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**REPORT TO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE  
SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 30 APRIL 2024**

**SUBJECT: TRANSPORTATION CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUDGETS  
2024/25**

**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 2024/25.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (F) (34) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the provision, development and monitoring of the Council's Economic Development and Infrastructure Services Committee.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

**2.1 It is recommended that Committee:**

- (i) approve the plans to deliver the capital and revenue programme for 2024/25 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 5.16 and 7.14; and**
- (iii) approve the plans for expenditure of the Cycling Walking and Safer Routes funding as set out in para 7.11 and 7.12.**

**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 2024/25.

#### 4. **PUBLIC TRANSPORT UNIT**

4.1 The 2024/2025 revenue budget for the Public Transport Unit is £6,244K. The major element of the budget relates to the statutory provision of entitled home to school transport. The budget is factored to 189 school days, which reflects the projected school calendar for the forthcoming year. The major areas of expenditure are set out below.

<b>Category</b>	<b>£k</b>
Home to School Transport	5305
Infrastructure, Systems and Services	78
m.connect including Bus Revolution	665
Minibus Contract	3
PTU Staff Costs	299
<b>Total</b>	<b>6244</b>

##### **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. The one year extension for 2024/25 has been implemented, which will see a full network review take place prior to retendering for implementation in April 2025.

4.2.1 Home to school transport is provided by a mix of external coach and bus suppliers, taxi companies, bolstered by using 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.

4.2.2 The budget for this service is £5,305,000 and provides home to school transport for 2,500 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, on bus ticket machines, tablet SIM's and other sundry items

##### **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.

4.5. Income is also generated by the hire of Council 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**

4.6 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 which has now largely recovered from Covid restrictions and the ensuing lack of confidence. Budgeted external income is £303,000, made up of cash and card paid fares, m.connect concessionary fare reimbursement, and Minibus (Network Support Grant). The m.connect brand has now fully replaced the original Dial M for Moray brand and all vehicles in the fleet are branded accordingly.

**Income**

4.7 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. **HARBOURS**

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

<b>Description</b>	<b>£</b>
Staffing Costs (salaries)	299,570
Staffing Costs (other)	168,691
Dredging services	180,000
Maintenance	49,500
Inspections & surveys	25,000
Port Marine Safety Code compliance	6,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>729,261</b>

**Infrastructure Maintenance**

5.2 Amongst other smaller works, the plan for 2024/25 includes:

- Ladder repairs / replacement in Portknockie
- Repairs to pier and harbour surfaces
- Repairs to safety railings and barriers in Burghead and Buckie
- Monthly maintenance and minor repairs
- Servicing of plant and equipment

### 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 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	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Buckie			Boat			Dive
Burghead	Boat			Dive		
Cullen		Dive			Boat	
Findochty		Boat			Dive	
Hopeman			Dive			Boat
Portknockie	Dive			Boat		

Boat – visual inspection from a vessel

Dive – in water inspection

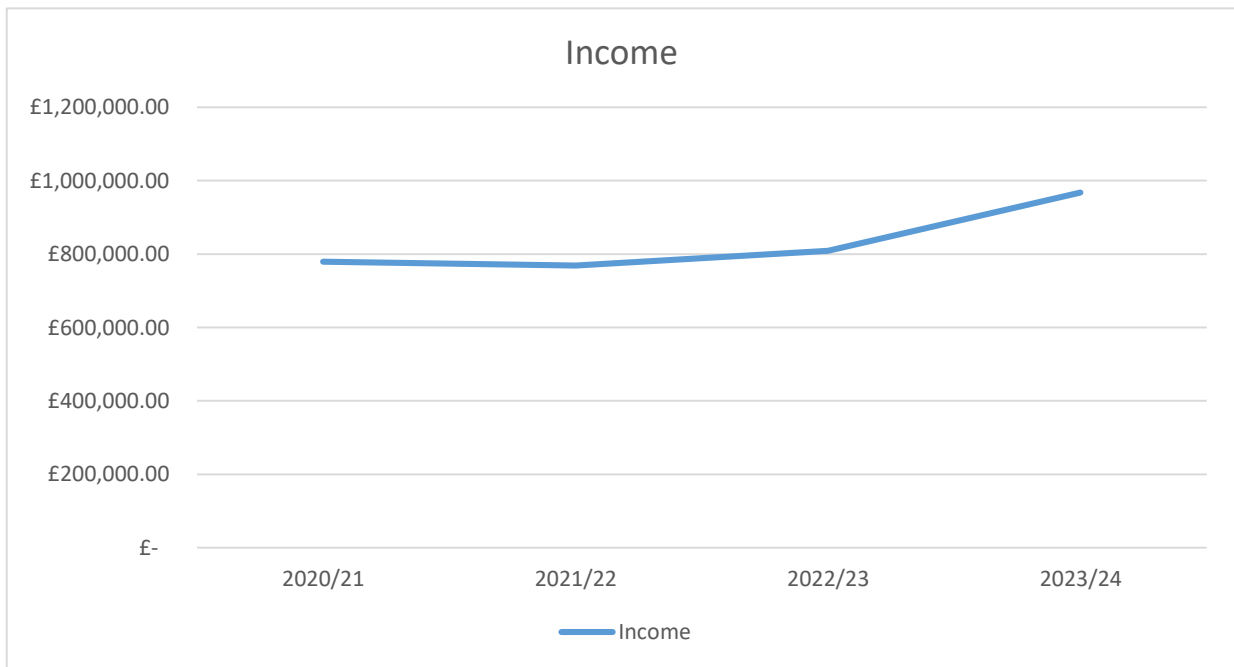
- 5.4 Bathymetric surveys have been carried out in Buckie harbour in September 2023, November 2023 and February 2024. Buckie is surveyed at least twice annually and Burghead annually to link in with dredging activity. Surveys are also carried out periodically on the harbour estate when required and other 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 (PMSC). PMSC 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. Annual Audits are completed annually with 2023 audit completed on 08 March 23. 2024 Audit is currently in process of being scheduled with Marex Marine who act as Moray Council's designated person. Currently Moray Council is deemed fully compliant.

### Income

- 5.6 Income generated by harbours continues a trend of increasing year on year, since 2015. There was a slight decrease in income in the financial year 2021/22 due to reduced harbour fee income because 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. This increase is partly as a result of increased cargo vessel activity within Buckie, and also relates to the income from offshore energy related activity. Total cargo tonnages handled have increased by 36% from 79,602 tonnes in 2017/18 to 108,407 tonnes during 2023/24. This is reflected in the income generated and has other significant benefits to local economy and supply chain.



5.7 During financial year 2023/24 there has been a continuation of regular and frequent cargo loading and discharging in Buckie harbour. The table below summarises cargo handled this year compared to previous years:

	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
Import tonnage	82143.79	86446.02	70488.72	64019.24	74242.20
Export tonnage	21622.97	17954.10	8931.55	31846.33	13330.50
Total	103766.75	104400.12	79420.27	95865.570	87572.70

5.8 The 2023/24 income figure used for the graph (para 5.6) is a projection based on latest income for February 2024 and an estimate for March 2024.

### 5.9 Dredging

Maintenance Dredging for the six Moray Council harbours for 2024/25 budget is £180,000. The plan is to make best use of the dredger and maximise use for operational benefit. Selkie will be tasked depending on weather conditions, tides, maintenance of the vessel and availability of the crew. The focus will be on Buckie Harbour and Burghead, then the other harbours.

5.10 Actual days worked at any of the harbours will depend on weather, tides, availability of crew, vessel, and machinery. Therefore, the final split of days across the harbours may change over time. Productivity of dredging is recorded continuously and reported to ED&I committee in bi-annual reports. 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. Accurate tidal information and appropriate Notices to Mariners are promulgated to harbour users to facilitate this responsibility. Portknockie always has a good depth of water and needs minimal maintenance dredging.

- 5.11 On average Selkie 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 weather conditions on the day - not only at the dredge location but also at the sea disposal site, crew availability and the vessel being in working order.
- 5.12 All relevant marine licences for dredging in Moray Council harbours have been renewed in 2023/24 from revenue budget and are valid until March 2027. Relevant authorities including SEPA and Marine Directorate were consulted extensively with sediment sample analysis being completed. Planned exempted activities to include abilities to dispose of some spoil to suitable land-based sites have been confirmed. This will provide an ability to carry out dredging in areas where a land based approach is more operationally effective. The Selkie Interim Load Line Survey is also due to take place in May 2024
- 5.13 A Capital funded repair of Buckie Mucks navigational lights has been through the Asset Management Working Group Gateway and is scheduled for Q2/3 of 2024/25. The work is currently being procured and is budgeted for £175,000. The works are safety critical with current light structure at end of life being installed in circa 1970. Once installed a detailed maintenance regime will ensure regular repair and protection of the asset.
- 5.14 Other capital works planned for 2024/25 include works on quay assets in Burghead, Cullen and Findochty which is reported in the separate Flood Risk Management & Bridges capital and revenue report to this committee.
- 5.15 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 require any other unbudgeted expenditure by the council.

## **6. TRANSPORT DEVELOPMENT**

- 6.1 The transport development team has a revenue budget of £38,285 for 2024/25 (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.

- 6.2 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 commenced during April 2023 and will continue through the next two financial years. To date expenditure on the update of the Traffic Model has been £89,350 (including traffic surveys), leaving some £160,650 for the completion of the work on the Traffic Model and for undertaking of the Transport Appraisal.

## **7. TRAFFIC**

- 7.1 The Traffic Team has a net revenue budget of £317,985 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 from service users of £207,008. This comprises £157,008 for processing Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders and issuing permits such as Road Opening Permits. £50,000 is budgeted for income relating to Road Construction Consent inspections.
- 7.3 The budget also includes allowances for licences for Road Traffic Accident software (£8,000) and software for the collection and analysis of traffic count and vehicle speed data (£4,000) 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 £105k in the Capital Plan provides funding to deliver works in priority areas and a small allowance for minor interventions.
- 7.5 In 2023 Scottish Government awarded funding from their Road Safety Infrastructure Fund (RSIF) for the upgrading of road markings and cat's eyes on the A940 and A941 for the rural sections of those roads within Moray. Should the fund be open again for applications, officers intend to apply for the upgrading of road markings and cat's eyes on the A95 (Keith to Aberdeenshire boundary), A98 (Fochabers to Aberdeenshire boundary) and A920 (Dufftown to Aberdeenshire boundary). Should the funding not be granted through the RSIF, as a minimum road markings and cat's eyes upgrades will be undertaken on the A98 utilising the Road Safety capital budget.

- 7.6 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 £61k 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 any on-street disabled person's parking spaces where the person for whom they were created no longer resides at the property in question.
- 7.7 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.
- 7.8 There is a small capital allocation of £39k 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.
- 7.9 Previously, Moray Council was awarded ring fenced funding for Cycling, Walking and Safer Routes (CWSR) from Scottish Government for capital projects to enable active travel. This grant is now going to be partially awarded as part of the Council's block grant, however the funding is still required to be used for active travel infrastructure projects, including staff costs. Transport Scotland have confirmed that in addition to the CWSR funding through the block grant, there will be a further CWSR direct award which is currently being discussed with COSLA.
- 7.10 The use of the Applications to the new Active Travel Infrastructure Fund (ATIF), which has replaced the Spaces for Everyone funding, will be dependent on a Council's track record delivering active travel projects. If the CWSR grant is not utilised for active travel projects, then the local authority may not be able to submit projects to the ATIF funding stream. Future applications to the ATIF include match funding for the Levelling Up active



travel projects in Elgin and funding towards the Burn of Buckie active travel bridge.

- 7.11 For 2024/25 the CWSR block grant awarded has been confirmed as £411,000. The additional direct award has yet to be confirmed. There are currently CWSR projects on site to be completed which require some £250k of this funding. Furthermore, a commitment has been made to install a signalised crossing at Lossiemouth High School on Coularbank Road. The installation of the crossing has been delayed from due to the need to relocate a bus stop and provide additional surface water management. The costs of these works are estimated to be £130k. Smaller schemes will also be taken forward which include a new section of footway in Garmouth near the War Memorial (deferred from last year due to contractor issues).
- 7.12 Over recent years, the CWSR grant has been used to develop 'pipeline' projects. This year it is proposed to develop designs for interventions on Tollbooth Street in Forres, which will complement and enhance public realm improvements to be undertaken as part of the Town Centre Improvement Plan and, following a public consultation exercise, develop the preferred option for improvements at the Barhill Road/Golf View Drive/St Peters Road junction in Buckie to support pedestrian and cycle movements through this area.
- 7.13 The funding mechanism for Behaviour Change projects has also changed, with funding now being distributed through the Regional Transport Partnerships. Moray Council has been awarded £75,117 for 2024/25 from Transport Scotland as a direct award for active and sustainable transport to complement the HiTrans funding, to support to deliver active travel promotions in relation to schools 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. This is a one-off direct award to Moray Council to replace the previous Smarter Choices Smarter Places funding.
- 7.14 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 require any other unbudgeted expenditure by the council.
- 7.15 Funding opportunities during 2024/25 are likely to include the Scottish Government Active Travel Infrastructure Fund (ATIF) and the Road Safety Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) which are both competitive funds. An ATIF application was made in January 2024 for the introduction of raised side road crossings for the Morrison Road cycle path in Elgin at four locations. At this time, the funder is still considering the applications made.

- 7.16 The Traffic Team is responsible for a revenue budget for traffic signals, signs and lines for general maintenance and the refreshing of road markings. Over recent years the costs associated with the maintenance of traffic signals has increased 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.
- 7.17 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. Costs associated with the maintenance (including operating costs) of traffic signals and signalised crossings have also significantly increased. Each new set of traffic signals and signalised crossing adds an extra £2,400 to the annual maintenance contract. It should be noted that once the costs associated with the maintenance and operation of the traffic signals (currently £30,000 per annum) have been deducted there is only a small budget available to maintain and refresh signs and road markings.
- 7.18 The overall net capital budget for traffic, including slippage is £315,000. This will be monitored throughout the year over all the team's capital projects.

## **8. CAR PARKS**

- 8.1 The 2024/25 revenue budget for car parks is £(685)k, taking into account budgeted income of £(1.179)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.
- 8.4 Level 2 refurbishment scheme at Batchen Lane Car Park, was carried out in 2023/24. A further refurbishment scheme for Level 4 is planned for 2024/25 with a budget of £250,000.
- 8.5 A bid of £150,000 has been sought from capital to enable a programme of resurfacing and lighting replacement in surface car parks. The ongoing programme will be based on a prioritised approach for inclusion and approval in future year capital budgets as appropriate.

## 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 2024/25. The capital figures reported are the gross figures from the capital plan, the slippage target will be worked to by all teams through management of risk, procurement and timing of individual schemes.

### (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 promote health & wellbeing.

### (i) **Consultations**

The Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance), Head of Environmental and Commercial Services, Legal Services Manager, Chief Financial Officer, Equalities Officer and Lissa Rowan, 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: Kelly Wiltshire, Strategic Transport Services Manager

Background Papers:

Ref: SPMAN-524642768-1034