

**TO: EXECUTIVE  
14 MARCH 2017**

**HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE WORKS PROGRAMME 2017-21  
Director of Environment, Culture & Communities**

**1 PURPOSE OF DECISION**

- 1.1 The Council as part of its overall budget allocation makes provision for highway maintenance schemes. The funding is then targeted according to highway condition. In order to ensure most effective use of resource and the early booking of the plant and equipment, approval is sought annually to approve the targeting of funding to a those roads identified on a rolling list as being in greatest need. The most recent assessment prioritises the works for the next four years as per Annex 1.
- 1.2 Approval is sought to target the available budget against schemes in this list as the priority for spending for 2017/18 so far as the total budget allows.

**2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That the budget for 2017-18 be targeted at the four year indicative Highway Maintenance Works Programme as set out in Annex 1 having due regard to the priority, availability of road space and available budget.**

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 The proposals in this report therefore identify the priority work across the network to maintain the highway in as good a condition as resources allow, having due regard to the Council's intervention policy based on condition as set out in the Local Transport Plan.

**4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 The proposals seek to effect works according to priority based on an assessment of condition that also reflects general safety. It is essential to have a large range of schemes is essential in order to minimise delay and maximise operational efficiencies. The Annex represents a continual 4 year rolling programme and is updated annually. Given the current financial position the Council faces and the reducing spend on highway maintenance, it would not be appropriate to allocate resources to anything other than that identified through a methodical and objective needs assessment.

**5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 5.1 The 2017/18 budget includes £1.637m for the non-routine highway maintenance schemes. This is the level of funding provided via the Department for Transport's (DfT) Highway Maintenance Capital Funding which is a reduction on last year. This funding allocation is not ring fenced and could in theory be spent according to local needs. However, the clear expectation is that it is used for the purpose intended.
- 5.2 The DfT now also awards Council's further funding based on their 'efficiency' assessments. Councils will be graded in three bands following completion of a self-assessment questionnaire and those in the higher bands will receive, on a sliding scale, up to 100% of the available additional funding based on the assessment of our

## Unrestricted

bid. In Bracknell's case the maximum we can expect under this process is £127,000 in the financial year 2017/18.

- 5.3 There is an additional £228,000 from the Council's own capital programme by way of capitalised revenue for road maintenance and street lighting. This funding is generally used for the schemes within the estates and for footpaths.
- 5.4 The Council also makes additional provision in its revenue budget. The sum included in the 2017/18 budget proposals is circa £2.4m. This is used for routine maintenance purposes on bridges , roads , paths and cycleways, drainage, street lighting, winter service and our 24/7 emergency event response service.
- 5.5 Even with this level of funding, the level of maintenance demand far exceeds available budgets. Accordingly funding has to be targeted. The Local Transport Plan defines how we prioritise spend according to an assessment of need having regard to the condition of the asset. Annex 1 sets out the results of that objective assessment according to road type.
- 5.6 The nature of the actual work in any given street can only be fully defined and costed once a more detailed survey has been undertaken. The form of treatment ultimately decided for each road will be the most appropriate for the nature and category of the road to ensure the most cost effective use of available budgets and preserve the useful life of the structure. On the A, B and C roads we generally use what are known as heavy duty inlays. These include the hot laid materials such as Hot Rolled Asphalts and Stone Mastic Asphalts. These are more expensive than the materials that we can use on the unclassified roads where we tend to use cold laid micro asphalt overlay treatments.
- 5.7 At this stage in the process the costings have to be considered 'indicative'. The list is therefore no more than a statement of intent subject to the funds. In addition whilst the need to do the works may have been identified at times the ability to do it is restricted because of other plans for the network. Where possible we try to co-ordinate activity in order to minimise local disruption but also to try to avoid new surfacing being dug up shortly after it has been laid. For such reasons works to some streets have to be deferred but they remain on the Programme and are carried forward into next year's plan.
- 5.8 Within the overall budget we plan to continue with our programme to maintain our bridge assets and protect sites where vehicle excursions could potentially occur giving rise to high risk of injury to others.
- 5.9 This report focuses mainly on the investment in the road surface. Members will also be aware that we are currently replacing all the existing street lighting lanterns with LED lanterns connected to a central management system. This project is funded through an 'invest to save' bid approved by Council. As part of this programme we will continue to replace life-expired concrete street lighting columns at sites throughout the Borough.
- 5.10 All works are procured through contracts which have been secured through competitive tendering.
- 5.10 The recommendation seeks approval to commit the budget as a whole. If approved the practice has not been to seek further approval. Ward Members are advised of the planned works in their Ward and the overall progress against budget is reported via the QSR. We need to take this approach and confirm the overall plan and level of

spend now in order to book the necessary plant and other necessary resources. The window of opportunity is tight.

## **6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

### Borough Solicitor

6.1 The Borough Solicitor has no further comments to add to this report.

### Borough Treasurer

6.2 The approved 2017/18 capital programme includes budgets for Highway Maintenance works as stated in paragraph 5.1. Spend against these budgets will be monitored on a monthly basis and reported on in line with the 2017/18 capital budget monitoring timetable

### Equalities Impact Assessment

6.3 There are no Equality Impact Issues.

### Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.4 Should the Council fail to maintain the highway network to minimum standards, then the risk of litigation increases.

## **7 CONSULTATION**

### Principal Groups Consulted

7.1 Not applicable. The works proposed reflect actual conditions.

### Method of Consultation

7.2 Not applicable.

### Representations Received

7.3 Not applicable.

### Contacts for further information

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