COPELAND LOCAL COMMITTEE DEVOLVED HIGHWAY BUDGETS 2013/14.

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Members are asked to approve recommendations for the Local Committee's devolved revenue and capital highways budgets for 2013/2014 which will form the basis of the Local Committee's devolved programmes for 2013/14 and provide a core programme for future years subject to annual review.

1.2 The final allocations for 2013/14 are £1,227,064 (revenue) and £1,883,000 (capital) respectively, approved by Council at its meeting on 14th February 2013.

2.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

2.1 This report supports the aims and objectives aims of the Council Plan, Corporate Strategy and the Local Transport Plan through the efficient planning and delivery of the Highways and Transport Programme in the Copeland area.

2.2 The Programme complies with the Strategic Equality Assessments for the Highways and Transport Service. Individual schemes will be assessed against equality criteria as appropriate.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

3.1 That Local Committee is recommended to approve the devolved highways budgets and programmes for 2013/2014 set out in the Appendices to the report.
**4.0 BACKGROUND**

4.1 This report makes final recommendations for the Local Committee’s devolved budgets and programmes for 2013/2014. The prioritised lists of schemes, which will form the basis of the Local Committee’s devolved programme for 2013/14 and provide a core programme for future years was approved at its meeting in November 2012.

4.2 The recommendations in this report are the final allocations of £1,227,064 (revenue) and £1,883,000 (capital) respectively, approved by Council at its February meeting.

4.3 The allocations are significantly different both to those for 2012/13 and to those considered by Copeland Local Committee at its meeting on 25 November 2012, as set out in paragraphs 4.4 and 4.5 below.

4.4 The consultation document for the draft revenue budget 2013/14 contained a proposal in respect of Highways capital and revenue budgets where it was proposed to devolve a further £0.8m of capital funding to Local Committees from the Priority Transport Improvement Schemes (PTIS) capital highways budget, whilst at the same time the highways revenue budget for Local Committees would be reduced by £0.8m. This means that the Local Committees would change the nature of some of the highways works they fund from maintenance, for example repair of potholes, to larger scale improvements such as resurfacing. Making use of capital funding in this way should allow available resources to be most effectively targeted to meet local highways priorities. In total this has been incorporated into the proposed allocations presented in the report. For this Local Committee, the effective movement from revenue to capital is £86,624.

4.5 In the Government’s Autumn Statement in December 2012 additional Local Highways Maintenance Funding (Capital) was announced for all Local Authorities. For Cumbria County Council this resulted in an additional £3.890m for 2013/14 and £2.082m for 2014/15. It is proposed that £0.700m of this additional funding is top sliced to fund the Cockermouth Main Street scheme as agreed by Cabinet on the 10th January 2013. This substitution of funding offers flexibility to use the County’s Betterment Capital budget for match funding towards other schemes. The remainder of this additional funding i.e. £3.190m is proposed to be allocated across the four elements of the overall Highways capital programme; Principal Road Network (£0.670m), Bridges and Structures (£0.383m) and Local committee devolved funding (£2.137m) and for this Local Committee that additional allocation is £214,000. The additional funding is for maintenance works and cannot be used for improvement schemes.

**DEVOLVED HIGHWAYS REVENUE BUDGET**

4.6 The recommended devolved highways revenue budget is set out in Appendix 1, which shows the proposed allocations, the original 2012/13 budget and the changes necessary to accommodate the £86,624 movement from revenue to capital set out above.
4.7 The Programmed Maintenance element remains at the same reduced level as 2012/2013 revised budget levels.

4.8 The Road Lighting element includes an efficiency pressure of £10,000 from the previous budget. The continuing rise in energy costs has resulted in an anticipated increase of 5% which is reflected in the budget proposal.

4.9 The Better Highways budget is reduced to take into account the proposal at 4.13 to establish a team to carry out more substantial repairs to the fabric of the carriageway utilising the devolved highways capital budget.

4.10 The proposal includes for the clawback of £75,000 being the outstanding amount of overspend from the 2011-2012 Devolved Highways Revenue budget.

**DEVOLVED HIGHWAYS CAPITAL BUDGET**

4.11 The summary of the recommended devolved capital budget for 2013/14 is shown at Appendix 2 and is set out in various blocks. Appendix 2 also shows comparison with the recommendations for provisional allocations approved by Local Committee in November 2012.

4.12 The additional capital maintenance allowance totals an additional £300,000 from the provisional figure approved by Copeland Local Committee at its November meeting.

4.13 With the reduction in revenue spending it will be prudent to focus the available funding on maintenance of the existing carriageway structure with extensive carriageway patching. The proposed increase in minor structural maintenance will allow a programmed approach utilising a “hot-box” team to maximise efficiency.

4.14 The severe weather events experienced during the last year have highlighted areas of concern and need for repairs. The County Council is now fulfilling a new role as Local Lead Flood Authority and as a consequence of flooding is finalising a number of reports in the Copeland area. Where the recommendations of these reports highlight highway drainage issues; funds will be required to resolve these drainage problems. Therefore, it is proposed to increase the allocation for drainage issues to address the outcomes of these reports in addition to known drainage issues.

5.0 **OPTION**

5.1 Members may approve the recommendations or suggest changes to the proposed programmes.
6.0 **RESOURCE AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The Non-Principal Road Structural Maintenance and Annual Package of Measures programmes are devolved to this local committee to determine and deliver in accordance with the Council’s policies.

6.2 All elements of work undertaken by this local committee must seek to meet the overall objectives as laid out in the current Local Transport Plan and this Council’s corporate policies.

6.3 The government’s capital allocation for highways and transport is not ring fenced and as such it is at each authority’s discretion as to how available funding is utilised. In this light and with reference to considerations identified in this report, it is important to have properly considered and prioritised lists of candidate schemes.

6.4 The County Council approved the 2013/14 Devolved Highways Revenue budget of £1,227,064 and the 2013/14 Devolved Highways Capital budget of £1,883,000 for the Copeland Local Committee at their meeting of the 14th of February 2013. If members endorse the recommendation, this would fully allocate those budgets.

7.0 **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 Local Committee is required to determine and deliver the highways programmes for its area in line with the County Council’s budgets and policies.

8.0 **CONCLUSION**

8.1 This report details the draft budgets and programmes of devolved revenue and capital works, under each of the different budget headings, for 2013/2014, and has taken full account of this Local Committee’s priorities.

Paul Little
Interim Area Highways and Transport Manager

12 March 2013
APPENDICES

Appendix 1 2013/14 Devolved Highways Revenue Budget

Appendix 2 2013/14 Devolved Highways Capital Budget

Electoral Division(s): All Copeland

Executive Decision

Key Decision

If a Key Decision, is the proposal published in the current Forward Plan?

Is the decision exempt from call-in on grounds of urgency?

If exempt from call-in, has the agreement of the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee been sought or obtained?

Has this matter been considered by Overview and Scrutiny?

If so, give details below.

Has an environmental or sustainability impact assessment been undertaken?

Has an equality impact assessment been undertaken?

PREVIOUS RELEVANT COUNCIL OR EXECUTIVE DECISIONS
[including Local Committees]

Copeland Local Committee (25th November 2012) – Devolved Provisional Highways Capital Programme 2013/14

Cumbria County Council (14th February 2013) – Draft Revenue Budget and Capital Programme

CONSIDERATION BY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Not considered by Overview and Scrutiny.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers.

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