

Individual Executive Member Decision

Title of Report:	Three Year Highway Improvement Programme 2012/13 - 2014/15
Report to be considered by:	Individual Executive Member Decision
Date on which Decision is to be taken:	8/03/2012
Forward Plan Ref:	ID2416

Purpose of Report: To present the Three Year Highway Improvement Programme for consideration by the Executive Member for Highways, Transport (Operational), ICT and Customer Services.

Recommended Action: That the Executive Member for Highways, Transport (Operational), ICT & Customer Services approves the Three Year Highway Improvement Programme for the period 2012/13 - 2014/15.

Reason for decision to be taken: The Three Year Highway Improvement Programme is a requirement of the Council's Local Transport Plan

Other options considered: None

Key background documentation: West Berkshire Local Transport Plan 2011 - 2026
Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management 'Well-maintained Highways'
Transport Infrastructure Assets Code 'Guidance to Support Asset Management, Financial Management and Reporting'

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor David Betts - Tel (0118) 942 2485
E-mail Address:	dbetts@westberks.gov.uk

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Melvyn May
Job Title:	Highways Manager
Tel. No.:	01635 519873
E-mail Address:	mmay@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

Policy:	The programme meets the requirements of the Council's Local Transport Plan 2011 - 2026 in that maintenance of the road network is not being considered in isolation. Many other transport policy links will be achieved in areas such as road safety, safer routes to school and cycling. The programme contributes towards the Council's Strategic Priority of Promoting a Vibrant District.
Financial:	The highway improvement programme will be funded from existing capital budgets.
Personnel:	None arising from this report
Legal/Procurement:	None arising from this report
Environmental:	None arising from this report
Property:	The public highway is an important and valuable asset. Failure to maintain it will devalue the asset and conflict with the Government's aim to implement Highway Asset Management and Whole Life Accounting.
Risk Management:	Failure to maintain the asset will affect availability, value, safety and the Council's ability to meet its legal duty to maintain a safe network under the Highways Act 1980.
Equalities Impact Assessment:	Failure to maintain the roads in West Berkshire will affect all users equally.

Consultation Responses

Members:	
Leader of Council:	Councillor Graham Jones supports the recommendations of the report.
Overview & Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman:	Councillor Brian Bedwell is in agreement with the proposals within the report.
Ward Members:	All Members were consulted on 27 January 2012. Alan Macro was pleased Church St, Blossom Lane and Station Road were in the programme but was disappointed that Blossom Ave and The Crescent had been dropped. An explanation why was provided.
Opposition Spokesperson:	Councillor Keith Woodham requested the inclusion of the Rivers Estate, Thatcham. A detailed response was provided confirming that the condition data did not support the inclusion of this estate at this present time.
Local Stakeholders:	Consultation is not formally undertaken as the programme is based on objective data from technical surveys. However, any comments received from stakeholders during the previous 12 month period are considered and all local Councillors and Town and Parish Clerks are advised of

scheme details in advance of work commencing. The full programme will also be published on the Council's website.

Officers Consulted: Jon Winstanley, Mark Edwards, Paul Clements.

Trade Union: Not applicable

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position		<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months		<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>
Report is to note only		<input type="checkbox"/>

Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council's approach to highway maintenance and asset management is described in the Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2026 (LTP) and the Council's Highway Asset Management Plan which is due to be published on the 1 April 2012.
- 1.2 Highway maintenance and improvement is one of the six local transport goals set out in the LTP. The LTP also shows how this goal and the Council's sustainable approach helps to address other key issues identified in the plan such as safer travel, minimising the impact on the environment and improving accessibility. The LTP confirms that the Council will continue to operate a rolling highway improvement programme refreshed annually through it's supporting Implementation Plan.
- 1.3 There is approximately 1260km of public highway in West Berkshire (more than Reading and Wokingham combined) comprising 116km of A roads, 75km of B roads, 422km of C roads and 648km of unclassified roads. As a consequence, maintenance of the road network presents real challenges, however, by adopting an asset management approach, the Highways and Transport service is now able to identify and treat roads at the right time so as to maximise design life at minimum cost. This approach has enabled the Council to maintain the condition of the classified road network at 5% (A roads) and 9% (B and C Roads) respectively in need of immediate intervention. The condition of the unclassified network is 11% in need of immediate intervention.
- 1.4 Following the period of sub-zero temperatures and snowfall during November and December 2011, additional funding was made available by the DfT in the form of a £913,000 grant. As a result of this additional external funding, it was possible to carry out the necessary essential repairs to the worst sections of snow damaged road across the District in 2011/12.

- 1.5 The Three Year Highway Improvement Programme has been developed in accordance with Highway Asset Management principles as detailed in the Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management 'Well-maintained Highways' and the Transport Infrastructure Assets Code 'Guidance to Support Asset Management, Financial Management and Reporting'. Following a successful Member Development Session on the 14 November 2011 on highway maintenance and asset management, the Council's asset management framework will be formally published on the 1 April 2012.
- 1.6 In accordance with the requirements of the Transport Infrastructure Assets Code, the 3 Year Highway Improvement Programme (structural repair, resurfacing, machine patching, surface dressing, slurry seals and other micro asphalts) is fully funded from the Capital programme.
- 1.7 The purpose of this report is to present the latest draft 2012/13 – 2014/15 Three Year Highway Improvement and Machine Patching Programmes and gain approval to proceed with the 2012/13 Highway Improvement Programme.
- 1.8 As part of the consultation process, a copy of the draft report and a map of West Berkshire highlighting the roads included in the Three Year Highway Improvement Programme will be displayed in the Members room.

2. Programme Development

- 2.1 The Three Year Highway Improvement Programme detailed in Appendix A has been compiled using the results of technical surveys on the principal classified (A roads), non-principal classified (B and C roads) and unclassified (D and U roads).
- 2.2 Since 2002, the Highways and Transport service has been carrying out a comprehensive programme of annual testing to determine the condition of the highway network and establish the Government's defined data sets for the condition of the principal classified, non-principal classified and unclassified road networks and skid resistance. For 2012/13, the national data sets are defined as follows:
 - 130 – 01 Condition of Principal Roads
 - 130 – 02 Condition of Non Principal Roads
 - 130 – 03 SCRIM (Side-way force Coefficient Routine Investigation Machine)
 - 130 – 04 Carriageway work completed.
- 2.3 Whilst there is no national requirement to report on the unclassified network, the Council continues to survey the unclassified network annually in order to establish its condition for the purpose of developing appropriate programmes of repair in accordance with current asset management guidance.
- 2.4 The condition of the classified network (A, B and C class roads) is measured using SCANNER (Surface Condition Assessment for the National Network of Roads) which was introduced in 2003/04. In 2010, SCANNER was introduced to measure the condition of the unclassified road network. Prior to this date, the condition of the unclassified road network was measured using CVI (Course Visual Inspection). All surveys are performed in accordance with national standards and guidance.

- 2.5 The skid resistance of the classified network is measured using SCRIM (Side-way force Coefficient Routine Investigation Machine). Using SCRIM and wet injury accident data, skid deficient sites have been identified and programmed accordingly and these are shown in bold within the programme
- 2.6 Details of the survey methodology, coverage and the Council's approach to highway asset management are described in LTP3 and in detail within the Council's Asset Management Plan (to be published April 2012). A brief summary of the methodology is provided in the following paragraphs.
- 2.7 The road maintenance approach adopted by the Council has been to tackle stretches of road that in terms of their condition, are showing as 'amber' in order to bring them back to 'green'. 'Red' areas are maintained in a safe condition and subject to their size, are either repaired under a separate patching programme or as part of a larger highway improvement project. This approach aligns with the guidance given in the Code of Practice on Transport/Infrastructure Assets and delivers better value for money in the medium/long term for any defined level of service or condition. In fact, this approach has already resulted in improvements across the range of performance indicators demonstrating that West Berkshire Council is achieving good value for money in respect of its investment in highway maintenance.
- 2.8 The traffic light system of red, amber and green is a methodology adopted to categorise roads based on survey data relating to surface texture, cracking, rut depth and ride quality.

3. Three Year Highway Improvement programme 2012/13 – 2014/15

- 3.1 The programme provided in Appendix A covers the period 2012/13 through to 2014/15 inclusive. For each of the three years a schedule of roads requiring treatment is provided in alphabetical order by parish or town. The programme has been developed using cost estimates and a provisional annual capital budget of £4.1m. This comprises £2.2m LTP Government Grant, £1.5m of capitalised revenue and £400k (to be confirmed) of programme efficiency saving from the Council's Term Contractor, Volker Highways. It is important to note that it may be necessary to make changes to the programme once detailed costs, budgets and savings have been established.
- 3.2 A range of different surface treatments will be used, depending on the type and location of each road being resurfaced. This can vary from 'micro asphalts' (a thin bituminous layer applied to the road surface) on minor estate and rural roads, surface dressing (sometimes referred to as 'tar and chippings') in rural areas through to resurfacing (overlay and inlay) and complete reconstruction. Where pre-treatment is required to strengthen the road, for example deep machine patching, in order to gain optimum effectiveness and value for money, these will normally receive a proprietary surface dressing treatment the following year. This preventative maintenance approach is important in order to maintain the condition and value of the highway network within West Berkshire.
- 3.3 For skid deficient sites, it should be noted that they may not display any of the normal visible defects like rutting, cracking, lamination and potholes. Treatments would include surface dressing, micro asphalt and retexturing (an abrasive

treatment that restores texture to the existing surface). The skid deficient sites are shown in bold text.

- 3.4 Wherever possible, roads in residential areas will be resurfaced using materials that exhibit low surface noise when trafficked. In addition, every effort will be made to use local and recycled materials in order to contribute towards the Council's key Strategic Priority of Protecting the Environment.
- 3.5 In line with the Council's agreed policy, any road included in the programme for resurfacing which has road humps will have those humps replaced with smaller, speed cushions. The opportunity will also be taken, where appropriate, to review any existing traffic management arrangements where a road is scheduled for resurfacing. This will usually involve consultation with local residents, Ward Members and the Town or Parish Council.
- 3.6 Details of the annual programmes are widely distributed to all local Town and Parish Councils and Ward Members. Regularly updated information is also available on the Council's website under 'Transport and Streets'.

4. Supplementary Information (Approval not required).

- 4.1 A further schedule of roads requiring targeted machine patching repairs has also been provided in alphabetical order by parish or town as detailed in Appendix B. The programme for 2012/13 has been developed using cost estimates and a provisional capital budget of £250k. In setting priorities, consideration has been given to condition, repair history and accidents. It may be necessary to make changes to the programme once detailed costs and budgets have been established.
- 4.2 In addition to the above highway improvements, other network, transport and safety related schemes are delivered by Highways and Transport through the Local Transport Plan and the Capital Programme and these are scheduled in Appendix C. Again the programme has been developed using cost estimates.

5. Programme Changes

- 5.1 From time to time, circumstances change which may necessitate alterations to the programme. Such circumstances may include unforeseen circumstances on site, utility activities, excessive demand on contractors and/or materials, new technical data or accelerated deterioration as a result of severe weather conditions. In the event that a programmed scheme has to be deferred, where appropriate, a suitable replacement site will be selected from the programme in agreement with the Executive Member for Highways, Transport (Operational), ICT and Customer Services.

Appendices

Appendix A – 3 Year Highway Improvement Programme 2012/13 – 2014/15
Appendix B – 2012/13 Machine Patching Programme
Appendix C – Local Transport Plan & Capital Programme
Appendix D - Equality Impact Assessment Stage 1