

## 1. Introduction

1.1 On 22 September 2023, the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) will consider a project change request and updated business case seeking approval to reallocate the remaining Local Growth Fund (LGF) monies towards schemes within the *Hastings and Bexhill Movement and Access Package* (HBMAP).

1.2 This note sets out the work undertaken to date and the next steps ahead of the project change request being considered by SELEP and a report being taken to the East Sussex County Council Lead Member decision-making meeting in October 2023. As part of these next steps, the County Council has sought input from Hastings Borough Council and Rother District Council on any strategic factors that need to be taken into consideration.

1.3 As per the SELEP Assurance Framework, this note is to inform and seek endorsement from the local federated board, Team East Sussex, on the proposed project change request. This will enable ESCC to submit an updated business case to the SELEP Accountability Board for its meeting on 22 September 2023, which will include a request for the reallocation of the remaining funding to the proposed prioritised schemes.

## 2. Background

### Progress and spend to date

2.1 Over the last three to four years, significant progress has been made on advancing each of the schemes within the Hastings and Bexhill Movement and Access Package (HBMAP), as identified in the original business case for £9m approved by SELEP in 2018.

2.2 The package primarily focuses on:

- improving traffic congestion and road safety;
- supporting accessibility to public transport;
- improving active travel connectivity; and
- enhancing the physical environment.

2.3 To date this package has successfully delivered the following schemes across Bexhill and Hastings:

- four new pedestrian crossings;
- VAS signage at a crossroads to improve road safety;
- RTP1 infrastructure to support the bus service network in both towns;
- accessibility improvements to forty bus stops across Bexhill and Hastings;
- upgrade of ten bus stops along The Ridge corridor including kerbing and shelters; and
- wayfinding improvements in Hastings.

2.4 In addition, two T-junction conversions to mini roundabouts in Bexhill town centre (London Road/Beeching Road and Sackville Road/Buckhurst Place/Terminus Road) are currently nearing completion. At present, six schemes remain outstanding for delivery, set out in Appendix 1.

2.5 As of the end of April 2023, spend across the package totals £6,051,746. Of this spend, £5,712,999 has been funded through Local Growth Fund (LGF) and £338,747 has been funded through ESCC or external S106 funding, as shown in Table 1.

*Table 1. Current Spend on HBMAP schemes*

LGF Budget	Total spend	LGF Spend	Other funding
£9,000,000	£6,051,747	£5,713,000	£338,747

### Review of HBMAP programme

2.6 Following discussions with ESCC's Highway Contractor earlier this year, it has become clear that the total amount of funding required to complete the design and delivery of these remaining schemes would be

significantly higher than the remaining LGF monies available. This has primarily been driven by the national rising costs in the construction sector.

2.7 This issue was highlighted in the report considered at the ESCC Lead Member for Transport and Environment decision making meeting on 13 March 2023, on the 2023/24 capital programme of local transport improvements of which the HBMAP forms an element. The Lead Member was advised that work on the HBMAP package would be paused while a full scheme review and programme assessment was undertaken to determine which of the remaining schemes within the HBMAP package could be taken forward for final development and/or delivery.

2.8 Since then, work has commenced to review the package in line with the amount of funding available. Once the remaining schemes have been selected for continuation in this package, a revised business case will be submitted to SELEP for review and the necessary approvals will be sought from the SELEP Accountability Board on 22 September 2023 to proceed.

2.9 The revised business case will include an updated economic appraisal for the revised package to ensure that it still demonstrates high value for money (a benefit:cost ratio over 2), or where it indicates that it represents medium value for money (a benefit:cost ratio of over 1.5) that a strong strategic narrative remains for the package.

2.10 Following completion of the review process and SELEP Accountability Board approval, a separate report will be presented at the Lead Member for Transport and Environment decision making meeting in October 2023.

### 3. Remaining HBMAP Schemes

3.1 As highlighted in 2.4, there are six schemes remaining within the HBMAP package as detailed in Appendix 1, with a current deadline to spend and deliver by Summer 2025. We are not proposing to include any alternative schemes.

- Hastings Western Cycle Route
- Bexhill Cycle Route A
- Bexhill Cycle Route B
- A259/Albert Road, Hastings
- Station Approach, Hastings
- Bexhill London Road Corridor Phase 2

3.2 Based on the original £9m LGF funding and the spend to date as set out in Table 1, there is £3,287,000 remaining from LGF to cover the six outstanding schemes.

3.3 In addition to this funding, there is also £890,000 of S106 and CIL funding assigned to the remaining schemes and £189,000 of other funding which can be allocated to the programme. However, depending on which schemes are progressed, not all of the £890,000 external funding can be utilised. Therefore, not including the scheme-specific external funding, there is only £3,476,000 currently available.

Table 2. Remaining LGF funding

LGF Budget	Total LGF spend to date	Remaining LGF available	Other funding	S106 and/or CIL (scheme dependent)
£9,000,000	£5,713,000	£3,287,000	£189,000	£890,000

3.4 We have commissioned transport consultants WSP to undertake a cost estimate exercise to review the remaining six schemes which determined the cost to construct them all is £11,320,000. The costs shown for each scheme are ‘estimated’ costs based on the information available at this juncture including design costs, preliminary/traffic management costs, stats diversions, contingency/risk and inflationary cost allowance as well as construction costs.

3.5 Table 3 shows the cost breakdown of the remaining six schemes as well as the scheme specific external s106/CIL funding potentially available.

Table 3. Breakdown of remaining scheme costs

Scheme name	Original budget	Spend to date	Remaining spend to complete design and delivery	External funding
Albert Road, Hastings	£402,900	£293,317	£850,000	£102,000 Albert Road OR Station Approach (S106)
Station Approach, Hastings	£425,000	£188,063	£1,430,000	£102,000 Albert Road OR Station Approach (S106)
London Road Corridor (Phases 1 and 2)	£950,000	£926,737	£3,080,000	£300,000 (CIL)
Bexhill Cycle Route A	£1,234,720	£684,585	£1,820,000	£439,000 (S106)
Bexhill Cycle Route B	Joint with above	Joint with above	£1,460,000	
Hastings Western Cycle Route	£383,000	£388,622	£2,680,000	£49,000 (S106)

3.6 Consideration has been given to whether there are options for descoping and/or value engineering the schemes as well as exploring other available funding sources.

#### 4. Scheme Prioritisation

4.1 As part of the scheme package review, a prioritisation approach that aligns with previous SELEP LGF business case assessment criteria has been developed focusing on:

- deliverability;
- affordability;
- value for money; and
- strategic fit.

#### 5. Conclusions & Next Steps

5.1 This briefing note sets out the current funding position for the delivery of the Hastings and Bexhill Movement and Access Package and its remaining schemes.

5.2 In developing the prioritisation matrix, several factors have been taken into account, as set out in Appendix 1 of this note.

5.3 From the prioritisation process and value for money assessment to support the updated business case review, we are minded at present to progress the following schemes which can be afforded within the current funding envelope:

- Albert Road, Hastings;
- Station Approach, Hastings; and
- Bexhill Cycle Route A.

5.4 An ESCC cross-party Transport Member panel will be held in late June 2023 to review the assessment made and agree the schemes to proceed to delivery within this funding package.

5.5 **TES members are asked to provide their support and endorse ESCC submitting an updated business case to the SELEP Accountability Board for its meeting on 22 September 2023, which will include a request for the reallocation of the remaining funding to the proposed prioritised schemes.**

<b>1.</b>	<b>A259/Albert Road</b>	<b>Hastings</b>	<b>£850,000</b>
<p>This junction improvement scheme aims to improve pedestrian connectivity between Hastings town centre and seafront while improving road safety. It includes a new staggered crossing on the western arm of Albert Road and a larger pedestrian crossing on Denmark Place.</p> <p>The detailed design is complete, the scheme is highly deliverable, and lighting and signal equipment has been purchased.</p> <p>This scheme has been assessed as high VfM due to the improvements in safety for a high volume of pedestrians.</p>			

<b>2.</b>	<b>Bexhill Cycle Route A</b>	<b>Bexhill</b>	<b>£1,820,000</b>
<p>This is one of two cycle routes proposed in Bexhill and is a dependency for the wider Bexhill Cycle Network. This route connects Collington to Worsham, linking the new north Bexhill development and Enterprise Park to the seafront, Collington rail station, and leisure centre.</p> <p>There is a risk to delivery as detailed design is still required to be completed, and the scheme requires a cycle track order and traffic regulations order before it can be progressed. Further land ownership negotiations and engagement with National Highways is also needed.</p> <p>Due to the high construction delivery costs, it has been assessed as part this review as representing comparatively low benefits. The inclusion of this cycle route would ensure the overall package fulfils the objectives of the original business case.</p>			

<b>3.</b>	<b>Station Approach</b>	<b>Hastings</b>	<b>£1,430,000</b>
<p>This scheme focuses on improvements to the public realm and pedestrian connectivity from Hastings train station to the town centre. The scheme includes widening of pavements around the Station Approach/Havelock Road/Devonshire Road area and straightening the existing staggered pedestrian crossing to improve usage and road safety.</p> <p>Final stages of detailed design are needed to review the signals and pedestrian guard rail. This scheme will also compliment the wider Hastings Town Centre Public Realm and Green Connections scheme which is being developed separately which is focussed on the Havelock Road/Harold Place corridor through the town centre to the seafront.</p> <p>This scheme is highly deliverable given the stage of design. Due to the volume of pedestrians and improvements to safety, this scheme has been assessed as providing high value for money.</p>			

<b>4.</b>	<b>Bexhill Cycle Route B</b>	<b>Bexhill</b>	<b>£1,460,000</b>
<p>This is the second of the Bexhill cycle routes, connecting the seafront and Bexhill rail station to Bexhill College and the Ravenside retail and leisure park.</p> <p>There is risk to delivery as public consultation and detailed design are still required. The scheme also requires a cycle track order and traffic regulations order which may be subject to objections and further land ownership negotiations. Due to the high construction delivery costs, it has been assessed as part this review as representing comparatively low benefits. The inclusion of this cycle route would ensure the overall package fulfils the objectives of the original business case.</p>			

<b>5.</b>	<b>Hastings Western Cycle Route</b>	<b>Hastings</b>	<b>£1,460,000</b>
<p>The cycle route runs from the western edge of Hastings, and the Coombe Valley Greenway provided alongside the Bexhill Hastings Link Road, to Silverhill. It will provide active travel connectivity between western residential areas of Hastings, two primary schools, a library, community centre and major retail outlet, and Ponswood Industrial Estate. The route has a complete detailed design and will be subject to successfully securing a cycle track order to progress to construction.</p> <p>Due to the high construction delivery costs, it has been assessed as part this review as representing low affordability, and low benefits comparative to cost. The inclusion of this cycle route would ensure the overall package fulfils the objectives of the original business case.</p>			

<b>6.</b>	<b>London Road Corridor Phase 2</b>	<b>Bexhill</b>	<b>£3,080,000</b>
<p>Following on from Phase 1 which comprised the conversion of the London Road/Beeching Road and Sackville Road/Buckhurst Place/Terminus Road junctions to roundabouts, Phase 2 includes public realm and junction improvements on the Buckhurst Place section of the London Road corridor. This involves the removal of the existing gyratory and improvements to the pedestrian area outside Bexhill Town Hall.</p> <p>It aligns with, although is not dependant on, Rother District Council's wider placemaking strategy and plans to upgrade the Town Hall as has been assessed as providing medium value for money. There is risk to delivery due to requiring detailed design and the scheme is unaffordable within this funding package.</p>			