

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE		
DATE:	15 MARCH 2021		
TITLE:	HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2021/2022 & 2020/2021 HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE UPDATE		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT BOROUGH WIDE
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the progress of year-1 (2020/21) of the 3-year £9M Highway Capital Investment Programme 2020-2023.
- 1.2 To inform the Committee of year-2 (2021/22) and year-3 (2022/23) of the 3-year £9M Highway Capital Investment Programme 2020-2023 and to give spend approval.
- 1.3 To inform the committee on the Town Centre £450k Capital Investment programme progress and to give spend approval.
- 1.4 To inform the committee on the £847k Capital LED Streetlighting Investment programme and to give spend approval.
- 1.5 To inform the Committee of the one-year Highway Maintenance Award of £1.838M, as well as the £ 1.592M Transport Award for 2021/2022, as announced from the Department for Transport (DfT) Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport & Highway Maintenance) settlement and to give approval for the proposed 1-year programme.
- 1.6 To provide the Committee with an update on the completed Highway Maintenance 2020/2021 DfT Local Transport Block Funding Capital Works Programme.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Committee grants spend approval for the proposed Road & Pavement Maintenance Year-2 Programme 2021/2022.
- 2.2 That the Committee grants spend approval for the proposed Town Centre Capital Investment programme.
- 2.3 That the Committee grants spend approval for the proposed Streetlighting LED Capital Investment Programme.
- 2.4 That the Committee grants spend approval of the DfT Local Transport Block Funding Highway Maintenance Grant and proposed Programme 2021/2022.
- 2.5 That the Committee gives delegated authority to the Assistant Director of Environmental & Commercial Services in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment Planning and Transport, the Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services and the Assistant Director of Finance to enter into relevant contracts required to undertake the proposed 2021/22 Capital Highway Maintenance Programme, as per 2.1 and 2.2 of this report.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 Council in June 2018 approved Shaping Reading's Future - Our Corporate Plan 2018-21, (updated in Spring 2019). The Plan reflects the Council's priorities for Reading and provides direction for staff in delivering services to meet the needs of the communities within the Borough whilst working to a budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) agreed at Council in February 2019. An annual refresh of the Plan was published at Council in June 2019.
- 3.2 To secure the most effective use of resources in the delivery of high quality, best value public service.
- 3.3 To make travel more secure, safe and comfortable for all users of the public highway.
- 3.4 To provide a public highway network as safe as reasonably practical having due regard to financial constraints and statutory duties.

4. THE PROPOSAL

BACKGROUND - £9M COUNCIL FUNDED HIGHWAY INVESTMENT

- 4.1 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy is informed by and supports delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities including its commitment to address the climate change emergency and seeks to ensure that the Council is "fit for the future", with sound finances that allow the Council's

future funding challenges and spending pressures to be met in as sustainable a way as possible.

- 4.2 The underpinning rationale of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy is to deliver a balanced and affordable budget that ensures the Council's finances are sustainable in both the short (one year) and medium term (three years). The Strategy is also informed by the Council's Vision: "to ensure that Reading realises its potential - and that everyone who lives and works in Reading can share in the benefits of its success", as well as its Corporate Plan priorities:
- Securing the economic success of Reading;
 - Improving access to decent housing to meet local needs;
 - Protecting and enhancing the life outcomes of vulnerable adults and children;
- 4.3 The Strategy builds on work over the previous 2-3yrs to stabilise the Council's financial position and build reserves back to a more robust level and seeks to facilitate vital investment in core infrastructure to drive efficiency improvements, facilitate service redesign and thereby manage pressures within demand led services. This invest to save approach provides for a robust financial position going forward and enables vital and valued services can continue to be delivered.
- 4.4 As part of MTFs an ambitious capital investment programme is being delivered with the Council investing £9M (over 3-years from 2020/21 to 2022/23) Capital in Reading's local residential road and pavement network. This welcomed investment is over and above the annual Local Transport Block Funding settlement from the (DfT) for highway maintenance work to improve the condition of local residential roads and pavements and reverse a deteriorating highway network.
- 4.5 The Council has and will continue to actively bid for appropriate external funding including Department for Transport (DfT) and Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) grants to maximise the use of available funding to improve the condition of all highway assets. This includes a current expression of interest to the Environment Agency for strategic level flood reduction in Reading (awaiting outcome).

PROPOSED PROGRAMME - Highway Maintenance Spend Proposal 2021/2022

- 4.6 The Council carried out a further Residents' Survey with its Citizen Panel in December 2020 as part of the Council's on-going conversation with residents. The aim of the survey was to gather information to inform customer service delivery in a number of ways. More specifically, the survey asks about residents' views of their neighbourhoods and of Council services, which has helped the Council to understand what residents really value in

their local areas and services, in order to make decisions on budgets and services that reflect those values.

- 4.7 Over 77% of respondents (compared with 65% in 2018) said that they were satisfied with their local area as a place to live. Respondents were asked what they thought needed improving and the number one consensus 47% (compared with 58.05% in 2018) said that the condition of roads & pavements needed improving.
- 4.8 The Council continues to listen to the residents of Reading and the £9M Capital Investment over 3 years (2020/21 to 2022/23) in Reading's highway network will continue to improve the local residential roads and pavements.
- 4.9 The £9M Capital Investment Programme was originally intended to be delivered through allocating £3M per year over the 3-year period. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic delaying the preparation and start of the year-1 programme, it was necessary to reprofile the £9M Capital Investment to £1.5M in year-1 and £3.75M in each of years 2 and 3. The reprofiling of the £9M Capital Investment Programme was approved at Policy Committee on the 18th May 2020.
- 4.10 Year-2 (2021/22) & Year-3 (2022/23) £7.5M Capital Investment in local residential roads and pavements is set out in the table below:

	2020/21 Spend	2021/22 Spend Proposal	2022/23 Spend Proposal
Residential Roads Surfacing	£1,250,000	£3,125,000	£3,125,000
Pavement Resurfacing	£250,000	£625,000	£625,000
TOTAL	£1,500,000	£3,750,000	£3,750,000

Residential Roads Surfacing (£6,250,000) - Financed by the Council Investment (year-2 & year-3 of the £9M over 3-years)

- 4.11 For category 3 roads (residential and other distributor roads) there is generally no skid or condition information available therefore priorities have to be established as a result of visual condition surveys to determine deterioration. The common types of deterioration are, for example, the number of potholes, rutting, the amount of patching and cracking.
- 4.12 A visual assessment of the road surface condition for minor roads is therefore carried out annually using the Council's agreed criteria. The assessment process consists of scoring the carriageway condition against various criteria. Those roads with the highest scores are then subjected to a further engineering assessment and those which, again, score highly through this process as well as being considered appropriate, are recommended for

inclusion in the next Financial Year's minor roads surfacing programme, subject to budget availability.

- 4.13 Tenders for this 2-year project will be invited shortly. The documents will include reserve schemes should the tender prices returned be more favourable than currently estimated. This will then enable the Council to deliver more schemes within the available budget. An updated report will be brought back to this Committee in June 2021 to provide the final 2-year (2021/22 & 2022/23) residential road surfacing list.
- 4.14 In the event of unforeseen carriageway deterioration outside of the scope of normal maintenance work, the programme of works would be reviewed and if necessary, a reallocation of funding within the budgets would be made to undertake higher priority carriageway schemes.
- 4.15 Due to the size of the 3-Year investment programme, the Council will engage Statutory Undertakers / Utility companies early to reduce the risk of newly resurfaced roads being dug up and also ensure that other planned major transport schemes are considered within the 3-year programme.
- 4.16 A number of cycle routes are included in year 2 and 3 of the programme where they are located on residential roads.

It should be noted that a number of local cycle routes are on classified main roads. Funding for those roads will come from the Department for Transport's capital funding award, rather than out of the Council's £9M 3-year capital investment programme. The annual highway maintenance programme will consider improvements to routes identified in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, which will be available for public consultation as part of our transport strategy consultation.

Pavement Resurfacing (£625,000) - Financed by the £3.75M Year-2 Council Investment (year-2 of the £9M over 3-years)

- 4.17 Potential pavement resurfacing schemes are identified as a result of visual condition surveys to determine deterioration. An assessment of the pavement surface is carried out annually using the Council's agreed criteria. The assessment process consists of scoring the pavement condition against various criteria; those pavements with the highest scores, as well as being considered appropriate, are then recommended for inclusion in the next Financial Year's pavement maintenance programme, subject to budget availability.
- 4.18 As was the case with the 2020/2021 pavement maintenance programme, it is proposed to focus the Council's Capital Investment year-2 programme on resurfacing and/or reconstructing damaged pavements/stretches of pavement in 2021/2022 using the Council's in-house Highway Teams who

have successfully delivered the pavement resurfacing year-1 programme to a high standard and within budget.

- 4.19 The proposed schemes will be included in the updated report that will be brought back to this Committee in June 2021 to provide the final 2021/22 pavement surfacing list.
- 4.20 A number of reserve pavement resurfacing/reconstruction schemes would be implemented if the costs for the main pavement programme prove to be less than the current estimates thus enabling more schemes within the available budget. Pavement resurfacing/reconstruction work is carried out in-house by the Council's Highways and Drainage Operations Team.
- 4.21 It is proposed to develop an alternate surfacing programme using slurry sealing or equivalent for year-3 of the Council's Capital investment programme, as this is a cost-effective process which provides a new 'veneer' overlain surface that seals and ultimately extends the life of pavements.
- 4.22 As in year-1 of the Pavement Programme, the Council is offering residents discounted vehicle crossings in residential roads where pavement works are being carried out, provided they are requested in advance and satisfy the Council's Vehicle Crossing Policy. To date we have installed 18 No. vehicle crossings as part of the pavement year-1 programme, which is providing affordability to the residents of Reading.
- 4.23 As in year-1 of the Pavement Programme, the Council will look to include highway trees where appropriate taking into account underground services and sight line visibility/safety requirements, to support the Council's carbon reduction and bio-diversity ambitions.

Other Carriageway Maintenance Works - To be financed by the remaining £7.5M Council Investment in years 2 & 3 of the £ 9M 3-year investment

- 4.24 It is recognised that there are roads which repeatedly do not meet the appropriate criteria for inclusion within the major carriageway resurfacing or residential roads surfacing programmes but would benefit from other maintenance treatment(s) to extend the life of these assets. Examples of such maintenance works are explained in more detail below:
- Following a SCRIM (Sideway-force Coefficient Routine Investigation Machine) survey, where a carriageway surface appears, overall, to be in a good condition but would benefit from a surface rejuvenation to improve/restore skid resistance, extending the life of the road. This process would prove to be a cost-effective treatment, when compared with full scale resurfacing, enabling more roads to be treated.

- There are a number of concrete roads across the Borough which have previously been overlain with a thin flexible surfacing course. Over time this surfacing has locally worn away leaving a ‘scabbed’ surface. Typically, these areas do not meet the Council’s current defect investigatory level to trigger repairs and as long as the underlying concrete slabs are in a stable condition, they are unlikely to increase in depth. Although such deterioration is aesthetically not pleasing, if the underlying concrete slabs are in reasonable condition, such roads do not score/rank as high as other roads for programmed maintenance work. Nevertheless, these roads would benefit from an appropriate treatment whereby the existing surfacing is either rejuvenated or replaced to not only improve the running surface but to also seal and protect the underlying concrete slabs, in turn, extending the life expectancy of these roads. A section of Southcote Lane was one road that was successfully treated/resurfaced during the 2020/2021 Financial Year using a proprietary product/process.
- There are also examples of localised carriageway deterioration where the surfacing and/or sub-structure show signs of wear and tear in specific areas but not extensive enough to justify full-scale maintenance work to the complete carriageway area. In these situations, substantially sized patching, whether in the form of a surfacing only repair, a surfacing and base course repair or perhaps a greater depth full reconstruction repair, can rectify the issue locally and help to extend the overall life expectancy of the complete road.

4.25 The Council’s £9M 3-year capital investment has enabled the Highways Team to develop a programme for year’s 2 & 3 to address these other carriageway maintenance works and will include these roads within the 2-year term surfacing tender.

4.26 The Council will continue to actively bid for appropriate external funding including DfT, Environment Agency (EA) & DEFRA grants to maximise the use of available funding to improve the condition of all highway assets.

TOWN CENTRE CAPITAL INVESTMENT

4.27 Council approved a capital investment of £450,000 for the Town Centre Pedestrianised area at the 25th February 2020 Council meeting to improve the Town Centre as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy to 2023.

4.28 A range of works including relaying of damaged and missing block paving, repair & painting of street furniture, streetlighting column & bollard painting, reconstruction of the Target Junction Roundabout and improvement to St Mary’s Churchyard Rear Car Park (Council owned) area were identified as requiring attention to rejuvenate the Town Centre pedestrianised areas.

- 4.29 To date sections of block paving have been replaced in the Town Centre areas with works programmed for the Target Junction in early spring 2021, while vehicle traffic remains light due to Covid 19 lockdown measures. Column and bollard painting is also scheduled to commence in spring with the improved weather.

STREETLIGHTING CAPITAL LED INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

- 4.30 Council approved a capital investment of £847,000 to convert the remaining streetlighting inventory to LED and a column replacement programme of life expired columns at the 23rd February 2020 Council meeting to reduce energy consumption, reduce revenue budget costs and to further reduce our carbon emissions, as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy to 2023.
- 4.31 The LED lantern conversions will cover the remaining illuminated signs and bollards, as well as subway lighting during 2021/22, which were not included within the original LED streetlighting upgrade project.
- 4.32 The column replacement of life expired columns programme will be carried out over a 5 year period 2021/22 to 2025/26.

LOCAL TRANSPORT BLOCK FUNDING (INTEGRATED TRANSPORT & HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE) SETTLEMENT FOR 2021/22

- 4.33 The Council receives an annual Local Transport Block Funding settlement from the Department for Transport (DfT) for highway maintenance work. This settlement covers the general headings of bridges, highways and lighting. The Highway Authority then needs to demonstrate that it has made suitable use of their allocation in accordance with highway needs and within the general criteria for which LTP maintenance funding is allocated.
- 4.34 In October 2020 the Government decided to conduct a one-year Spending Review for 25 November 2020. This decision prioritised the response to Covid-19, and the Government's focus on supporting jobs and families. As highlighted in November 2020's National Infrastructure Strategy, the Spending Review committed £1.125 billion of local roads maintenance funding in 2021-22, which includes the Potholes Fund, to fix potholes and resurface roads.

4.35 READING BOROUGH COUNCIL AWARD FOR 2021/2022

4.32 FINANCIAL YEAR	SETTLEMENT ELEMENT	POTHOLES ELEMENT	INCENTIVE ELEMENT	TOTAL
2021 / 2022	£ 817,000	£ 817,000	£ 204,000	£ 1,838,000
2020 / 2021	£ 1,185,000	£ 907,000	£ 243,000	£ 2,335,000

- 4.36 In previous years the Local Transport Block Funding settlement has been split into a number of different areas to make best use of the funds available, and it is intended to continue with this approach.
- 4.37 Against each heading is the proposed works allocation based on the DfT settlement for Carriageways & Bridges, the Lead Local Flood Authority Flood Alleviation award & the remaining LED Streetlighting DfT award as follows:

TOTAL £ 1,838,000 for 2021/2022

	2020/21 Spend (Works Only)	2021/22 Spend Proposal (Works Only)
Major Roads Carriageway Resurfacing	£800,000	£ 1,000,000
Pothole Reduction: Major and Minor Carriageway Resurfacing	£700,000	£150,000
Bridge/Structural Maintenance	£800,000	£ 600,000
Pothole Plan	£ 32,000	£ 88,000
Lead Local Flood Alleviation Grant (LLFA) Funding	£ 22,250	(To be confirmed)
TOTAL	£ 2,354,250	£ 1,838,000

Major Carriageway Resurfacing £ 1,000,000 - Financed by the DfT Award

- 4.38 With the funding available we have prioritised the schemes based on nationally accepted technical assessment processes as well as visual engineering assessments.
- 4.39 The provisional programme for category 1 and 2 roads (mainly class A and class B roads and roads with high volumes of commercial traffic) surface treatment has been prioritised after assessment of carriageways using information from:
- SCANNER surveys which checks the structural integrity and residual life of existing carriageways;
 - SCRIM (sideways-force coefficient routine investigation machine) surveys to check skidding resistance.
 - VISUAL/ENGINEERING ASSESSMENT by Highways Maintenance (Engineering) Team.
- 4.40 Based on the above assessments the roads/sections of roads listed in Appendix 3 are recommended for treatment over the next 2-years 2021/22 to 2022/23 subject to funding award confirmation. These are shown in priority order and will be progressed until the available allocation is spent. To make the most effective use of the budget available only the sections of

the roads with a poor and deteriorating residual life, as identified from the SCANNER surveys and visual engineering assessments, will be treated.

- 4.41 Tenders for this work will be invited shortly and the documents will include reserve schemes so that in the event that returned tender prices prove to be more favourable than current estimates suggest, we will be able to undertake further scheme(s) within the available budget to be confirmed by the DfT. In the event of unforeseen carriageway deterioration on roads not currently on the 2-year list, the programme of works would be reviewed and if necessary, a reallocation of funding within the budgets would be made to undertake higher priority carriageway schemes.

Bridge/Structural Maintenance £ 600,000 - Financed by the DfT Award

- 4.42 The Council has maintenance responsibility for around 80 bridges and 300 other structures. Each structure is inspected in line with the Code of Practice for Highway Structures. Based on these inspections the priority for works within the capital programme is determined and a rolling 5-year programme is developed and updated annually. Appendix 3 details the schemes proposed for 2021/2022 that are achievable within the available budget. Whilst these schemes are all high priority, they will not necessarily be completed in the order they are listed, as other factors have to be considered when developing a scheme and programme to ensure they are achievable within the timescale / financial year. The current bridge backlog is managed by risk assessment, monitoring and if necessary interim measures.

Street Lighting (£80,000) - Financed by the remaining LED streetlighting Capital Programme

- 4.43 The LED streetlighting upgrade was completed on the 31st March 2019 and has delivered over 55% annual energy consumption saving.
- 4.44 Streetlighting maintenance will revert to its normal cycle of works, predominantly dealing with emergencies such as RTA damage, column testing and inventory updates. Street lighting will be managed according to Highways asset management principles and inventory management and life cycle planning will be managed using the lighting module of the WDM system to coordinate with the pavement management and roads maintenance system. Once populated and operational the system will support web based self-serve reporting of street lighting faults via a dedicated portal improving customer reporting and reducing the reliance on the current communication channels.
- 4.45 The completed LED upgrade joint contract programme achieved a saving of which Reading's share was £374,000. The remaining £80,000 within the capital programme will be committed during 2021/22. These funds will be directed towards completing any outstanding LED upgrade not included within the original project, (e.g. subway & bridge lighting).

Pothole Repair Plan 2021/22 £ 88,000 - Financed by the DfT Award

- 4.46 It is proposed to allocate funding towards a Pothole Repair Plan given the success of the previous Plans. As before, this will enable potholes of a lesser depth than the Council's current investigatory criteria to be repaired, which can only help to extend the life of roads until such time that they require a more comprehensive maintenance treatment.

It is expected that a Pothole Repair Plan will be set up similarly to the previous Plans and, as usual, Members will be engaged at the appropriate time.

Lead Local Flood Alleviation Grant (LLFA) Funding for 2017/18 and later years (Unfunded)

- 4.47 No announcement has yet been made by DEFRA on the Lead Local Flood Alleviation grant for 2021/22. However, should appropriate funding become available this will be reported accordingly to a future Strategic Environment Planning and Transport Committee.

There are several costly flood risk/surface water management priority schemes identified for Reading under the 'Local Flood Risk Management Strategy' and the 'Surface Water Management Plan'. However, given that these are very costly schemes and, unfortunately, are unsupported by appropriate funding at this moment in time, it is highly unlikely that they will form part of the 2021/22 works programme.

- 4.48 Any future grant will, however, be used towards the annual ditch cleaning programme and to investigate/progress further several smaller schemes identified through flood modelling. A detailed list of works/schemes will be presented to this Committee for approval at a future meeting during the year to keep Councillors updated.

HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE DELIVERY UPDATE 2020/2021

- 4.49 The Council has carried out an extensive works programme of major carriageway resurfacing, specialist carriageway surfacing of concrete roads, minor residential roads surfacing, pavement resurfacing, streetlighting (LED Replacement), as well as a bridges/structural maintenance programme.

Year 1 of the £9M COUNCIL 3-YEAR CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN LOCAL ROADS & PAVEMENTS

- 4.50 Year-1 (2020/21) £1.5M Capital Investment in local residential roads and pavements is set out in the table below:

2020 / 2021	Spend (Works Only)
Minor Residential Roads Surfacing	£ 1,000,000

Pre-Patching Minor Residential Roads	£ 250,000
Pavement (footway) Resurfacing	£ 250,000
TOTAL	£ 1,500,000

- 4.51 The Council advertised and awarded the competitive tender to Eurovia Infrastructure Limited to deliver 63 local residential road improvements, refer to Appendix 4.
- 4.52 An extensive Communications Strategy was developed to inform residents of the investment and improvement by the Council at the start of the year-1 local residential roads and pavement programme. The Communications Plan included residents' letters, an infographic, (refer to Appendix 2) to visually explain the surfacing process, as well as a colouring competition. An extensive and proactive social media strategy was also undertaken by the Council's Communication Team.
- 4.53 A review of the communication strategy was carried out after Phase 1 of the local residential road's year-1 programme. Following feedback from residents and Local Ward Councillors a 'lessons learnt' exercise was carried out and these will be incorporated in future work programmes.
- 4.54 The contractor commenced with the residential road surfacing on the 5th October 2020 using 2 No. surfacing teams. The process involved surfacing of Micro-Asphalt material which is an appropriate local residential road product. The material is water based so cannot be laid during heavy rain nor during very cold spells, which prevents the material setting.
- 4.55 Although October was late in the year to be surfacing with this material there was still enough daytime warmth to progress the schemes until later in the Autumn, when colder weather and shorter days prohibit any further laying. Schemes which were not completed will be carried out in early spring 2021, when the contractor will be returning to complete the surfacing programme and to carry out any necessary remedial works. To date the contractor has surfaced 33 number of roads which represents approx. 52.38% of the overall programme, refer to Appendix 1.
- 4.56 The Highways & Drainage (H&D) in-house operations team carried out extensive pre-patching in advance of the residential road surfacing programme. Any defect that warranted attention, irrespective of its depth were repaired, thereby providing added structural integrity to the road construction. Due to the lockdown restrictions during the initial Covid 19 pandemic, defects under parked cars could not be addressed at that time; the H&D team were embedded with the contractor to plug all defects on the day of surfacing to ensure that the Micro-Asphalt was laid on a structurally sound road base.

Major Roads Resurfacing Programme (2020/21) - Financed by the DfT Award

- 4.57 The Council advertised and awarded the competitive tender to Kiely Bros. Limited to deliver 18 Major Strategic Road improvements across the Borough, refer to Appendix 4.

The contractor commenced with the resurfacing on the 28th September 2020 and completed 17 out of the 18 programmed roads. Erleigh Road is to be completed in spring 2021 as it requires an alternative repair solution.

Pavement Resurfacing (£250,000) - Financed by the Year-1 Council Investment (year-1 of the £9M over 3-years)

- 4.58 As was the case with the 2019/2020 pavement maintenance programme, it was intended to focus the Council's Capital Investment year-1 programme on resurfacing and/or reconstructing damaged pavements/stretches of pavement in 2020/2021 using the Council's in-house Highway Teams, as they are a competitive and cost effective team, who are experienced in delivering patching and minor road & pavement schemes.
- 4.59 The residential pavement / footway schemes programme commenced in early November 2020 and due for completion by the end of March 2021, refer to Appendix 1.

Bridge/Structural Maintenance - Financed by the DfT Award

- 4.60 The Council has maintenance responsibility for around 80 bridges and 300 other structures. Each structure is inspected in line with the Code of Practice for Highway Structures. Based on these inspections the priority for works within the capital programme is determined and a rolling 5-year programme is developed and updated annually. Appendix 4 details the completed schemes for 2020/2021.
- 4.61 A range of schemes were completed including 2 No. sections of Kings Road Culvert, strengthening of 2 No. sections of Kennetside Retaining Wall, bridge inspections & assessments, managing the abnormal loads, planned maintenance and reactive maintenance response.
- 4.62 Appendix 4 refers to the works programme delivered by the Highway Maintenance 2020/2021 Award from the DfT Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport & Highway Maintenance) settlement.

Appendix 4 satisfies the Grant Determination requirements on the use of the funding allocation by the DfT for Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport & Highway Maintenance) 2020/2021 settlement.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The proposed Highway Maintenance Programme 2021/2022 will contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan 2018-21 objectives of:

- Securing the economic success of Reading
- Keeping Reading's environment clean, green and safe
- Ensuring the Council is fit for the future

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

6.1 Defects reported by members of the public on the Council's public highway network are assessed / considered for appropriate action in accordance with the Council's investigatory criteria.

6.2 Schemes are identified through an assessment process however members of the public also request sites, and these are considered as part of the assessment process.

6.3 The Highway Maintenance Programme 2021/2022 and 2020/2021 Highway Maintenance Update will 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 proposed Highway Maintenance Programme 2021/2022 consists of improvement work to the Council's existing public highway network. There is no overall change to service delivery at this time. Should any future updates/amendments be required, which result in service delivery changes, an equality impact assessment will be carried out.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 It will be necessary to enter into a contract with the successful tenderer for each of the maintenance operations described in this report.

8.2 In each case, the tender process will be conducted in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the principles of the Open process as defined by the Public Contract Regulations 2015 ("the Regulations"). It is intended that each contract will be entered into based on the most economically advantageous tender received.

- 8.3 The 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 proposed Highway Maintenance Programme 2021/2022 will be funded by the Councils £9M 3-year Capital Investment, the Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport & Highway Maintenance) settlement for 2021/2022, the Lead Local Flood Alleviation Grant (LLFA) Funding 2021/2022 and the remaining LED Streetlighting Capital budget.

The Lead Local Flood Alleviation Grant are anticipated but not yet known for 2021/22. Irrevocable commitments to spend that funding should not be made until the council has been notified of the amounts it will receive for 2021/22.

10. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The proposed resurfacing contracts will include a carbon reduction and environmental element aimed at reducing the impact on the environment by the works. The intent is to reduce the amount of carbon used to produce the material by lower temperature products, use of recycled materials and reducing the uncontrolled waste in the environment to reduce pollution of the natural environment.
- 10.2 We will be ensuring through the procurement process that the successful contractor's operations support the Council's net zero carbon ambitions.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Reading Borough Council £ 9M Capital Investment over 3-years press release.
- 11.2 Highway Maintenance Programme 2020/2021 Progress Report & Spend Approval - Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport Committee - 18th November 2020.
- 11.3 Council Committee Report 2020/21 Budget & Medium Term Financial Strategy to 2023 of 23rd February 2020.
- 11.4 DfT Highway Maintenance Integrated Transport Block Funding Award 2021/2022 notification 15th February 2021.