

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	HOUSING NEIGHBOURHOODS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE		
DATE:	9TH MARCH 2023		
TITLE:	HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2023/2024 & 2022/2023 HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE UPDATE		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR K ROWLAND	PORTFOLIO:	ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES & COMMUNITY SAFETY
SERVICE:	ENVIRONMENTAL & COMMERCIAL SERVICES	WARDS:	BOROUGH WIDE
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the progress of year-3 (2022/23) of the 3-year £9M Highway Capital Investment Programme 2020/21 to 2022/23.
- 1.2 To update the Committee on the progress of year-1 of the Council's additional £8M 5-year (2022/23 to 2026/27) Highway Capital Investment Programme.
- 1.3 To update the Committee on the progress of year-1 of the Council's additional £4M 2-year (2022/23 to 2023/24) Bridges & Structures Capital Investment Programme.
- 1.4 To inform the Committee of year -2 of the 3- year Department for Transport (DfT) Highway Maintenance Award 2023/24 Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport & Highway Maintenance) settlement.
- 1.5 To provide the Committee with an update on the completed Highway Maintenance 2022/23 DfT Local Transport Block Funding Capital Works Programme.
- 1.6 Appendix 1: 2022/23 Programme Delivered
 - £9M Residential Roads & Pavements 3-year programme (2020/21 to 2022/23)
 - DfT Roads & Bridges Programme (2022/23) Programme

Appendix 2: Proposed Delivery programme

- £8M Residential Roads & Pavement Programme 5-Year Programme (2022/23 to 2026/27)

Appendix 3: Bridges & Structures 5-Year Rolling Programme (2023/24 to 2027/28)

Appendix 4: Financial Implications Report

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Committee note the progress of year-3 (2022/23) of the 3-year £9M Highway Capital Investment Programme 2020/21 to 2022/23.
- 2.2 That the Committee note the update on the progress of year-1 of the Council's additional £8M 5-year (2022/23 to 2026/27) Highway Capital Investment Programme.
- 2.3 That the Committee note the update on the progress of year-1 of the Council's additional £4M 2-year (2022/23 to 2023/24) Bridges & Structures Capital Investment Programme.
- 2.4 To inform the Committee of year-2 of the 3-year Department for Transport (DfT) Highway Maintenance Award 2023/24 Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport & Highway Maintenance) settlement.
- 2.5 That the Committee note the update on the completed Highway Maintenance 2022/23 DfT Local Transport Block Funding Capital Works Programme.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Council approved Shaping Reading's Future - Our 3-year Corporate Plan 2022/23 to 2023/24. 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) and updated to include to current Year-2 priorities.
- 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 3-YEAR (2020-2023) RESIDENTIAL ROADS & PAVEMENTS INVESTMENT PROGRAMME**
- **ADDITIONAL £8M COUNCIL FUNDED 5-YEAR (2022-2027) RESIDENTIAL ROADS & PAVEMENTS INVESTMENT PROGRAMME**
- **ADDITIONAL £4M COUNCIL FUNDED 2-YEAR (2022-2024) BRIDGES AND STRUCTURES INVESTMENT PROGRAMME**

- 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 4-5 years 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 and an additional **£8M** (over 5-years from 2022/23 to 2026/27) 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 In addition to the Council's investment in Reading's local residential road and pavement network, the Council is investing a further **£4M** in Reading's bridges & structures to address 'very poor' and 'poor' structural assets to improve their condition and reverse these deteriorating Council structural assets over a 2-year period (2022/23 to 2023/24).
- 4.6 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.

PROPOSED PROGRAMME - Highway Maintenance Spend Proposal 2023/24

- 4.7 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.

- 4.8 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.
- 4.9 The annual National Highways & Transport MORI Residents Satisfaction Surveys for 2022 has shown an improvement with 141 national indicators being above average and 90 indicators improving, with the biggest improvement in how the Council is dealing with the potholes / damaged roads indicator.
- 4.10 The Council continues to listen to the residents of Reading and the **£9M** Capital Investment over 3 years (2020/21 to 2022/23) and a further **£8M** Capital Investment in Residential Roads & Pavements over a 5-year period (2022/23 to 2026/27) will continue to accelerate the resurfacing programmes and reverse the deteriorating condition of our highway asset in Reading's local residential roads and pavements.
- 4.11 The Council's additional investment will deliver a total investment of £6.588M Capital Investment in local Residential Roads & Pavements and Bridges & Structures is set out in the table below (awaiting LLFA Award):

	2022/23 Spend (Works Only)	2023/24 Spend Proposal (Works Only)
Residential Roads Surfacing	£3,125,000	£2,088,000
Pavement Resurfacing	£625,000	£ 400,000
Bridges /Structures	£750,000	£3,900,000
Tree Planting	£96,000	£100,000
Innovation / Carbon Reduction	£0	£100,000
Lead Local Flood Alleviation Grant (LLFA) Funding	£150,000	TBC
TOTAL	£4,650,000	£6,588,000

Residential Roads Surfacing 2023/24 (£2,088,000) - Financed by the £1.5M Year-2 Council Investment (Year-2 of the £8M over 5-years) and £1.83M of the DfT 2023/24 Local Transport Plan (LTP) Award for Bridges & Carriageways.

With the funding available we have prioritised the schemes based on nationally accepted technical assessment processes as well as visual engineering assessments.

- 4.12 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.

Based on the above assessments the roads/sections of roads listed in Appendix 2 are recommended for treatment during Financial Year 2023/24. 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.

- 4.13 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. In the event of unforeseen carriageway deterioration on roads not currently on the 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.
- 4.14 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.
- 4.15 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.

- 4.16 Based on the above a list of schemes was prepared as detailed in Appendix 2. Estimated costs based on current contract expenditure are shown against each scheme and would suggest that up to 54 roads will be achieved in the programme.
- 4.17 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.
- 4.18 Due to the size of the 8-Year Council investment programme (2020/27), the Council is engaging with 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 programme.
- 4.19 A number of cycle routes are included in 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. The annual highway maintenance programme will consider improvements to routes identified in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

Pavement Resurfacing (£400,000) - Financed by the £1.5M Year-2 Council Investment (Year-2 of the £8M over 5-years) and £1.83M of the DfT 2023/24 Local Transport Plan (LTP) Award for Bridges & Carriageways.

- 4.20 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 on a rolling programme 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.
- 4.21 It is proposed to continue to split the focus of the Council's Capital Investment pavement programme between a combination of resurfacing and/or reconstructing damaged pavements/stretches of pavements, and surfacing with a slurry sealing or equivalent product, as this cost-effective process which provides a new 'veneer' overlain surface that seals and ultimately extends the life of pavements, and which will accelerate the Pavement surfacing programme considerably. Both solutions will be delivered by the Council's in-house Highway Works Team.
- 4.22 The Council will continue to offer 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 40 no. vehicle crossings as part of the pavement programmes, which is providing affordability to the residents of Reading.

- 4.23 The Council will continue 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. To date 350 no. trees have been planted.
- 4.24 The Council will continue to install pedestrian dropped crossings at road junctions on the pavements being resurfaced to improve accessibility for all users of the public highway. The Council recognises that Reading is an old established town with historically older roads that were built at a time when accessibility was not considered during the design process. The pavement programme is an ideal opportunity to address this matter and to date 60 no. pedestrian crossings have been installed at road junctions.

Other Carriageway Maintenance Works - To be financed by the remaining £1.5M Year-2 Council Investment (Year-2 of the £8M over 5-years) and £1.83M of the DfT 2023/24 Local Transport Plan (LTP) Award for Bridges & Carriageways.

- 4.25 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.
 - 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.

Bridges & Structures 2022/24 (£3.9M) - Financed by the £4M Year-2 Council Investment and the £1.838M DfT Award

- 4.26 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. This welcomed additional Council investment will address the 'very poor' and 'poor' condition structures and extend the life of these structural assets. This investment is over and above the DfT annual award which together will assist in tackling the backlog in structural maintenance. Refer to Appendix 3 showing the proposed 2023/24 bridge and structures programme.
- 4.27 The Council approved an additional £ 7.2M Capital funding to address the IDR Bridge Bearings and Berkeley Avenue Strengthening schemes, however, as this scheme is the Council's strongest Bridges & Structures case to attract DfT funding, it is proposed to delay the scheme by a further year to allow a funding bid to be made when the opportunity becomes available. Spend approval and scheme update will be brought back to this committee at that time.
- 4.28 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.
- 4.29 The Department of Transport (DfT) 3-year Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport and Highway Maintenance) settlement from Financial Year 2021/22, with an initial National funding pot of £1.7bn year-1 Funding, £3.8bn year-2 and then increasing to £4.4bn in future years, as part of the Local Roads Spending Review.
- 4.30 This settlement covers general headings of Major Carriageway, Pothole Reduction, Bridge / Structural Maintenance & Lead Local Flood Alleviation. 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.
- 4.31 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. (Refer to item 4.11).

Bridge/Structural Maintenance £ 3.9M - Financed by the £4M 2-Year Council Investment and the £1.838M Award

- 4.32 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 2023/2024 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 - LED streetlighting Capital Programme Update

- 4.33 The LED streetlighting upgrade programme has delivered over 60% annual energy consumption saving. The Council's additional investment is addressing those units not included within the original LED programme, including conversion of all sign lighting, subway lighting and bespoke lighting units.
- 4.34 Streetlighting maintenance has reverted 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.
- 4.35 The Council are currently reviewing our streetlighting specifications to reduce the brightness of the LED lanterns from 4,000k (kelvin), to 3,000k and below to reduce the environmental impact.

Pothole Repair Plan 2023/24 (Unfunded) - Financed by the DfT Award

- 4.36 No announcement has yet been made by the Department for Transport on the Pothole Action Fund Award allocation for 2023/24. However, should appropriate funding become available this will be reported accordingly to a future Strategic Environment Planning and Transport Committee. It is proposed to allocate any funding towards the carriageway resurfacing programmes, which will further improve the condition of Readings roads.

Lead Local Flood Alleviation Grant (LLFA) Funding for 2023/24 and later years (Unfunded)

- 4.37 No announcement has yet been made by DEFRA on the Lead Local Flood Alleviation grant for 2023/24. 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 2023/24 works programme.

- 4.38 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 2022/2023

- 4.39 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-3 of the £9M COUNCIL 3-YEAR CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN LOCAL ROADS & PAVEMENTS (Including the DfT LTP 2022/23 Award)

- 4.40 The Council advertised and awarded a competitive tender to Kiely Bros. Limited to deliver up to 500 local residential 'micro asphalt' and 'hot rolled asphalt' major roads, refer to Appendix 2 over the full Council's 3-year Residential Roads & Pavement investment programme.
- 4.41 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 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.
- 4.42 A further review of the communication strategy was carried out after Phase 2 of the local residential road year-2 programme. Following feedback from residents and Local Ward Councillors a 'lessons learnt' exercise was carried out and these are being incorporated in future work programmes.
- 4.43 The contractor resumed the residential road surfacing programme in early spring 2022 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.
- 4.44 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.

Pavement Resurfacing (£625,000) - Financed by the Year-3 Council Investment

- 4.45 As was the case with the first two years of the pavement maintenance programme, it was intended to focus the Council's Capital Investment year-3 programme on resurfacing and/or reconstructing damaged pavements/stretches of pavement in 2022/2023 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.

- 4.46 The residential pavement / footway schemes programme commenced in early April 2022 and due for completion by the end of March 2023, refer to Appendix 2.

Bridge/Structural Maintenance - Financed by the Council's 2-year investment (2022/23 to 2023/24) and the annual DfT LTP Award

- 4.47 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 2 details the completed schemes for 2022/2023.
- 4.48 A range of schemes are underway including phase 4 of Kings Road Culvert, strengthening of phase 6 Kennetside Retaining Wall, Reading Station Subway Ceiling Refurbishment, bridge inspections & assessments, managing the abnormal loads, planned maintenance and reactive maintenance response.
- 4.49 Appendix 2 refers to the works programme delivered by the Highway Maintenance 2022/2023 Award from the DfT Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport & Highway Maintenance) settlement.
- 4.51 Appendix 2 satisfies the Grant Determination requirements on the use of the funding allocation by the DfT for Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport & Highway Maintenance) 2022/2023 settlement.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 Reading Borough Council's vision is:

To help Reading realise its potential - and to ensure that everyone who lives and works here can share the benefits of its success.

- 5.2 The Highway Maintenance Programmes will contribute to the Council's 3-Year Corporate Plan 2021/2024 objectives of:

- Healthy environment - Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active
- Inclusive economy - Enabling the infrastructure to continue to support the economy
- Thriving Communities - Remaining financially sustainable and to ensure everyone has an equal chance to use the public highway

- 5.3 TEAM Reading values:

Together - Collaborative working approach between the Council, consultant, contractors and the public

Efficiency - Continue to explore efficiency savings within the contract

Ambitious - Investing into the public highway

Make a Difference - Providing a safe inclusive public highway for all users

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council declared a climate emergency at its meeting in February 2019 and as such recognises the need to minimise the climate impacts of its decisions. A climate impact assessment of this decision has been conducted which suggests a 'net low negative' impact. Highway maintenance is an energy intensive activity and some carbon emissions from the process are inevitable, but a number of steps are being taken to mitigate these impacts as far as possible as set out below.
- 6.2 The Council on 15th October 2019 formally adopted of the 'Unite Construction Charter' where the Authority supports the 'Get Britain Building' campaign, which is aimed at supporting and sustaining the British construction industry. As a result, all relevant construction contracts will be required to comply with the Authority's Sustainable Buying Standard for Highways and Construction Materials, which requires structural steel and other relevant materials to be covered by BES 6001 Responsible Sourcing of Construction Product certification, or equivalent.
- 6.3 Tenders for any subsequent contracts that are necessary will be invited to submit Environmental Implications proposals which will form part of the quality element of the tender evaluation. A social value quality submission will also be required to be submitted with tenders and evaluation.
- 6.4 Tenders also needed to include carbon reduction targets and improved sustainability within tender returns. The intent is to reduce the amount of carbon used to produce the materials at source, using recycled materials, lower temperature bitumens, reducing the uncontrolled waste in the environment to reduce pollution of the natural environment, use of electric vehicles and plant, as well as how they will achieve their carbon reduction targets.
- 6.5 The Council is committed to a tree planting programme to increase canopy cover, improve biodiversity and reduce localised flooding. The Council is committing up to 1% of the value of the road resurfacing programmes towards this initiative.
- 6.6 The Reading Climate Emergency Strategy, which was endorsed by the Council in November 2020, highlights the importance of adapting to climate impacts as well as reducing the emissions which are driving climate change. The Council will regularly review design standards for roads, in conjunction with industry bodies, to take into account the extreme weather events (both extreme heat and extreme cold) to ensure sustainability of the public highway network.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 7.1 Section 138 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 places a duty on local authorities to involve local representatives when carrying out "any of its functions" by providing information, consulting or "involving in another way".

- 7.2 The public can report highway defects to the Council, including road and structures condition concerns, which are assessed and included within the annual review of the highway assets that inform the ‘Annual Status Option Reports’ (ASOR) with the proposed high priority schemes brought to Committee for consideration and approval should they meet the assessment criteria.
- 7.3 This report will be available on the Council’s website following Housing Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee approval processes.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, 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.
- 8.2 The Highway Maintenance programme 2023/2024 consists of improvement work to the Council’s existing public highway network and will be making improvements to existing highway assets. There is no overall change to service delivery at this time and all users will have a safe public highway. Should any future updates/amendments be required, which result in service delivery changes, an equality impact assessment will be carried out.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Borough Council, as Highway Authority, has a duty under the Highways Act 1980 to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway.
- 9.2 The Council as Lead Local Flood Authority, has a duty under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 to reduce the risk of flooding.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Highway Maintenance programme 2023/2024 will be fully funded by the by the following:
- Year-3 of the Council’s £9M 3-year (2019/20 to 2022/23) Capital Residential Roads & Pavement Investment of £3.75M.
 - Year-2 of the Council’s £8M 3-year (2022/23 to 2024/25) additional Capital Residential Roads & Pavement Investment of £2M.
 - Year-2 of the Council’s £4M 2-year (2022/23 to 2023/24) Capital Bridges & Structures Investment of £2M.
 - The Council’s £ 1.371M Investment into LED Streetlighting Investment.
 - The Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport & Highway Maintenance) settlement for 2023/2024).

- The DEFRA Lead Local Flood Alleviation Grant (LLFA) Funding 2023/2024 (tbc).

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 None.