



## Report of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure

Cabinet – 21 December 2023

### **Financial Procedure Rule 7 – Local Transport Fund SBWW and Regional Bus Core Allocation 2023/24 and 2024/25**

<b>Purpose:</b>	<p>To approve the additional funding for Local Transport Fund (LTF) and seek approval to add the capital expenditure to the delivery programme for Local Transport Fund projects in 2023/24 and 2024/25.</p> <p>To comply with Financial Procedure Rule No.7 (Capital Programming and Appraisals): to commit and authorise schemes in the Capital Programme.</p>
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Joint Transport Plan for South West Wales (2015 – 2020)
<b>Consultation:</b>	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	<p>It is recommended that Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Approves receipt of the grant funding.</li><li>2) That delegated approval be assigned to the Cabinet Member and Director of Place for the Local Transport Fund schemes set out in paragraph 2, and they be added to the Capital programme in line with FPR7.</li></ol>
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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Funding bids for the Local Transport Fund (LTF) were originally submitted to the Welsh Government on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023 in accordance with guidance from the Welsh Government.
- 1.2 The funding was available to all Welsh Local Authorities. The Welsh Government elected not to set a maximum value for each scheme, but rather elected to set banded scoring criteria, with higher values attracting a lower point allocation. Whilst match funding was not a requirement of the funding bids, schemes offering match funding would attract higher scoring, thus increasing the likelihood of receiving an allocation for a scheme offering match funding.
- 1.3 An FPR7 report was submitted for Cabinet to approve the LTF, ULEVTF and ATF 2023/24 grant applications on 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2023. Approval from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure was sought and granted prior to the drafting and submission of the bids.
- 1.4 Upon receipt of the grant award letter on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023, Welsh Government elected to award additional funding for the Regional Bus Core Allocation in 2023/24 and an additional value for the project continuation of the Swansea Bay and West Wales Metro into 2024/25. Although these schemes are led by four local authorities (Swansea Council, Neath Port Talbot Council, Carmarthenshire County Council, Pembrokeshire County Council), Swansea will act as the host authority for the South West Wales region.
- 1.5 This report seeks the retrospective approval of Cabinet for the award of LTF grant funding, specifically for the South-West regional Bus Core Allocation in FY2023/24 and Swansea Bay & West Wales Metro in FY2023/24, and seeks delegated approval be assigned to Cabinet Member and Director of Place for the LTF schemes, so that they, together with their financial implications are approved.

## 2. Details of schemes

- 2.1 The projects granted additional funding for Local Transport Fund 2023/24 and 2024/25 are summarised below.
- 2.2 **Swansea Bay & West Wales Metro** – This project will continue the development work for the Swansea Bay and West Wales Metro (SBWW) in FY2024-25, which commenced in 2017/18. This is a partnership project, developed collaboratively by the four South West Wales local authorities - Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire - working alongside Welsh Government, Transport for Wales, and the Swansea Bay City Region and taking account of the work of the evolving South-West Wales Corporate Joint Committee. The overarching vision for the Swansea Bay & West Wales Metro is to create a modern, sustainable, and integrated transport network - including rail, bus and active travel

(walking and cycling) - that will enable everyone access to reliable, convenient and affordable travel, and support growth across region.

- 2.3 This project has received consistent funding from LTF since 2017/18, which has enabled development work on the Swansea Bay & West Wales Metro. The continuation of the project in 2024/25 will further develop and substantiate the Metro to determine its feasibility, phasing and cost-benefit measures.
- 2.4 It is envisaged that a new Programme Manager will be appointed using this funding in 2023/24, which will continue into 2024/25 to oversee and coordinate the Swansea Bay and West Wales Metro project elements. This resource will bring together the various project elements into a single joined up Metro Programme, supporting the development of linkages and partnership working with the Welsh Government and TfW to expedite the delivery of the programme.
- 2.5 **South-West Wales regional Bus Core Allocation** – The Welsh Government awarded a ‘Regional Bus Core Allocation’ to the South West Wales region in FY2023/24. This will enable local authorities in the region to work collaboratively to identify bus corridors and to develop a pipeline of regional bus priority infrastructure enhancements. Swansea Council will act as the host authority for the region to develop and progress the scheme.

### 3. Funding Awarded

- 3.1 In total, the City and County of Swansea has been awarded £250,000 from the Welsh Government for South West Wales regional Bus Core Allocation, and £2,000,000 for the continuation of the Swansea Bay & West Wales Metro in FY2024-25.

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Grant Awarded</b>
LTF 2023-24 – South-West Wales regional Bus Core Allocation	£250,000
LTF 2024-25 – Swansea Bay and West Wales Metro	£2,000,000

### 4. Integrated Assessment Implications

- 4.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
  - Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
  - Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
  - Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
  - Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 4.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.
- 4.3 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language. Each scheme will be subject to its own IIA process.
- 4.4 These transport infrastructure schemes will serve to improve public amenity, connectivity and access for all, particularly for people with disabilities, and will be the subject of consultation as appropriate
- 4.5 Close consultation with local disability and access groups will be undertaken to ensure accessibility for all. For some schemes proposed to be delivered, this process has already taken place, alongside engagement with a range of other stakeholders and the public. For schemes which are proposed to be developed, this will be undertaken if they are approved by Welsh Government, and individual projects will consider their equality impacts more fully at the appropriate design stages when they will be screened in their own right.
- 4.6 The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 has been considered in the development of these schemes. These initiatives that support our Corporate Plan's Well-being Objectives will contribute towards the seven national wellbeing goals, applying the five ways of working and meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 4.7 These schemes will be highly visible to the public and are considered to pose a medium risk to the Council. The cumulative impact of these schemes should be a positive one for people living along or near the proposed schemes. They will improve public transport and active travel for communities and make more sustainable forms of travel more attractive, safe, and accessible.

## 5. Financial Implications

5.1 The schemes described in this report, rely upon the Local Transport Fund to provide 100% grant funding to secure their delivery.

5.2 Summary

**Table Two – Financial Summary of LTF Grant 2023/24 and 2024/25**

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Total LTF (£k)</b>	<b>Match Funding (£k)</b>	<b>Total Project Costs (£k)</b>
LTF 2023-24 – South-West Wales regional Bus Core Allocation	£250,000	£0	£250,000
LTF 2024-25 – Swansea Bay and West Wales Metro	£2,000,000	£0	£2,000,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,250,000</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£2,250,000</b>

## 6. Legal Implications

6.1 The Welsh Government’s transport capital infrastructure grants will require that all spend is compliant with the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules. Applicable spend must also comply with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

6.2 When delivering Transport Schemes, compliance will be required with the relevant Highways and Transport Act measure and guidelines.

6.3 It will be necessary to ensure that all terms and conditions attached to external grant funding are complied with and that the Council’s Financial Procedure Rules Regarding Grant Applications and Acceptances are followed.

6.4 Where the Council wishes to acquire land, the relevant Responsible Officer must instruct the Head of Property Services to negotiate, settle or confirm the terms of such acquisition after taking into account any relevant statutory provisions or guidance and any advice from the Chief Legal Officer. Any acquisitions must comply with the Council’s Land Transaction Procedure Rules and generally the terms of any acquisition must be in accordance with the market value of the interest to be acquired and be approved in writing by the Head of Property Services.

6.5 Section 120(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 authorises Local Authorities to acquire any land for their functions, and for the ‘benefit, improvement or development of their area’. The Council has to consider the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the 7 well-being goals and how the scheme may improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

- 6.6 Land agreements whether by purchase or lease should be in place prior to the commencement of scheme construction and delivery.
- 6.7 Separate legal advice will need to be sought regarding any contract and procurement issues relevant to the schemes.

**Background Papers:** None

**Appendices:**

Appendix A: Integrated Impact Assessment