

Title of Report:	Five Year Highway and Footway Improvement Programmes	Item 12
Report to be considered by:	Executive	
Forward Plan Ref:	EX0716	

Corporate Plan Priority:	S5 – Ensuring that the street environment is clean, well maintained and safe
	S8 – Improving transportation
The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Corporate Plan priority by:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the Street Environment is clean, well maintained and safe • Improving Transportation 	

Purpose of Report:

To present the draft five year highway and footway improvement programmes for consideration by Members.

Recommended Action:

That the Executive approve the highway improvement programme for the period 2005-2010 and the footway improvement programme for the period 2004-2009.

Reason for decision to be taken:

The highway improvement programme is a requirement of the Council's Local Transport Plan.

List of other options considered:

Not applicable.

Key background documentation:

- West Berkshire Local Transport Plan 2001-2006
- Local Transport Plan Annual Progress Report

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Implications

Policy:

The programmes meet the requirements of the Council's Local Transport Plan.

Financial:

The highway improvement programme will be funded from existing revenue and capital budgets. Capital projects are highlighted in bold within Appendix A. The footway improvement programme will be funded from the capital budget.

Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council's Highway Maintenance Strategy for 2001-2006 is described in detail in the Local Transport Plan with updates provided in each Annual Progress Report. This strategy sets out key objectives for the Council which include highway inspection, road signs and street lighting performance targets aimed at bringing about an improvement in the condition of the roads in West Berkshire. The strategy also includes for the provision of an on going five-year highway improvement programme.
- 1.2 At its meeting on 8 November 2001, the Executive approved the first five-year highway improvement programme but requested that an updated report is submitted annually on a rolling basis. The purpose of this report is to present the latest draft programme for consideration and approval.

2. Five Year Highway Improvement Programme

- 2.1 The programme detailed in Appendix 14 (a) has been compiled using the results of technical surveys on the principal classified (A roads), non-principal classified (B, C and D roads) and unclassified road networks.
- 2.2 Since 2002, the Council embarked on a comprehensive programme of annual testing to determine the condition of its highway network and establish Best Value data for BV 96 (Condition of Principal Roads), BV 97a (Condition of non-principal roads) and BV97b (Condition of unclassified roads).
- 2.3 For 2004 there was a national requirement that the Deflectograph survey was replaced by the TRACS survey to measure the condition of the principal road network. Whereas Deflectograph surveys gave an indication of structural integrity, the TRACS survey measures parameters relating to the road surface condition, for example, profile, rutting, surface texture and cracking. As a result of this, the highway improvement programme has been refreshed using the 2003-2004 TRACS data. With the visual condition data collected for BV 97, the programme now represents an objective overview of the condition of the road network in West Berkshire.
- 2.4 To gain optimum effectiveness, the 'planer patching' improvements undertaken during 2004-05 will receive a proprietary surface dressing treatment the following year and have been included in the programme which may appear to be duplication as the same road name may appear in successive years.
- 2.5 The programme covers the period 2005-06 through to 2009-10 inclusive. For each of the five years a schedule of roads requiring treatment is provided in alphabetical order by parish or town. The programme is based on the assumption that budgets remain the same, in real terms, for future years. Any increase or reduction in either revenue or capital budgets will affect the programme. The capital schemes are highlighted in bold text. Typically these projects will range in value from £50,000 to £500,000. The smaller revenue funded projects range from £5,000 to £50,000 in value.
- 2.6 A variety of different surface treatments will be utilised, depending on the type and location of each road being resurfaced. This can vary from 'slurry sealing' (a thin bituminous layer applied to the road surface) on minor estate roads, through to complete reconstruction. A significant number of the roads will be resurfaced using noise reducing asphalts.

- 2.7 Whilst this five year highway improvement programme sets out the resurfacing projects managed by the Highways and Engineering service, it does not include minor carriageway patching repairs.
- 2.8 From time to time, circumstances do change which may necessitate alterations to the programme. In addition to budget variations such circumstances may include utility activities, new technical data or severe weather conditions resulting in the necessity to re-prioritise some schemes. It may be possible to bring some schemes forward in the event of developer contributions becoming available or if the scheme can be included as part of another project funded from the Council's capital programme.
- 2.9 In line with the Council's agreed policy, any road included in the programme for resurfacing and having road humps will have those humps replaced with smaller, speed cushions. Such locations are marked with an asterisk in Appendix 14(a).
- 2.10 Details of the annual programmes are widely distributed to all local Councils and Ward Members. Regularly updated information is also included on the Council's website.
- 2.11 The programme for 2004-05 has recently been completed within budget and included 66 highway improvement projects. These projects included the A4 at Woolhampton and Midgham, A338 at Great Shefford and Newtown Road North, Newbury as well as numerous unclassified roads.

3. Ten Year Plan for Transport

- 3.1 The highway maintenance strategy described in the Council's Local Transport Plan has been developed to accord with the Government's initiative of arresting the decline in the condition of local roads by 2004 as part of its Ten Year Plan for Transport. The data collected in West Berkshire since 2002 has produced a steady improvement in both BV 96 and BV 97(a) results and this positive progress was reported in our 2003-04 Annual Progress Report.
- 3.2 For the unclassified network (BV97(b)), 25% of the network is surveyed each year and when full coverage has been achieved in 2006, officers will be in a position to ascertain whether the overall condition of the unclassified road network is improving. Early indications are that our targeted approach is working as there has been a considerable reduction (from 50.21% in 2002-03 to 33.5% in 2003-04) in the length of road requiring repair, as defined by BV 97.

4. Five Year Footway Programme

- 4.1 Following the successful completion of a consultation exercise with all Parish Councils in January 2004 and in combination with correspondence received from stakeholders including Members and the public, a draft five year footway improvement programme has now been developed. This forms part of the overall capital programme for highways and transport and includes the provision of new footways where required as well as major improvement works to existing footways. It does not include maintenance of the existing footway network, which is funded from revenue budgets.
- 4.2 The schemes have been prioritised taking account of strategic importance, estimated cost, potential demand, cost of land acquisition, volume and speed of traffic using a rating system previously approved by Members.

- 4.3 As with highway schemes referred to previously it may be possible to bring some footway projects forward in the event of developer contributions becoming available or if the scheme can be included as part of another project funded from the Council's capital programme.

Appendices

Appendix 14(a) – Five year highway improvement programme.

Appendix 14(b) – Five year footway improvement programme.

Consultation Responses

Local Stakeholders:	Consultation is not undertaken for the highways programme as it is based on technical surveys. However all Parish Councils have been consulted in respect of the footway programme.
Officers Consulted:	Melvyn May, Derek Crouch.
Trade Union:	Not sought at this stage.