

Local Transport Capital Settlement 2007-2008

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr Douglas Alexander): Today I am announcing a package of funding of £3 billion to improve local transport outside London. It builds on last year's settlement of £1.6bn to ensure that 122 local transport authorities, including the six Passenger Transport Authorities are allocated a total of £8 billion over the five years of the Local Transport Plan period.

This capital funding is in addition to the £3 billion made available in Regional Funding Allocations for local authority major schemes and Highways Agency schemes of regional significance over the next four years.

This is the first local transport settlement since local authorities reviewed the delivery of their first five year plans and produced the final versions of their second five year local transport plans.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate local authorities on their good performance over the course of the first five year plans. I have been very impressed with the improvement in delivery of transport services during this period. There has been sustained progress, for example, in reducing local road casualties and in the condition of many local roads. Authorities have made substantial investment to manage traffic more effectively and reduce its adverse impacts on residents, town centres and the environment more generally. In many areas, better infrastructure for buses, cyclists and pedestrians has been put in place and transport is making a contribution to more sustainable development and economic growth. Examples of local authority achievement throughout the country are highlighted in a recent report by Atkins which has been placed in the Libraries of the House, and is also available at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_localtrans/documents/divisionhomepage/032393.hcsp

Local authorities have also taken the opportunity to make substantial improvements in the quality of the provisional plans submitted last year. 21 authorities have been assessed as having produced excellent plans. Today's announcement clearly demonstrates our commitment to building upon the successes already achieved.

Alongside this year's settlement we have also issued financial planning guidelines for a specific road safety grant set up as part of the move to integrate safety cameras into the wider road safety delivery process from 1 April 2007. This funding represents a long term commitment to fund further improvements in road safety and provides local authorities and their partners with the flexibility to implement a locally agreed mix of road safety measures that will deliver the greatest reductions in road casualties in their area.

Details of the 2007/08 allocations and assessments made of authorities' performance and a report on the delivery of the first Local Transport Plans have been placed in the Libraries of the House, and are also available at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_localtrans/documents/divisionhomepage/032393.hcsp