

Divisions Affected - Deddington, Bloxham & Easington, Woodstock, Wroxton & Hook Norton

**DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT
MANAGEMENT
25 APRIL 2024**

**United States Visiting Forces (USVF) Road Safety Review
RAF Barford St John
Department for Transport Grant Determination**

Report by Corporate Director for Environment & Place

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member for Transport Management is **RECOMMENDED** to;

- a) **Accept on behalf of the County Council the DfT provided grant of £1.26m**
- b) **Approve the full scope of proposed works as provided in this report.**
- c) **Permit Officers to make reasonable adjustments, inclusions, omissions etc to the package of works as may be considered appropriate/necessary during the scheme's development / delivery.**

Executive Summary

2. The County Council has been awarded a £1.26m grant to undertake enhanced maintenance works as a part of an existing project to improve highway safety near to RAF Barford St John.
3. The proposed works are in response to a road traffic collision whereby a United States citizen driving on the wrong side of the road collided with a motorbike, fatally injuring its rider.
4. As the expenditure is greater than £1m, the decision on whether to accept the grant is considered to be a Key Decision.

Background

5. In August 2019 a fatal road traffic collision occurred near to RAF Croughton, whereby a visiting United States citizen driving on the wrong side of the road collided with a motorbike, causing the rider to be fatally injured.
6. The Transport Secretary subsequently committed to a review of highway safety around both RAF Croughton in Northamptonshire and RAF Barford St John in Oxfordshire.
7. Both Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire County Councils' have been working with the DfT to determine a package of works to enhance highway safety.
8. Measures identified include, but are not limited to;
 - a. New infrastructure such as road markings, traffic signs, and traffic calming
 - b. Enhanced maintenance such as carriageway surfacing
9. In March 2023, the County Council accepted a DfT provided grant of £2.734m for the same project to undertake works which fell outside of our ordinary maintenance-based levels of intervention.
10. This most recent and further grant of £1.26m extends the scope of that already committed work to include for the delivery of complimentary enhanced / accelerated maintenance works that meets the typical criteria of the County Council but which is not currently prioritised due to the limited resources available.
11. Acceptance of the grant is to be considered by the County Council. If accepted, the Council is required to comply with the conditions of the grant, and to undertake the associated package of highway safety improvement works.
12. If accepted, the total value of grants received for this undertaking will be £3.994m.
13. A copy of the grant letter accompanies this report.

Proposed works

14. Whilst works have been identified, they are not yet programmed, pending the final confirmation of scope (i.e. this most recent grant).

15. It is understood that once the two affected Highway Authorities (Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire) have responded to their respective grants that a joint press release, led by the DfT would be undertaken.
16. Upon confirmation of the full scope of works, safety measures identified in Oxfordshire would be delivered over the course of the coming (2024/25) financial year. Most works are likely to be scheduled for late summer due to the lead in time required, and out of operational necessity – i.e. surfacing being undertaken prior to the subsequent installation of road markings. However, where it is possible to do so, standalone features without such dependencies will be progressed concurrently and without undue delay to ensure the benefits are realised as soon as possible.
17. Affected Members / Localities will be notified of any works once programmed, and where necessary appropriate consultation will be undertaken in line with existing standard procedures.
18. A summary of the locations and the nature of works proposed accompanies this report.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

19. The maintenance-based safety works to be undertaken will contribute to the County Council's statutory obligations regarding the maintenance and management of the highway network.
20. The proposed works will contribute towards the prevention of traffic collisions that may otherwise be contributed to by the condition of highway assets.
21. The works are well aligned to the County Council's commitment to health and wellbeing of residents, and positively align with commitments made under the Council's 'Vision Zero' programme to eliminate incidents of traffic collisions resulting in life changing injuries / fatalities.

Financial Implications

22. The grant must be spent in line with the amount received.
23. Grant condition 1 requires that the grant is invested only for the purposes for which a capital receipt may be used in accordance with regulations made under section 11 of the Local Government Act 2003.
24. Grant Condition 2 requires a notification to be sent to the Department for Transport within strict time limits following completion of the Project. Accordingly, the service area responsible for the works needs to ensure that adequate provisions are put in place to ensure this condition is met.

25. If the authority fails to comply with any of the conditions and requirements of grant conditions 1 and 2, the Secretary of State may:

- a. reduce, suspend or withhold the grant; or
- b. by notification in writing to the authority, require the repayment of the whole or any part of the grant.

26. Any sum notified for repayment shall become immediately repayable to the Secretary of State.

Comments checked by:

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Legal Implications

27. Accepting the grant requires adherence to conditions as set out in the grant determination letter, a copy of which accompanies this report.

28. Not fully complying with the grant conditions could result in the County Council being liable to repay part or all of the grant.

29. Grant Conditions are dealt with in the Financial Implications section of this report.

Comments checked by:

Karen Jordan, Senior Solicitor and Team Leader
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Staff Implications

30. External consultancy support will be used to complete design and delivery of the project which is over and above the Council's ordinary programme commitments.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

31. No implications in respect of equalities or inclusion have been identified in respect of the proposals associated with this grant.

Sustainability Implications

32. The nature of the proposed work is typical of routine highway maintenance activity with no special considerations in relation to sustainability.
33. Existing standard approaches to ensuring sustainability in material selection and operational methodology will be followed.

Risk Management

34. There are not any notable, special, or extraordinary risks to the delivery of the project. The works fall within the ordinary and routine business of the County Council in its capacity as the Highway Authority.
35. Any operational risks identified, such as inclement weather affecting works will be managed through the pre-existing governance structure for the service.

Consultations

36. No consultation is required prior to the County Council accepting the grant.

Bill Cotton
Corporate Director, Environment and Place

Annex:

1. Grant Determination Letter
2. Schedule of Provisional Works

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