

**TO: EXECUTIVE
11 MARCH 2014**

**HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE WORKS PROGRAMME 2014 - 15
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 as per Annex 1.
- 1.2 Approval is sought to target the budget against schemes in this list as the priority for spending for 2014/15 so far as the total budget allows.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the budget for 2014-15 be targeted at the indicative Highway Maintenance Works Programme as set out in Annex 1.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To meet the Council's Local Transport Targets and improve the condition of the highway network in pursuance of the Council's Medium Term Objectives.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 No alternative options are appropriate. The proposals seek to effect works according to priority needs based on an assessment of condition that also reflects general safety. The need to have a large range of schemes is essential in order to minimise delay and maximise operational efficiencies. The Annex is updated annually.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The 2014/15 budget includes £1.533m for the non routine highway maintenance schemes. This is the level of funding provided via the Local Transport Plan (LTP) capital allocation along with a further £228k from the Council's own capital programme by way of capitalised revenue for road maintenance and street lighting. This is the funding we use for the schemes as indicated in Annex 1.
- 5.2 The LTP money 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. The revenue budget is used for basic maintenance purposes mainly related to ensuring safety to the users.
- 5.3 The level of maintenance demand far exceeds available budgets. Accordingly funding has to be targeted and, as per the LTP, we prioritise spend according to an assessment of need having regard to the condition of the asset. The deterioration evident in many streets as a direct result of the unusually severe wet weather has been taken into account in the selection process.

- 5.4 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. At this stage in the process the costings have to be considered 'indicative'. The list is therefore no more than a statement of intention 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. Such streets remain on the programme and are carried forward into next year's plan.
- 5.5 Within the overall budget we plan to continue with our programme to strengthen bridge parapets and protect sites where railway incursions could potentially occur via the LTP, capital and revenue budgets. Again it should be noted that sometimes it is found that once exposed it is evident that supporting elements have to be strengthened; accordingly we can only come forward with an indicative list.
- 5.6 Whilst this report focuses on the road surface we will be continuing to replace life-expired concrete street lighting columns at sites throughout the Borough.
- 5.7 All works are procured through our contracts which have been secured through competitive tendering. The one area of risk to the overall programme is the potential cost to repair the Bagshot Road between Coral Reef and the Opladen Way/Ringmead junction. The nature of the work here is extensive and will require a considerable amount of work to deal with the ongoing damage being caused to the road foundation due to the high water table. The cost of this work is not yet known.
- 5.8 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 2014/15 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 2014/15 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

Steve Loudoun

Chief Officer: Environment & Public protection

01344 352501

steve.loudoun@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Anthony Radford-Foley

Head of Highways Asset Management

01344 351904

anthony.radford-foley@bracknell-forest.gov.uk