

Individual Executive Member Decision

Three Year Highway Improvement Programme 2016/17 – 2018/19 – Supporting Information

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 The Three Year Highway Improvement Programme will help achieve the Council Strategy aim: A stronger local economy and priority: Deliver or enable key infrastructure projects in relation to roads, rail, flood prevention, regeneration and the digital economy.
- 1.2 The Council's approach to highway maintenance and asset management is described in the Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2026 (LTP) and the Council's approved Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP).
- 1.3 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 its supporting Implementation Plan.

2. Supporting Information

- 2.1 There is approximately 1280km of public highway in West Berkshire (more than Reading and Wokingham combined) comprising 117km of A roads, 75km of B roads, 396km of C roads and 692km of unclassified U 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 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 and improve the condition of the classified road network at a consistent level since 2009/10.

Programme Development

- 2.2 The Three Year Highway Improvement Programme detailed in Appendix C has been compiled using the results of technical surveys on the principal classified (A roads), non-principal classified (B and C roads) and unclassified (U roads).
- 2.3 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 including skid resistance. For 2016/17, the national data sets are defined as follows and expressed as a % of road length under each class where maintenance should be considered:

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.

- 2.4 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 and best practice. For 2016/17, the local data set is defined as follows and expressed as a % of road length where maintenance should be considered.

BV224b Condition of Unclassified Roads

- 2.5 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 (U roads). 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.
- 2.6 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.
- 2.7 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 Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP). A brief summary of the methodology is provided in the following paragraphs.
- 2.8 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.
- 2.9 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.

Three Year Highway Improvement programme 2016/17 – 2018/19

2.10 The programme provided in Appendix C covers the period 2016/17 – 2018/19 and lists in alphabetical order by parish or town those roads requiring treatment. The programme has been developed using cost estimates and a provisional annual capital budget of £4.05m which may be summarised as follows:

Budget 2016-17	£
DfT Indicative allocation (resurfacing element)	£3.02m
Council Capital Funding	£1.03m
Total	£4.05m

2.11 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.

2.12 In developing the 3 Year Highway Improvement Programme to deliver our set service levels of 5%, 7% and 12% (Principal Classified NI 130-01, Non-principal classified NI 130-02, and unclassified BV224b respectively), the total budget has historically been split 60/40 between the classified and unclassified network in favour of the classified network. Over the last 3 years, this division of funding has enabled us to meet and exceed these service levels, particularly across the classified network and therefore in line with the principles of asset management, the budget has been re-profiled with a 50/50 split to favour the unclassified network for the first year of the 3 Year Highway Improvement Programme. This revised profile will have a positive impact on the condition of the unclassified network, and in particular, the urban residential road network.

2.13 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.

2.14 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.

2.15 Wherever possible, roads in residential and built up 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 corporate aim of promoting a strong local economy through the delivery of key infrastructure improvements in relation to roads.

- 2.16 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.
- 2.17 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 ‘Roads, Transport and Parking’.

Programme Changes

- 2.18 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 (Operations), Emergency Planning and Newbury Vision.

3. Options for Consideration

- 3.1 Please refer to Appendix C – Three Year Highway Improvement Programme for 2016/17 – 2018/19

4. Proposals

The purpose of this report is to present the latest draft 2016/17 – 2018/19 Three Year Highway Improvement and gain approval to proceed with Year 1 of the programme.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The Highway Improvement Programme has been developed in accordance with the Council’s approved Highway Asset Management Plan using surveyed condition data.

Background Papers:

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

- The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval
- Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council
- Delays in implementation could compromise the Council’s position
- Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months
- Item is Urgent Key Decision
- Report is to note only

Wards affected:

- All Wards.
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Strategic Aims and Priorities Supported:

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy aim:

- SLE – A stronger local economy**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priority:

- SLE2 – Deliver or enable key infrastructure improvements in relation to roads, rail, flood prevention, regeneration and the digital economy**
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Officer details:

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Appendix B

Equality Impact Assessment - Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity.

Please complete the following questions to determine whether a Stage Two, Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Name of policy, strategy or function:	Annual Highway Improvement Programme 2016/17
Version and release date of item (if applicable):	N/A
Owner of item being assessed:	Melvyn May
Name of assessor:	Melvyn May
Date of assessment:	08/01/16

Is this a:		Is this:	
Policy	No	New or proposed	n/a
Strategy	No	Already exists and is being reviewed	Yes
Function	No	Is changing	Yes
Service	Yes		

1. What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the policy, strategy function or service and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	To maintain the public highway in a safe and usable condition in compliance with the Councils duty to maintain under the Highways Act 1980.
Objectives:	To maintain the condition of public highway in accordance with the service level set within the Councils level approved Highway Asset Management Plan. To comply with government guidance.
Outcomes:	The Council continues to meet its duty to maintain to highway in a safe and usable condition by undertaking the appropriate works on the network in a timely and cost effective manner.
Benefits:	A well maintained and safe highway network for road users, reduced accidents/claims, safer environment and an effective network to help stimulate movement across the district for the local economy.

<p>2. Note which groups may be affected by the policy, strategy, function or service. Consider how they may be affected, whether it is positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this.</p> <p>(Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.)</p>		
Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this.
Road Users	Highway works affect all users equally; however, provisions will be made on a scheme by scheme basis to ensure that road users are able to negotiate works in a safe and appropriate manner	H & S legislation Chapter 8 Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions
<p>Further Comments relating to the item:</p> <p>No further comments.</p>		

3. Result	
<p>Are there any aspects of the policy, strategy, function or service, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?</p>	No
<p>Please provide an explanation for your answer:</p>	
<p>Will the policy, strategy, function or service have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?</p>	No
<p>Please provide an explanation for your answer:</p> <p>On completion of this programme, the condition of the public highway will be improved for all users.</p>	

If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered ‘yes’ to either of the sections at question 3, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment.

If a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the Equality Impact Assessment guidance and Stage Two template.

4. Identify next steps as appropriate:	
Stage Two required	
Owner of Stage Two assessment:	
Timescale for Stage Two assessment:	

Stage Two not required:	Not Required
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Name: Melvyn May

Date: 08/01/16

Please now forward this completed form to Rachel Craggs, the Principal Policy Officer (Equality and Diversity) for publication on the WBC website.