

# Individual Executive Member Decision

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<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Three Year Highway Improvement Programme 2011/12 - 2013/14</b>
<b>Report to be considered by:</b>	Individual Executive Member Decision
<b>Date on which Decision is to be taken:</b>	10 June 2011
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	ID2266a

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

**Recommended Action:** That the Executive Member for Highways, Transport (Operations) and ICT approves the Three Year Highway Improvement Programme for the period 2011/12 - 2013/14.

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

**Statutory:**  **Non-Statutory:**   
**Other:** The Council has a legal duty to maintain the public highway in a safe and usable condition.

**Other options considered:** N/A

**Key background documentation:** West Berkshire Local Transport Plan 2006 - 2011  
Local Transport Plan Annual Progress Report.  
  
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	
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## Implications

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<b>Policy:</b>	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 Corporate Plan outcome of Better Roads and Transport.
<b>Financial:</b>	The highway improvement programme will be funded from existing capital budgets.
<b>Personnel:</b>	None arising from this report
<b>Legal/Procurement:</b>	None arising from this report
<b>Environmental:</b>	None arising from this report
<b>Partnering:</b>	None arising from this report
<b>Property:</b>	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.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	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.
<b>Community Safety:</b>	None arising from this report
<b>Equalities:</b>	None arising from this report

## Consultation Responses

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### Members:

- Leader of Council:** Cllr. Graham Jones supported and welcomed the recommendations.
- Overview & Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman:** Cllr. Brian Bedwell commented that the overall programme was good.
- Select Committee Chairman:** Cllr. Quentin Webb
- Ward Members:** All Wards are affected and all Members were consulted, the following Members made comments, which have received formal responses and their comments will be taken into account with the updating and expanding of the programme:  
Councillors Barbara Alexander, Pamela Bale, Brian Bedwell, Hilary Cole, Carol Jackson-Doerge, Alan Law, Tony Lindon, Alan Macro, Gwen Mason and Julian Swift-Hook.
- Opposition Spokesperson:** Cllr. Keith Woodhams accepted that there were deadlines that needed to be adhered to, but wished it to be recorded that two days notice was insufficient time for Members to read a document, consult with each other and return comments. In response to this, the consultation period was extended by one week to the 28 April 2011.  
Councillor David Betts said that he was happy that the extension to the 28 April 2011 gave sufficient time for comments. Cllr Betts took into account the comments taken, however ruled out waiting to sign the decision until after the 5 May 2011 due to it being essential to start work on these important schemes as soon as possible. Cllr Betts also asked that it was noted that these schemes were allocated on an evidential (not political) basis.
- Local Stakeholders:** Consultation is not formally undertaken as the programme is based on 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:** Nick Carter, Jon Winstanley, Mark Edwards, Paul Clements.
- Trade Union:** N/A

<b>Is this item subject to call-in.</b>	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:</p> <p>The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Considered or reviewed by OSC or associated Task Groups within preceding 6 months <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Item is Urgent Key Decision <input type="checkbox"/></p>		

## Supporting Information

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### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report is being re-presented for Individual Decision following call-in of the original report and subsequent consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission at its meeting on 18 May 2011.
- 1.2 The OSMC agreed that the report could go forward for Individual Decision provided that the Head of Service reviewed the consultation process in due course, arranged a Member Development session on the subject and included the highway programme on the agenda of a future Parish Conference.

### 2. Background

- 2.1 The Council's approach to highway maintenance and asset management is described in the Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2026 (LTP). 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.
- 2.2 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 7% (B and C Roads) respectively in need of immediate intervention. The condition of the unclassified network has also improved by 1% from 12% to 11% in need of immediate intervention.
- 2.3 Following the prolonged periods of sub-zero temperatures and snowfall during December 2010 and January 2011 and receipt of the 2010 -11 condition data, the Highway Improvement Programme has been subject to a full and detailed review. The cold winters of 2009 and 2010 have had a significant effect on the Three Year Highway Improvement Programme in terms of priority and annual programmes. The programme is detailed in Appendix 1.
- 2.4 Following the periods of sub-zero temperatures and snowfall during December 2009 and January 2010 additional funding was made available by the Department for Transport (DfT) in the form of a £382k grant. As a result of this additional funding, it was possible to carryout immediate permanent repairs on the worst sections of snow damaged road within the district.
- 2.5 Following the period of sub-zero temperatures and snowfall during November and December 2010, additional funding was made available by the DfT in the form of a £913,000 grant. As a result of this additional funding, a snow damage repair programme has been developed for 2011 – 12 which is detailed in Appendix B.

- 2.6 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'.
- 2.7 Following publication of the Transport Infrastructure Assets Code, £2.27m of revenue funding covering structural maintenance, surface treatments (surface dressing and other macro surfacings) and patching was capitalised in order to comply with the requirements of the Code. These key maintenance budgets represent approximately 70% of the total annual Highway Improvement Programme budget.
- 2.8 The purpose of this report is to present the latest draft 2011/12 – 2013/14 Three Year Highway Improvement Programme, 2011 Snow Damage Programme and 2011/12 Planer Patching Programme. A map of West Berkshire highlighting the roads included in the Three Year Highway Improvement Programme will be displayed in the Members room.

### **3. Programme Development**

- 3.1 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).
- 3.2 Since 2002, the Highways and Transport service has been carrying out a comprehensive programme of annual testing to determine the condition of its highway network and establish National Indicator data for the condition of the principal classified, non-principal classified and unclassified road networks. The highway condition related National Indicators are NI168 for the principal classified roads (A class roads) and NI169 for the non principal classified roads (B and C class roads). Whilst these are no longer formal National Indicators, the Council is still required to report the data to the Government.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 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) and was first used in 2003/04. The condition of the unclassified road network is measured using CVI (Course Visual Inspection). Both surveys are performed in accordance with national standards and guidance.
- 3.5 The skid resistance of the classified network is measured using SCRIM (Sideways 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
- 3.6 Details of the survey methodology, coverage and the Council's approach to highway asset management are described in LTP3 and a brief summary is provided in the following paragraphs.

- 3.7 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 asset management approach will bring better value for money in the medium/long term and will prevent sections of road from becoming red. 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.
- 3.8 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.
- 3.9 As a result of the prolonged periods of sub-zero temperatures and snowfall during December 2010 and January 2011, a programme of improvements commenced in January 2011 which was in addition to the 2010/11 Annual Highway Improvement Programme. A claim was submitted to the DCLG (Department for Communities and Local Government) for additional capital funding to help fund these emergency repairs under the Bellwin scheme, however, this was not successful but an additional £382k was made available for post snow damage repairs by the DfT.

#### **4. Three Year Highway Improvement programme 2011/12 – 2013/14**

- 4.1 The programme provided in Appendix A covers the period 2011/12 through to 2013/14 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 capital budget of £2.9m (£1.7m LTP3 Transport settlement and £1.2m of capitalised revenue). It is important to note that it may be necessary to make changes to the programme once detailed costs and budgets have been established.
- 4.2 A range of different surface treatments will be used, depending on the type and location of each road being resurfaced. This can vary from 'macro surfacing' (a thin bituminous layer applied to the road surface) on minor estate roads and surface dressing (sometimes referred to as 'tar and chippings') in more rural areas through to complete reconstruction of the carriageway. Where pre-treatment is required to strengthen the road, for example deep planer patching, in order to gain optimum effectiveness and value for money, these 'planer patching' improvements will normally receive a proprietary surface dressing treatment the following year. This preventative maintenance approach is important in order to maintain the improving condition of the districts road network.
- 4.3 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, macro surfacing and retexturing (an abrasive treatment that restores texture to the existing surface). The skid deficient sites are shown in bold italics
- 4.4 Wherever possible, roads in residential areas will be resurfaced using noise reducing asphalts. Every effort will also be made to use recycling methods in support of the Council's Cleaner and Greener initiative.

- 4.5 In line with the Council's agreed policy, any road included in the programme for resurfacing and 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, usually involving consultation with local residents, Ward Members and the Town or Parish Council.
- 4.6 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'.

## **5. Supplementary Information (Approval not required).**

- 5.1 Following this winter's adverse weather, a schedule of roads requiring treatment has been provided in alphabetical order by parish or town as detailed in Appendix B. The programme has been developed using cost estimates and is funded by a provisional capital budget of £0.9m (special post snow DfT grant). Treatments will comprise full width resurfacing and targeted planer patching repairs as appropriate. It is important to note that it may be necessary to make changes to the programme once detailed costs and budgets have been established.
- 5.2 A further schedule of roads requiring targeted planer patching treatment has also been provided in alphabetical order by parish or town as detailed in Appendix C. The programme for 2011/12 has been developed using cost estimates and a provisional capital budget of £0.8m. In setting priorities, consideration has been given to condition, repair history and complaints and changes to the programme may be necessary once detailed costs and budgets have been established.
- 5.3 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 D. Again the programme has been developed using cost estimates and a provisional capital budget of £6m (Section 106, Environment Agency Grant and Maintenance/Transport Grant funded) and may be subject to change.

## **6. Programme Changes**

- 6.1 From time to time, circumstances change which may necessitate alterations to the programme. Such circumstances may include unforeseen circumstances on site, utility activities, new technical data or severe weather conditions resulting in the necessity to re-prioritise some schemes. 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) and ICT.



## **Appendices**

Appendix A – Three Year Programme 2011/12 – 2013/14

Appendix B – Snow Damage Programme 2011/12

Appendix C – Planer Patching Programme 2011/12

Appendix D – Local Transport Capital Programme 2011/12