

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	13 JUNE 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	6
TITLE:	HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE - POTHOLE REPAIR PLAN 2017/2018 REVIEW		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR A PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	TRANSPORTATION AND STREETCARE	WARDS:	BOROUGH WIDE
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To inform Councillors of the review carried out on the Pothole Repair Plan 2017/2018 which was created using the £97,000 share from the £70 Million Pothole Action Fund in 2017/18, made available to Reading Borough Council for pothole repairs in the 2017/18 Financial Year, following the announcement in the Government's Autumn Statement 2015.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee notes the review carried out on the Pothole Repair Plan 2017/2018 which was created using the £97,000 share from the £70 Million Pothole Action Fund in 2017/18, made available to Reading Borough Council for pothole repairs in the 2017/18 Financial Year, following the announcement in the Government's Autumn Statement 2015

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 To secure the most effective use of resources in the delivery of high quality, best value public service.
- 3.2 To make travel more secure, safe and comfortable for all users of the public highway.
- 3.3 To provide a public highway network as safe as reasonably practical having due regard to financial constraints and statutory duties.

4. THE REVIEW

Pothole Repair Plan 2017/2018 Review

- 4.1 Reading Borough Council welcomed the £97,000 share from the £70 Million Pothole Action Fund in 2017/18, made available for the 2017/18 Financial Year, which was announced by the Department for Transport (DfT). (DfT correspondence dated 13th January 2017 and DfT Roads Funding: Information Pack - January 2017, refers). As in previous years, we proposed setting up a further Pothole Repair Plan, following the successful completion of the three previous Pothole Repair Plans. The purpose of this fourth Pothole Repair Plan was to enable potholes of a lesser depth than the Council's normal investigatory criteria to be repaired, helping to extend the life of roads until such time that they require a more comprehensive maintenance treatment.
- 4.2 The Council's standard investigatory criteria for carriageway defects is 50mm depth (over an approximate area of 300mm x 300mm). This Pothole Repair Plan, as in previous years, enabled the Council to repair defects of a minimum depth of 30mm. In addition, this Plan also included repairs to potholes of lesser criteria than 30mm depth, which typically were located on concrete roads where the thin overlain surfacing had locally 'scabbed'. A proprietary material was trialled for this purpose on a selection of roads, minor and major, heavily trafficked and quieter residential roads. The proprietary material was provided and laid by the specialist contractor.
- 4.3 The performance of the proprietary material has been variable, overall tending to perform better on lesser trafficked, minor roads. In summation it was felt that this material was perhaps not so well suited for use within an urban environment. The consensus of opinion was that it was not a suitable product due to the uneven finish quality, limitations for laying the material in windy and/or wet weather conditions, the additional traffic management that was required (supplied by the Council) and the hire of specialist machinery. Public feedback on the quality of the proprietary material pothole repairs has been mixed.
- 4.4 Potholes for inclusion in this Pothole Repair Plan were, again, identified by the Neighbourhood Officers through the cyclical statutory highway inspections, Ward Councillor input and following ad hoc reports/complaints received by the Council.
- 4.5 All of the Council's public highway roads were considered for appropriate pothole repairs under this Pothole Repair Plan.
- 4.6 This Pothole Repair Plan operated concurrently with the statutory highway inspection regime, as was the case with the previous Pothole Repair Plans.

- 4.7 This Pothole Repair Plan was delivered on site using existing Highway Operative resources and plant/equipment, with the exception of the work using the proprietary material (Refer to 4.2 and 4.3).
- 4.8 The Pothole Repair Plan commenced in November 2017 and was successfully delivered and completed by 31st March 2018 (end of Financial Year).
- 4.9 1,462 potholes were ordered for repair, including potholes repaired in advance of the annual Reading Half Marathon.
- 4.10 An additional 374 potholes, of lesser depth than 30mm, were repaired using the proprietary material by the specialist contractor.
- 4.11 A total of 1,836 potholes were repaired under this Pothole Repair Plan.
- 4.12 The overall cost for delivering the Pothole Repair Plan 2017/2018 was £123,000 (approximate) which included pothole repairs for the Reading Half-Marathon and providing the traffic management for the specialist contractor carrying out the proprietary material pothole repair trial. The additional £26,000 spend, over and above the £97,000 Government Pothole Action Fund 2017/18 Allocation, was funded from the Local Transport Capital Block Funding for Highways Maintenance.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 The Pothole Repair Plan contributed to the Council's Corporate Plan objectives of:
- Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active;
 - Providing infrastructure to support the economy;
 - Remaining financially sustainable to deliver these service priorities.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 Pothole defects on the Borough's highway network, which were reported by members of the public, were assessed / considered for appropriate action in accordance with the Council's investigatory criteria and, where applicable, in accordance with the Pothole Repair Plan operating at the time.
- 6.2 The Highway Maintenance Update and Programme 2017/2018 continues to be available on the Council's website.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 In addition to the Human Rights Act 1998 the Council is required to comply with the Equalities Act 2010. Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:-
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;

- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.2 The Pothole Repair Plan consisted of improvement work to the Borough Council's existing public highway network. There was no overall change to service delivery. Should there have been any updates/amendments required, which resulted in service delivery changes, an equality impact assessment would have been carried out.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The Borough Council, as Highway Authority, has a duty under the Highways Act 1980 to carry out highway maintenance and maintain highway structures.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Pothole Repair Plan was funded through the Department for Transport's £70 Million Pothole Action Fund in 2017/18 - £97,000 share allocated to the Borough Council, with the additional £26,000 funded by the Local Transport Capital Block Funding for Highways Maintenance.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Department for Transport 'Roads Funding 2017/18' correspondence - 13 January 2017.

10.2 Department for Transport 'Roads Funding: Information Pack' - January 2017.

10.3 Traffic Management Sub-Committee 'Highway Maintenance Update and Programme 2017/2018' Report - 9 March 2017.

10.4 Department for Transport 'Pothole Action Fund Award' correspondence - 8 April 2016.

10.5 Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport Committee 'Severe Weather Pothole Funding Award - Additional Allocation 2014-2015' Report - 16 July 2014.

10.6 Policy Committee 'Highway Maintenance Update' Report - 10 June 2013.