

Title of Report:	Re-profiling of Highways and Transport Capital Programme
Report to be considered by:	Council
Date of Meeting:	14 May 2013
Forward Plan Ref:	Urgent

Purpose of Report: To seek approval for re-profiling of the Highways and Transport capital budget allocation.

Recommended Action: That Council approve this proposal.

Reason for decision to be taken: To ensure that the additional schedule of failed road surfaces reported by the Highways and Transport Service is included in the 2013/14 Highway Improvement Programme.

Other options considered: Reducing the number of schemes to fit the available budget.

Key background documentation: Highway Asset Management Plan
Local Transport Plan 2011-2026

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priority:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSP2 – Promoting a vibrant district
The proposals will also help achieve the following Council Strategy principles:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSP6 - Living within our means
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSP9 - Doing what's important well

Portfolio Member Details	
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Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	30 th April 2013

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Implications

- Policy:** Road maintenance is a priority for the Council.
- Financial:** If this is to be funded from within the existing 5 year highways capital programme it would be necessary to reduce the highways capital maintenance programme by £345,000 per year in 2014/15 to 2018/19 to £1,162,000 per year. The effect on revenue funding of capital would be an increase in total revenue spend of £153,000 in 2014/15. The planned increase in revenue spend will then be lower by £38,000 each year from 2015/16 to 2018/19 so that the total revenue spend in 2018/19 will be in line with the existing forecast.
- Personnel:** n/a
- Legal/Procurement:** There are no legal implications. The additional work will be procured through the Highway Term Contract 2006-2016.
- Property:** n/a
- Risk Management:** The risks are addressed within the report.

Is this item relevant to equality?	Please tick relevant boxes	Yes	No
Does the policy affect service users, employees or the wider community and:			
• Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Will the policy have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to an area with known inequalities?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Outcome (Where one or more 'Yes' boxes are ticked, the item is relevant to equality)			
Relevant to equality - Complete an EIA available at www.westberks.gov.uk/eia			<input type="checkbox"/>
Not relevant to equality			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" 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 checked="" 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"/>

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 There is approximately 1260km of public highway in West Berkshire (more than Reading and Wokingham combined). As a consequence, maintenance of the road network presents real challenges. Using an asset management approach, the Highways and Transport service is able to treat roads at the right time using the available budget so as to achieve best value.
- 1.2 Annual road condition surveys were undertaken in Autumn 2012 and based on this data, the 2013/14 Annual Highway Improvement programme was developed and subsequently approved by Individual Decision on 5 March 2013.
- 1.3 However, following prolonged periods of rainfall in November and December 2012 and snowfall and freezing conditions in January 2013, the road network rapidly deteriorated with a consequent increase in requests from Members of the public for safety repairs to be completed together with a rise in claims against the Council for vehicle damage.
- 1.4 An additional list of roads requiring treatment was therefore drawn up. The cost of resurfacing these roads was estimated to be £1.39m.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 The circumstances described above led Officers to conclude that there were two options to consider. Firstly, to work within the existing budget by reducing the number of schemes in the approved programme in order to accommodate the additional roads or secondly, to bring forward capital funding from future years so that the additional roads can be included in this year's improvement programme.
- 2.2 At a special meeting of the Capital Strategy Group on 26 April 2013, Members considered the business case attached as Appendix A and unanimously agreed to the second option proposed i.e. to bring forward capital funding.

3. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

- 3.1 This item is not relevant to equality.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 That Council agree to £1.39m of highways capital funding being brought forward to 2013/14 from the years 2014/15 - 2017/18.

Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Highway maintenance and improvement is one of the six local transport goals set out in the Local Transport Plan (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 its supporting Implementation Plan.
- 1.2 During the period December 2012 to January 2013, a full and detailed analysis was undertaken across the West Berkshire road network using the most current survey data to establish the condition of the local network. From this analysis, the 2013/14 Annual Highway Improvement Programme was developed and produced in line with the highway asset management principles as detailed in the Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management 'Well-maintained Highways', the Transport Infrastructure Assets Code 'Guidance to Support Asset Management, Financial Management and Reporting' and the Council's approved Highway Asset Management Plan. This programme was approved by Individual Decision on the 5 March 2013 by the Executive Member for Planning, Property, Highways and Transport. In accordance with the requirements of the Transport Infrastructure Assets Code, the Annual Highway Improvement Programme is fully funded from the Capital Programme.
- 1.3 Following prolonged periods of sustained rainfall in November and December 2012 and snowfall and freezing conditions in January 2013, the network suffered further damage in addition to the deterioration identified by the annual surveys and the above analysis. As a consequence, the affected roads do not appear in the approved 2013/14 Annual Highway Improvement Programme or any other ongoing repair programme. However due to the potential safety concerns for highway users and cost of claims, they are considered to be of high priority and in need of imminent repair. A list of these additional schemes is included in the business case at Appendix A.
- 1.4 In addition to the above, some of the road sections listed within the approved 2013/14 Annual Highway Improvement Programme have also suffered further deterioration following the 2012/13 winter period. As a consequence, the current capital budget is insufficient to fund these additional repairs listed in the business case as Appendix B.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 To accommodate the additional roads in the 2013/14 Highway Improvement Programme at a cost of £1.39m, it is proposed that funding is brought forward from each of the four years in the period 2014/15 - 2017/18.
- 2.2 It is recognised that this reduces the funding over the period 2014/15 - 2017/18 to maintain roads to the condition prescribed in the Highway Asset Management Plan. It is considered that given the extreme conditions experienced over last winter and the resulting damage to the local road network, the money needs to be spent this year to restore the affected roads as soon as possible.

2.3 If the roads are not improved this year, the Council will still be required to carry out temporary repairs under its legal obligations. This would not be a good use of highway funds. Much better value for money will be achieved by repairing and resurfacing these roads now.

3. Recommendations

3.1 Council are asked to ratify the conclusion arrived at by the Capital Strategy Board that £1.39m of capital funding is brought forward from the Highways and Transport Programme for spending on road maintenance this year.

Appendices

Appendix A - Business Case for Capital Scheme

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: Parish and Town Councils will be advised of the additional roads to be included in the programme. There will be no consultation as the Programme is based on technical surveys and assessment.

Officers Consulted: Paul Clements, Nick Carter, John Ashworth, Corporate Board

Trade Union: n/a