

**TO: EXECUTIVE
12 MARCH 2019**

**HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE WORKS PROGRAMME 2019-20
Executive Director: Delivery**

1 PURPOSE OF DECISION

- 1.1 The Council makes provision for highway maintenance schemes as part of its overall budget allocation. 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 budget against schemes in this list as the priority for spending for 2019/20 so far as the total budget allows.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the budget for 2019/20 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 identify the priorities across the entire network. The schemes seek to ensure the Council maintains 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 prioritise 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 in order to minimise delay and maximise operational efficiencies. Annex 1 represents a four year rolling programme that 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 2019/20 budget includes £1.369m for the non-routine highway maintenance schemes. This is the level of funding provided via the Department for Transport's Highway Maintenance Capital Funding. Last year we were also awarded £1.369m. 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 awards Council's further funding based on their 'efficiency' assessments. Council's are graded in three bands following completion of a self-assessment questionnaire and those in the higher bands will receive, on a sliding

Unrestricted

scale, up to 100% of the available additional funding. In Bracknell's case the maximum we can expect under this process is £285k in the financial year 2019/20.

- 5.3 There is an additional £200k from the Council's own capital programme by way of capitalised revenue for road maintenance and street lighting. This funding is generally used to support the schemes within the estates and for footpaths.
- 5.4 The Council also make additional provision in its revenue budget. The sum included in the 2019/20 proposals is circa £2.4m. This is used for routine and reactive maintenance purposes on all our highway network assets, our winter service and our 24/7 emergency event response service.
- 5.5 The total funding for highway maintenance funds is therefore expected to be in the order of £4.277m. This compares to a spend of £4.169m in 2018/19. Even with this level of funding, the level of maintenance demand far exceeds the available budgets. Accordingly funding has to be targeted. The Local Transport Plan defines how we prioritise spending 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 will vary and will only be fully defined once a more detailed survey has been undertaken. The form of treatment for each road will be the most appropriate for the nature and category of the individual 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 Asphalt and Stone Mastic Asphalts. These are more expensive than the materials we can use on 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 be noted at times the ability to do the work 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 All works are procured through our 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 ECC QSR. We need to continue to take this approach in order to confirm the overall plan to Ringway and thereby determine the 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 2019/20 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 2019/20 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.

Contact for further information

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