

8 REVENUE PROGRAMME

8.1 FUNDING REVENUE PROJECTS

The contribution that revenue funding makes to the implementation of the Local Transport Plan should not be underestimated, particularly in a predominantly rural county such as Wiltshire. In Wiltshire the annual value of revenue expenditure exceeds capital expenditure in the ratio of 3:1.

Revenue funds are available from a number of sources, predominantly through local taxation and grants from Government. Other key sources are detailed later in the Chapter in respect of Public Transport expenditure.

Revenue Expenditure In Wiltshire

Figure 8.1.1 shows the revenue expenditure profile for Wiltshire in 2000/2001 and it can be seen that the largest elements of highways and transportation expenditure are:-

- Highway Maintenance (34%);
- Professional & Engineering Services(31%); and,
- Public Transport (18%).

In total, it costs £16.7m to maintain the services currently provided by the County Council for transport (excluding transport for social services and education). This expenditure represents about 6% of the County Councils total revenue budget.

The County Council is free, within certain limits, to spend its revenue budget on those services which it considers most important although the Government does give guidance on how it has allocated the funds within the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) settlement through the use of Standard Spending

Assessments (SSA) for the major service areas. The mechanisms for calculating and allocating the RSG are very complex and the Government is currently reviewing how this is done.

Best Value and Service Delivery

Over the last two years, the Council has been reviewing how it delivers the main transport services, including professional services and highway maintenance and, in 1999 has out-sourced much of this work to the private sector. It is anticipated that there will be considerable savings which will enable better service levels to be provided for the same amount of money.

Estimates suggest that the efficiency savings in service delivery could be worth up to £1.5m per year.

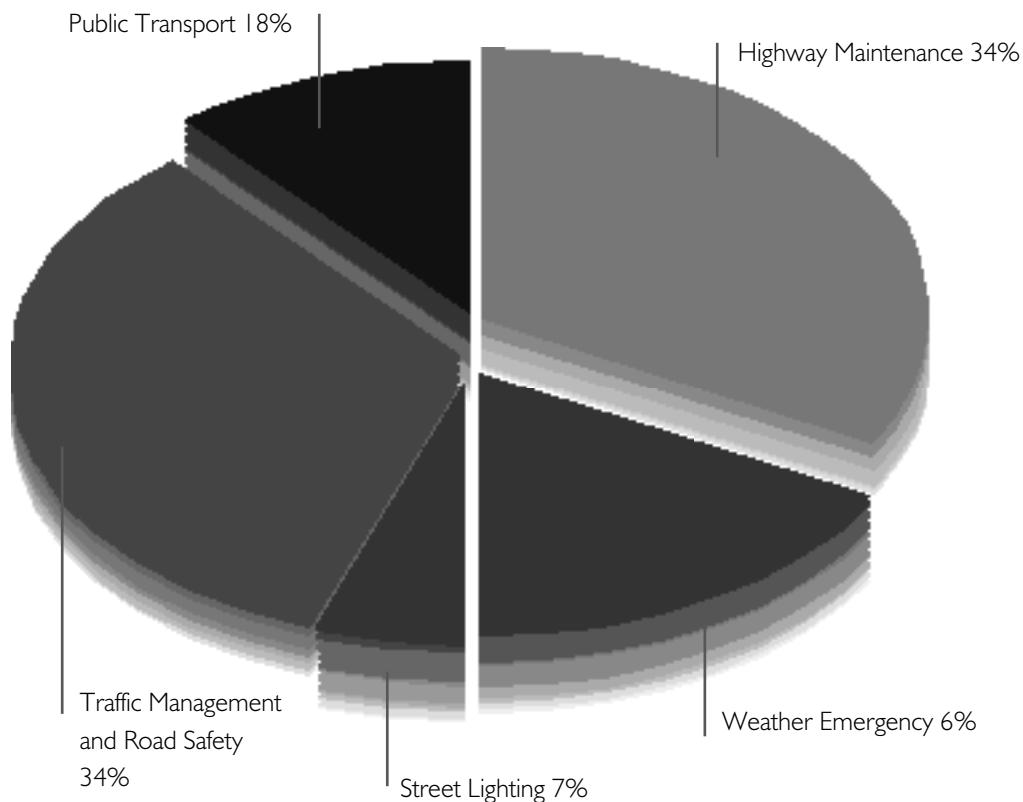
Highways

The County Council receives funding from Government through the RSG for highways maintenance and professional engineering services. Table 8.1.1 shows that the Council has under-spent against its highways SSA which is used in the RSG calculation. This is primarily due to pressing problems in Education and Social Services needing additional funding.

Table 8.1.1: Highway SSA and Budgets 1997-2001 (£m)

Year	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Standard Spending Assessment	16.309	16.437	17.460	19.13
County Council Revenue Budget	13.958	13.991	15.195	15.56
Shortfall	2.351	2.446	2.265	3.624

Figure 8.1.1: Distribution of Transport and Highways Nett Revenue Expenditure 2000/2001



Highway Maintenance

The historic under-spend against SSA is likely to continue into the future but will be offset by efficiency savings resulting from out-sourcing. It will therefore be possible to achieve better maintenance standards with the same resource level.

It should be noted that proposed cuts to the highways maintenance budgets were reversed as a result of information obtained from the 'Peoples Voice' surveys undertaken jointly by County and District Councils and Wiltshire Health Trust. Further details can be found in Chapter 4.

The funds allocated to Highway Maintenance are targeted at maintaining road safety (skidding resistance etc) and supporting the public footpath network to encourage more short trips to be made by foot. This programme accords with local public opinion derived from the Peoples Voice which identified the following priorities for additional expenditure on maintenance:-

- Keeping pavements in good order
- Rural grass cutting of verges
- Highway drainage and gully emptying
- Highway gutter sweeping
- Road signs and markings.

A Network Management Action Plan is currently being prepared to co-ordinate and target future expenditure in line with the Councils priorities to maintain assets and improve conditions for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. It is anticipated that this Action Plan will be developed in parallel with the definitive Local Transport Plan and in consultation with other stake holders.

Table 8.1.2. below highlights the current areas of expenditure for maintenance.

Table 8.1.2 Highways Maintenance Expenditure (£000s)	
Bridges	0.5
Roads - Structural	2.5
Roads - Routine	5.1
Winter/Emergency Weather	1.7
Total	9.8

It should be noted that, in the past, the under-spend on highways maintenance has been supported by borrowing from the Councils own capital programme (normally about £600,000/year). This has meant that less money has been available for capital works in other areas and has had a particular impact on progress on walking, cycling and public transport improvements.

Public Transport

Revenue expenditure is a vital part of the County's Public Transport Strategy. In a largely rural county, infrastructure improvements, while important, will not generally be sufficient to attract increased passengers to the extent where services become commercially viable, and continued revenue subsidy is therefore likely to be required on most routes if service frequencies are to be maintained or improved. In this context, stability of funding is important if the strategy is to be successful, and while this cannot be guaranteed it is hoped that the Local Transport Plan process will permit greater security of revenue funding than has been evident in the past. It is assumed that revenue funding from all sources (including the Rural Bus Subsidy Grant) will remain at 1999-2000 levels throughout the Plan period.

The County Council's public transport revenue budget for 2000-2001 has been set at £1.418m (excluding social services and education transport). Initial proposals to reduce this were reversed as a result of the 'Peoples Voice' survey and a better than expected financial position. In view of this support, there are no planned reductions in public transport revenue expenditure in future years. In addition, the Council has also received £786,000 in Rural Bus Subsidy Grant and a similar amount is expected in the future. District Councils in Wiltshire contribute about £1.0m per year in the form of revenue support and concessionary fares schemes. Table 8.1.3 sets out the forecast revenue funding profile for the public transport across the County over the Plan period.

These funds are targeted at maintaining existing service levels and introducing innovative rural transport schemes to overcome the problems identified in Chapter 3. In particular, the Council will seek to ensure that:-

- Those without access to a car in rural areas are adequately serviced;
- Those with access to a car are encouraged to use public transport as an alternative, particularly for the journey to work;
- Growth in tourism in the County is developed in a sustainable manner, with public transport a real alternative;
- Growth in recreational activity in the countryside is serviced by public transport;
- Partnerships with bus operators ensure best value in service delivery;
- Socially necessary services in urban and rural areas are supported; and
- Maximum advantage is taken of other funding sources.

Public Transport Growth Items

To support the development of the LTP, the Council will seek to increase the availability of Revenue funds for Public Transport. In particular, the following growth item bids have been identified:-

- **WWSTS:** rail enhancement 'pump priming' subsidy; £350k per year
- **School Transport:** additional home to school bus subsidy; £100k per year

Source	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06
WCC	1157	1231	1418	1418	1418	1418	1418	1418
Rural Bus Subsidy Grant	786	786	786	786	786	786	786	786
Rural Bus Challenge	41	188	303	206	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown
District Councils	746	1018	1062	1062	1062	1062	1062	1062
Total	2730	3223	3569	3472	3266	3266	3266	3266

Other Services

To complement the maintenance and public transport proposals and funding strategies set out above, the Council will continue to invest in high quality professional advice and to manage existing assets in line with Government objectives.

Traffic Management Services are particularly important in ensuring safety of the travelling public and in encouraging alternatives to the car. The County Council's Traffic Services, Transportation, Development Control, Rights of Way and Forward Planning functions all contribute to the achievement of the overarching objectives for transport.

The Traffic Management section deals with a number of smaller scale issues which compliment and develop at the local level the wider strategies for public transport and maintenance, including:-

- Road traffic regulations;
- Monitoring of road safety;
- Road safety education, training and publicity;
- Implementation of minor works (including traffic calming, speed limits, cycling and walking schemes funded by revenue);
- Local safety schemes; and
- Maintenance of signals and street lighting.

8.2 PRIORITY REVENUE INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

The County Council's priorities for revenue investment will be targeted to support the objectives for transport set out earlier in this Plan. The forward programme for revenue expenditure is set out in Table 8.2.1.

Table 8.2.1 County Council Revenue Support (£m's)

Item	99/00 Budget	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05
Maintenance	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8
Public Transport	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Traffic Management	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2
Other Services	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2
Sub Total	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7
Additional Revenue Support Sources						
Item	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05
Rural Bus Subsidy	0.786	0.786	0.786	0.786	0.786	0.786
Rural Bus Challenge	0.041	0.188	0.303	0.206	-	-
District Councils	0.746	1.018	1.062	1.062	1.062	1.062
Sub Total	1.573	1.992	2.151	2.054	1.848	1.848
County Council Growth Proposals						
Growth Item	99/00 Budget	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05
WWSTS rail subsidy	-	-	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35
School Transport	-	-	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10
Sub Total	-	-	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45
Total	18.273	18.692	19.301	19.204	18.998	18.998