

Highways Maintenance Programme – 2016/17 onwards

SUMMARY

- 1.1 The report sets out how we prioritise highways maintenance work and now in accordance with new guidance provided by central government and the impact this will have on the Local Transport Plan Programme and future Neighbourhood Board Priorities.
- 1.2 It also demonstrates the importance placed on good highway asset management, to ensure our key assets are managed correctly and treated at the right time in their lifecycle.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To note the contents of the report and the importance placed by central government on sound asset management principles and the direct relationship that successfully demonstrating we follow these principles has on our potential for future maintenance funding.
- 2.2 To discuss the contents of the report and make appropriate comments and recommendations.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To enable us to demonstrate to the Department for Transport our commitment to embedding asset management principles into our core policies and procedures and to ensure we manage the network in the most efficient way and provide value for money and to allow the scrutiny board to make comments and recommendations on these policies and principles.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 The Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy was presented and approved at Cabinet on 18 February 2015. The documents highlight our key highway assets and the steps we need to take to ensure we manage them correctly, considering all the risks and limited funding available. It stressed planned preventative maintenance at regular intervals is the most effective and cost efficient method of keeping the road surface level in good condition.

- 4.2 The Department for Transport have also announced new funding rules for highway maintenance in January 2015. The new rules incentivise Local Authorities to adopt asset management principles, by making up to 15.5% of our total allocation conditional over the next five years, on achieving good performance against a range of asset management criteria. (With our indicative allocation given as £2,212,000 in 15/16, this 15.5% reduction could have meant a potential loss of £342,860, which is equivalent to this year's Surface Dressing Programme covering some 75,000 square metres of planned preventative maintenance)
- 4.3 Officers have recently completed a 'dry run' self-assessment questionnaire, commissioned by DfT and designed to establish the maturity of local authorities towards effective asset management, to assess our progress to date and identify the improvements we need to make. The questionnaire has familiarised us with the key criteria DfT are looking for; namely demonstrating clearly that efficiency measures are being pursued. A full assessment will need to be completed before the end of November, which in turn will inform our funding allocation in 16/17. The questionnaire will be repeated each year for the next five years and again result in the following year's allocation.
- 4.4 Both the adopted policy and strategy and guidance from central government require a fundamental step change in Derby in the way we approach highway maintenance, if we are serious about managing the deterioration level of our key assets. Fundamental to this whole process is ensuring that our most senior officers and leaders show commitment and provide leadership on the way forward.
- 4.5 The asset management strategy makes clear early intervention or treatment at the right time reduces long term costs. We must move away from 'worst first' principles, which are typified by fewer but more costly, large scale works and towards more cost effective treatments to a larger number of assets at an earlier stage in their lifecycle. This will slow deterioration in the highway network much more effectively and represents better value for money. The principle of intervening with the right treatment at the right time in an assets lifecycle is one of the cornerstones of the Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme championed by DfT.
- 4.6 We need to prioritise our schemes carefully with a logical science based approach which can stand up to external scrutiny. (We could be assessed by DfT at any time, who reserve the right to undertake sample audits, to ensure the evidence we submit on our self-assessment is a true reflection of how we are performing.) The prioritisation should not be influenced politically and must be applied consistently across the city. This must also apply to Neighbourhood Highway and Transport Priorities. These have typically included extensive reconstruction and resurfacing schemes, which have had to include a large element of costly drainage and civil work. However, a number of Boards have also supported the more efficient measures and contributed to our programme of surface treatments, including carriageway micro-asphalt, surface dressing and overlay schemes completed by the In-house Maintenance service. This year's footway slurry sealing programme is also complemented by over £100k of devolved budget projects.
- 4.7 This year's Surface Dressing Programme in Derby City includes some 75,000sqm coverage over 12 streets, at a cost of approx. £400,000. Our Footway Slurry Sealing programme covers 75 streets (approx. 53,000sqm) at a cost of £200,000. We recently completed a short section of essential maintenance in Alvaston (some

12,000sqm) which cost near £207k to repair. This section was beyond any surface treatments, but demonstrates how costly repairing roads can be and the number of streets we could have treated for a similar price, to stop them getting into the same condition. Although the worst roads cannot be ignored, those in poorest condition going forward can only receive safety critical repairs until we can identify alternative funds to deal with these assets.

4.8 **Prioritisation Process**

Each year, we complete a programme of road and footway asset condition surveys, delivered either by driven or detailed walked inspections. A number of defect types are collected, including surface deterioration, fretting, cracking and chipping loss. The data is processed internally using our UK Pavement Management System.

Defects are combined over 10 or 20 metre lengths and the value of the defect measured against the threshold for each defect. In Derby, we split the categories into 6 equal sections of 20, for example:

- Very Good – 0 to 19.99
- Good – 20 to 39.99
- Fair – 40 to 59.99
- Moderate – 60 to 79.99
- Poor – 80 to 99.99
- Very Poor – greater than equal to 100

If the road is 70% or greater in a worse than Fair condition, we would class this as an efficient road to carry out our surface treatments or resurfacing work on. A list is generated which is subsequently reviewed and a treatment confirmed following a site visit and visual inspection of the road / footway.

- 4.9 Along with the road condition data, we have grouped locations where risks are likely to be higher due to the increased volume of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular traffic. This includes areas such as all district and neighbourhood centres, schools, hospitals, doctor's surgeries, community centres, village halls, places of worship and other similar facilities.
- 4.10 Any carriageways or footways within 50 metres of these key facilities are classed as higher priority and ranked accordingly. It's not that these facilities are more dangerous than any other area in Derby, but the increased number of people visiting these locations makes it a more efficient route to complete, as well as the likelihood of an incident happening increases
- 4.11 Our main bus routes have also been classed and prioritised and these specific roads have been ranked as our priority routes for gritting during winter and as such form our priority network for gritting during severe winters. This is also classed as our resilience network of roads.
- 4.12 Finally, the knowledge of our accredited Highway Inspectors who complete regular walked and driven safety inspections of the entire network provide us key qualitative information to support our automated survey results. Their recommendations are sought each year for possible scheme ideas to deal with common queries and complaints in the local neighbourhoods.

- 4.13 Our annual scheme programmes are built from these combined databases of information. These are forwarded to Neighbourhood Boards for consideration as their proposed Highways and Transport priorities or potential Neighbourhood Board devolved projects. Going forward, those requests for early intervention treatment must be given priority over costly resurfacing work. We have to demonstrate that our knowledge of the asset, how it performs and the funding needed to maintain it have guided our decision to include it in a programme of repair work rather than merely a local priority. This in turn will show benefits in terms of financial efficiencies, improved accountability and better customer service.
- 4.14 Neighbourhood Teams have already been advised to consider the contents of this report when planning discussions with each of the Neighbourhood Boards on their 2016/17 Highways and Transport Priorities.
- 4.15 Should we become aware of any additional funding streams that can be utilised for larger projects, we will notify the relevant Boards in good time to inform future Highway and Transport priorities. Section 106 contributions for example maximise the delivery of the entire Highways and Transport programme. This would be a good source to consider in line with the specific terms of each agreement as it can provide major enhancements that provide benefits for the whole city as well as the immediate development. This stream of income, where appropriate should be considered for treating some of the poorer condition assets on the network, as is can be deemed to be facilitating sustainable modes of transport.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 None. If we do not adopt asset management principles, the authority will be penalised and potentially lose up to 15.5% of our total allocation over the next 5 years. This would place pressure on other council budgets to provide funding to address critically deteriorating highway assets. This would help deliver value for money and help to ensure our DfT funding allocations were not reduced unnecessarily. It would also reduce our chances of being able to bid to the Highway Maintenance Challenge Fund for future larger scale maintenance projects or any other funding opportunities.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Estates/Property officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	Tim Clegg David Bartram
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IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 This report outlines the need for investment in our highway network using more cost effective methods, in line with sound asset management principles. Any reduction in capital maintenance, which leads to deteriorating assets increases the need for more reactive maintenance to make safe defects. This puts an increased burden on already stretched revenue budgets.

Legal

- 2.1 None

Personnel

- 3.1 None

IT

- 4.1 None

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 None

Health and Safety

- 6.1 None

Environmental Sustainability

- 7.1 None

Property and Asset Management

- 8.1 None

Risk Management

- 9.1 None

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 10.1 Our aim is to work together so that Derby and its people will enjoy; feeling safe and being safe, a thriving sustainable economy, good health and well-being and a strong community. The programme contributes towards the goals of:
- A thriving sustainable economy
 - Good-quality services that meet local needs
 - A skilled and motivated workforce