings & Signs
 - Winter Maintenance
 - Lighting Maintenance

- 8.3 The balance of the expenditure in revenue includes employee costs, rent, rates and energy costs, clothing and uniform.
- 8.6 Batchen Lane Car Park, refurbishment scheme will be delivered 2023/24 with an estimated cost of £450,000.
- 8.7 Following the potentially serious structural defects identified in St Giles Car Park the upper floors of the car park were closed in the interest of public safety. Options for the future of St Giles are currently being considered by officers.

9. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

Carrying out the planned functions of the Transportation team as set out in this report, enables the fulfilment of statutory duties and contributes towards the council priorities of a growing sustainable economy, healthier citizens and safer communities.

(b) Policy and Legal

Delegated authority to make grant applications is requested in this report, which is a deviation from the Financial Regulations. The Head of Financial Services has been consulted and is supportive of this request.

(c) Financial implications

This report sets out the plans to deliver the revenue and capital budget allocation to Transportation for 2023/24.

(d) Risk Implications

The predicted incomes for harbours, traffic and car parks are based on the best available information but may be subject to variation based on external influences.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

(f) Property

There are no property implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

There are no equalities issues arising from this report. There are various expenditure items which promote equalities and / or have a socioeconomic benefit, in particular the spend on road safety and public transport.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

Public Transport, Active and Sustainable Travel all contribute to reducing carbon emissions and promoting health & wellbeing.

(i) Consultations

The Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance), Head of Environmental and Commercial Services, Legal Services Manager, Head of Financial Services, Principal Accountant, Equalities Officer and Committee Services Officer have been consulted and their comments incorporated into the report.

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 Committee is asked to approve plans and programmes for expenditure as set out in this report.

Author of Report: Debbie Halliday, Acting Transportation Manager

Background Papers:

Ref: SPMAN-524642768-880