

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT PLANNING AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE		
DATE:	18 MARCH 2019		
TITLE:	HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE UPDATE 2018/2019 AND PROPOSED PROGRAMME 2019/2020		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR A PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT BOROUGH WIDE
SERVICE:	TRANSPORTATION AND STREETCARE	WARDS:	BOROUGH WIDE
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To provide Councillors with an update on the 2018/2019 Highway Maintenance programme.
- 1.2 To provide Councillors with an update on the £653,000 share of the Additional Highways Maintenance Funding Award for 2018/2019, following the announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Budget 2018 and to give spend approval.
- 1.3 To inform Councillors of the £1.308 Million Highway Maintenance 2019/2020 Award from the Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport & Highway Maintenance) settlement and to give spend approval.
- 1.4 The report outlines the proposed Highway Maintenance 2019/2020 works programme and spend allocation set out in Appendix 1 and paragraph 4.11.
- 1.5 To provide Councillors with an update on the Lead Local Flood Alleviation Grant (LLFA) Funding and to give spend approval for the total amount of £40,721 available for 2019/20.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the Highways Maintenance Update 2018/2019.
- 2.2 That the Committee notes the update on the £653,000 Additional Highways Maintenance Funding Award and gives spend approval.

- 2.3 That the Committee accepts the £1.308 Million Highway Maintenance Award for 2019/2020 from the Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport & Highway Maintenance) settlement and gives spend approval for the proposed Highway Maintenance Programme 2019/2020, as set out in Appendix 1 and paragraph 4.11.
- 2.4 That delegated authority is given to the Head of Transportation & Streetcare in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport, the Head of Legal & Democratic Services and the Head of Finance to enter into the variety of contracts required to undertake the highways maintenance works as described in this report.
- 2.5 That the Committee notes the update on the Lead Local Flood Alleviation Grant (LLFA) Funding and gives spend approval for the total amount of £40,721 available for 2019/20.

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 PROPOSAL

BACKGROUND - Highway Maintenance Update 2018/2019

- 4.1 The Council has carried out a works programme of major carriageway resurfacing, minor roads surfacing, footway resurfacing, Street Lighting (LED Replacement), bridges/structural maintenance works programme, as well the progression of the 2018/19 Pothole Repair Plan. Appendix 2 refers to the works programme delivered.
- 4.2 Following the successful progression of the Pothole Repair Plan during 2018/19, it can be reported that the equivalent of around 1,700 potholes have been repaired and a contribution has been made towards the specialist surfacing work carried out in Mayfair (paragraph 4.3 refers).
- 4.3 A proprietary process/surfacing material was sourced for resurfacing the complete length of Mayfair, from Park Lane to Halls Road. In addition, as part of the process, the concrete slab joints were repaired/refurbished. As explained in last year's highways maintenance report to this Committee, Mayfair was one of a number of concrete roads across the Borough where the existing surfacing had deteriorated. The Additional Pothole Action Fund Award 2017/18 (£66,975) was used towards the funding of this work.

4.4 Additional Funding Allocation (£653,000)

- 4.4.1 The Council welcomed the £653,000 share from the additional £420 million funding for local highways maintenance work which was made available for this Financial Year, as announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Budget 2018 and confirmed in the Department for Transport (DfT) correspondence dated 13th November 2018 - 'Local Transport Capital Funding 2018/19 Financial Year'. It was a requirement for this additional funding to be spent / committed by the end of Financial Year 2018/19 and to be used for 'local highways maintenance, including the repair of potholes, to keep local bridges and structures open and safe, as well as to help aid other minor highway works that may be needed'.
- 4.4.2 Given the very late announcement of this additional funding allocation and requirement to spend/commit by the end of the current Financial Year, the Committee should note that works have had to be identified which are deliverable within this tight timeframe. The following works will, however, help to tackle the backlog in bridge/culvert maintenance work, help tackle more potholes repairs and contribute to the improvement of the Borough's carriageway and footway assets.
- 4.4.3 The £653,000 has been allocated to the following Highways Maintenance work areas:

HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE AREA	ADDITIONAL FUNDING ALLOCATION (£)
Specialist Carriageway Resurfacing Treatment to the following sites: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Southcote Lane (Southcote Farm Lane to Circuit Lane roundabout)• Southcote Lane (Coronation Square to Virginia Way roundabout)• Long Barn Lane (Basingstoke Road to Northumberland Avenue)	350,000
Hills Meadow Culvert - Cleaning/Silt Removal	100,000
Hills Meadow Culvert - Strengthening Works	50,000
Kings Road Culvert - Strengthening Works	100,000
Highway Maintenance Works - Pothole Repairs / Footway Resurfacing Works (Locations to be finalised)	53,000
TOTAL	653,000

4.5 Street Lighting (LED Replacement Update)

Reading, Wokingham and Slough Borough Councils secured Challenge funding from the DfT for 70% of the cost of a £27m joint street lighting asset upgrade to LED with a Central Management System (CMS) in 2015. The total budget for Reading was £9.8m, £6.86m of which was grant and £2.94m was RBC capital. A joint LED swap out contract was tendered in Autumn 2015 and Volker Highways were awarded the contract to swap out 11,329 street lights, 2578 sign lights, 890 illuminated bollards and 2533 life expired columns. The contract works began in April 2016 with a contract completion date of 31st March 2018. During the contract additional works have had to be instructed in all 3 Borough's for example, 1500 of the 5 metre columns in Reading were found to have structurally failed and have had to be replaced to ensure public safety and continuity of service and the contract was extended into a third year to accommodate the additional works and will complete by 31st March 2019. This extra work will be funded from the contract contingency allocation. All equipment has been fitted with the Mayflower CMS system which allows remote dimming, will monitor energy usage accurately and report faults remotely. To date 11,300 lanterns have been upgraded, 4033 columns, 850 bollards, 2350 sign lights and a number of bridge mounted fittings have been replaced and 300 heritage columns have been refurbished. The works are subject to a 12 month defect liability period. LED lanterns carry a 12 year warranty.

- 4.5.1 Street lighting energy consumption has fallen by 50% as a result of the change to LED lighting saving circa £300k per annum in energy costs. The cost of maintenance following the upgrade will reduce by 50% creating significant savings in both revenue and capital budgets.

PROGRAMME - Highway Maintenance Spend Proposal 2019/2020

Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport & Highway Maintenance) Settlement

- 4.6 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.
- 4.7 In December 2014, the Secretary of State for Transport announced how the DfT planned to allocate £6 Billion being made available between 2015/16 and 2020/21 for local highways maintenance capital funding. Ministers reached a decision on how to allocate the £976 Million of local highways maintenance capital block funding available each year based on a 'needs based' formula funding model.

4.8 Reading Borough Council's settlement for this 6 year cycle is as follows:

FINANCIAL YEAR	AMOUNT OF SETTLEMENT
2015/16	£ 1,472,000
2016/17	£ 1,350,000
2017/18	£ 1,309,000
2018/19	£ 1,185,000
2019/20	£ 1,185,000
2020/21	£ 1,185,000

4.9 Every Local Highway Authority had the opportunity to secure additional funding on an “incentive basis”, dependent on its pursuit of efficiencies and use of asset management; and/or from a competitive Challenge Fund for major maintenance projects.

Of the £6 Billion, £578 Million has been set aside for an incentive fund scheme, to help reward Local Highway Authorities who can demonstrate they are delivering value for money in carrying out cost effective improvements.

Each Local Highway Authority in England (excluding London) was invited to complete an annual self-assessment questionnaire, in order to establish the share of the incentive fund that they will be eligible for. Local Highway Authorities are not competing with each other for funding, but are demonstrating that efficiency measures are being pursued in order to receive their full share of the funding.

Each Local Highway Authority scores themselves against 22 questions, which places them into one of 3 Bands on the basis of the available evidence.

The incentive funding awarded to each Local Highway Authority is based on their score in the questionnaire and is relative to the amount received through the needs-based funding formula. The current banding model is shown in the table below.

This table, therefore, shows an indicative estimate of what the Council could potentially receive in additional funding per Band per Financial Year to 2020/21.

Highways maintenance incentive funding formula and indicative incentive allocations for Reading Borough Council award over the next 2 Financial Years is as follows:

YEAR	AWARD	BAND	INCENTIVE
2019/2020*	£1,185,000*	3 (100%)	£247,000
		2 (50%)*	£123,000*
		1 (10%)	£25,000
2020/2021	£1,185,000	3 (100%)	£247,000
		2 (30%)	£74,000
		1 (0%)	0

*Note: For 2019/2020 Reading Borough Council remains at 'Band 2' so the total award with incentive is: £1,185,000 + £123,000 = **£1,308,000**

- 4.10 Reading Borough Council will continue to progress the asset management programme to move Reading from 'Band 2' to 'Band 3' at some point in the near future.
- 4.11 In previous years the LTP3/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. Against each heading is the proposed works allocation based on the 2019/2020 settlement for works.

	2018/19 Spend (Works Only)	2019/20 Spend Proposal (Works Only)
Major Carriageway Resurfacing	£550,000	£525,000
Minor Roads Surfacing	£135,000	£110,600
Footway Resurfacing	£83,600	£80,000
Bridge/Structural Maintenance	£400,000	£400,000
Pothole & Flood Resilience Fund Award	£134,681	(Awaiting Announcement by DfT)
Pothole Action Fund Award (Additional Allocation)	£66,975* + £69,000	£0 (Currently)
Additional Highway Maintenance Funding Award	£653,000	£0 (Currently)
Lead Local Flood Alleviation Grant (LLFA) Funding for 2017/18 and later years	£12,494 + £13,654**	£14,573 + (£12,494 + £13,654 c/fwd)** = TOTAL £40,721

*Additional Allocation from Department for Transport (Letter dated 1 February 2018 refers). Spend carried over to 2018/19 (as per the Grant Determination).

**Lead Local Flood Alleviation Grant Funding for 2017/18 (£12,494) and for 2018/19 (£13,654) carried over and added to 2019/20 allocation (£14,573). Total 3 year allocation of £40,721 for spend in 2019/20. (Department for Communities and Local Government Letter dated 13th June 2017 refers).

Major Carriageway Resurfacing (£525,000)

- 4.12 Due to the limited funding available it is necessary to prioritise the schemes based on nationally accepted technical assessment processes as well as visual engineering assessments.
- 4.13 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.
- 4.14 Based on the above assessments the roads/sections of roads listed in Section A of Appendix 1 are recommended for treatment in 2019/2020. These are shown in priority order and will be progressed until the allocation is spent. To make the most effective use of the budget available only the sections of the roads with a poor residual life, as identified from the SCANNER surveys and visual engineering assessments, will be treated. Estimated costs, based on current information, are shown against each scheme and on this basis it would suggest that schemes 1 to 10 could be achieved in the 2019/2020 maintenance programme.
- 4.15 Tenders for this work will be invited shortly and the documents will include reserve schemes, in the event that returned tender prices prove to be more favourable than current estimates suggest, thus enabling us to undertake further scheme(s) within the available budget. 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.

Minor Roads Surfacing (£110,600)

- 4.16 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.
- 4.17 An assessment of the road surface condition for minor roads is therefore carried out annually using the Council's pro-forma. 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.

- 4.18 Based on the above a list of schemes has been prepared as detailed in Appendix 1 Section C. Estimated costs based on current information are shown against each scheme and would suggest that schemes 1 to 9 could be achieved this year. Tenders for his work will be invited shortly and the documents will include reserve schemes (schemes 10 to 19 as shown in Appendix 1 Section C) in case the tender prices returned are more favourable than current estimates enabling us to do more schemes within the available budget.

Footway Resurfacing (£80,000)

- 4.19 Potential footway resurfacing schemes are identified as a result of visual condition surveys to determine deterioration. An assessment of the footway surface is carried out annually using the Council's pro-forma. The assessment process consists of scoring the footway condition against various criteria; those footways with the highest scores, as well as being considered appropriate, are then recommended for inclusion in the next Financial Year's footway maintenance programme, subject to budget availability. Many requests for footway resurfacing schemes are also received from Ward Councillors and members of public, but the amount of funding available is not sufficient to deal with every request.
- 4.20 In recent years the footway maintenance programme has consisted of 'slurry sealing' surfacing. Although this is a cost-effective process which provides a new 'thin veneer' overlain surface which seals and ultimately extends the life of footways, this treatment has limitations and has not been well received by local residents at every location. Where footways have more comprehensive deterioration or wear and tear, resurfacing and/or localised reconstruction is a more appropriate maintenance treatment.
- 4.21 As was the case with the 2018/2019 footway maintenance programme, it is proposed to focus on resurfacing/reconstructing several more footways/stretches of footway in 2019/2020 rather than a slurry sealing programme. Unlike slurry sealing, which is carried out by a specialist contractor, footway resurfacing/reconstruction work is carried out in-house by the Council's Highways and Drainage Operations Team.
- 4.22 The schemes listed in Section D of Appendix 1 are recommended for action in 2019/2020. Estimated costs, based on current information, are shown against each scheme and would suggest that schemes 1 to 7 could be achieved this year. 5 no. reserve footway resurfacing/reconstruction schemes 8 to 12 (as shown in Appendix 1 Section D) would be implemented if the costs for the main footway programme prove to be less than the current estimates thus enabling us to do more schemes within the available budget.

Bridge/Structural Maintenance (£400,000)

- 4.23 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. Section E of Appendix 1 details the schemes proposed for 2019/2020 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

- 4.24 The LED upgrade completes on the 31st March 2019 and street lighting 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.

Other Carriageway Maintenance Works

- 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 minor 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 such 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. Mayfair was one such road which was successfully treated/resurfaced during the 2018/2019 Financial Year using a proprietary product/process. Similarly, sections of Southcote Lane as well as Long Barn Lane are two other roads which have been identified as showing signs of surfacing deterioration with areas of 'scabbing' and are to be treated using this same 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 such 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. Such a localised repair was carried out in Gun Street during the 2018/2019 Financial Year.

There is no available budget specifically identified for such work in Financial Year 2019/2020 but should appropriate funding become available or be identified, the Strategic Environment Planning and Transport Committee will be updated accordingly by way of a report at a future Committee Meeting.

4.26 Pothole Action Fund Award 2019/20 (Awaiting announcement from Department for Transport)

No announcement has yet been made by the Department for Transport on the Pothole Action Fund Award allocation for 2019/20.

Subject to the announcement of the Pothole Action Fund Award allocation for 2019/20, given the success of the previous Pothole Repair Plans, it is proposed to deliver a further Pothole Repair Plan. 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 this Pothole Repair Plan will be set up similarly to the previous Plans and, as usual, Members will be engaged at the appropriate time. Details will be presented in a Report for approval at a future Strategic Environment Planning and Transport Committee.

4.27 Lead Local Flood Alleviation Grant (LLFA) Funding for 2017/18 and later years (Total Amount £40,721)

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 2019/20 works programme.

The 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 such works/schemes will be presented to this Committee for approval at a future meeting during the year to keep Councillors updated.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The proposed Highway Maintenance Programme 2019/2020 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 Update 2018/2019 and Proposed Programme 2019/2020 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 2019/2020 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 2019/2020 will be fully funded by the Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport & Highway Maintenance) settlement for 2019/2020 and the Lead Local Flood Alleviation Grant (LLFA) Funding for 2017/18 and later years, (2018/19 & 2019/20).

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Traffic Management Sub-Committee 'Highway Maintenance and Pothole Repair Plan 2018/2019 Update Report' - 10 January 2019
- 10.2 Strategic Environment Planning and Transport Committee 'Highway Maintenance Code of Practice & Highway Asset Management Update' Report - 21 November 2018.
- 10.3 DfT Letter 'Local Transport Capital Block Funding (Flood Resilience) Specific Grant Determination (2017/18): No.31/3296' - 29th March 2018.
- 10.4 'Highway Maintenance Update 2017/2018 and Proposed Programme 2018/2019' - Strategic Environment Planning and Transport Committee Report - 19th March 2018.
- 10.5 DfT Additional Pothole Action Fund Award 2017/2018 letter - 1st February 2018 & confirmation to carry spend into 2018/19 Financial year - 23rd February 2018.
- 10.6 DfT Letter 'Local Transport Capital Block Funding (Pothole Action Fund) Specific Grant Determination (2017/18): No.31/2951' - 1st February 2018.
- 10.7 Lead Local Flood Authority Grant for 2017-18 and Later Years - Department for Communities and Local Government letter - 13th June 2017

10.8 DfT Roads Funding: Information Pack - January 2017.

10.9 DfT Letter 'Roads Funding 2017/18' - 13th January 2017.

10.10 Local Transport Block Funding (Integrated Transport & Highway Maintenance) Document - December 2014