

Application to the Pothole Fund

SUMMARY

- 1.1 A £168million pothole fund was announced in the Chancellor's March budget statement. Local authorities have been invited to bid for a share of this fund to repair local roads, making them safer and smoother for motorists, cyclists and other road users.
- 1.2 With this funding, the Department for Transport (DfT) is seeking to reward local authorities who rise to the challenge of tackling the problem of potholes in their areas, particularly those who use technology and innovation to make repairs quickly and effectively.
- 1.3 The DfT is keen to see what action local authorities have taken in response to recommendations arising from the Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme (HMEP) Potholes Review Report that was published in April 2012.
- 1.4 For a number of years, the DfT has strongly encouraged local authorities to adopt asset management principles and there has been a number of reports and guidance published to assist moving to an asset management approach. This includes the Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Guidance, published in 2013.
- 1.5 The application form for this funding examines both these elements. Our completed application form is appended to this report.
- 1.6 If we are successful in securing a portion of this funding, we will be required to sign a 'pothole pledge', setting out the number of potholes we will have repaired by March 2015. This will be published on our webpage. We will also be required to submit a monthly progress report to the DfT.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To consider this report and approve the submission of an application to the Pothole Fund.

- 2.2 To delegate approval to accept any funding awarded as a result of this bid to Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods or Strategic Director of Resources.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Securing additional funding will enable us to deliver a programme of pothole repairs across the city over and above the level that our ordinary budget allows.
- 3.2 Obtaining approval to accept any funding award at the same time as seeking approval to bid will enable us to embark on programming and delivering the pothole programme more quickly and efficiently.

URGENT LEADER OF THE COUNCIL CABINET MEETING
16 May 2014

Report of the Strategic Director for Neighbourhoods

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 There is approximately 807km of carriageways and 1,828km of footways in Derby. The annual Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) for highway assets, submitted in October 2013, calculated a gross replacement cost of £1.369 billion for these carriageways and footways.
- 4.2 This effectively translates as the value of Derby's highway network, making it the Council's biggest asset by far.
- 4.3 As with all property assets, the condition of our carriageways and footways deteriorates over time, which impacts negatively on its value. Using methods prescribed by the WGA, we can determine that the value of our carriageways and footways is presently reducing by £33million each year.
- 4.4 In line with Government best practice including the Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Guidance, we have adopted an asset management approach. This aims to set investment at a level which prevents or limits the deterioration of assets. Maintaining our carriageway and footway assets at this steady state is widely accepted to be the most effective way to maintain a balance between over and under investment.
- 4.5 With these principles in mind, we already utilise funds from our revenue budget to tackle pothole hotspots by undertaking large scale patching works. We began this approach following the allocation of DfT pothole funding after the severe winter in 2010/11. This initiative was so successful it was decided to allocate some revenue funding in future years. This has created a pressure on our revenue budgets, but has very clearly demonstrated the value of proactive rather than reactive repairs.

4.6 A successful bid to this fund would enable us to deliver this type of intervention at more locations in the city. The actual extent of work that could be delivered would of course be determined by the level of funding secured. This would bring the following associated benefits:

- better quality carriageways and footways make a positive contribution to Derby's economic well-being and growth
- better quality carriageways and footways for Derby's residents, visitors and businesses
- further contribution to proactive highways maintenance approach
- reduction in the receipt of related accident and damage claims
- reduction in the receipt of complaints and therefore a reduction in the volume of reactive site inspections required.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 None. This funding application is in direct response to the funding announcement.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Estates/Property officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	Janie Berry Amanda Fletcher n/a n/a Christine Durrant, Tim Clegg Rachel Harvey, David Bartram
For more information contact: Background papers: List of appendices:	Rachel Shardlow 01332 641770 rachel.shardlow@derby.gov.uk None Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – Application Form Appendix 3 – Supporting Evidence

IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 Pothole repair is categorised as a revenue activity therefore if this application is successful; any funding allocated will be subject to the usual corporate revenue reporting requirements.
- 1.2 Delivery of a programme of pothole repairs will be within the remit of the Infrastructure Programme Board. Any scheme changes or delivery issue identified will be reported to that group.

Legal

- 2.1 Any funding secured through this application will contribute towards delivering the statutory Network Management Duty of 'securing the expeditious movement of traffic', as contained in the Traffic Management Act 2004. It will also positively impact on our general duty of maintaining our highway network in a condition that is safe for use.

Personnel

- 3.1 None arising from this report.

Equalities Impact

- 4.1 None arising from this report.

Health and Safety

- 5.1 Securing this funding would allow us to improve more carriageways and footways that we are ordinarily able to; this will contribute to health and safety of all highway users. It will also have a positive impact on the number of third party claims against the Council received.

Environmental Sustainability

- 6.1 A high quality carriageway surface will generate more efficient driving, i.e. less acceleration and deceleration which will result in a reduction in emissions.
- 6.2 The standard of the carriageway surface is very important for cyclists; ideally they need a smooth riding surface without undulations. Potholes present significant hazards for cyclists; they can affect the balance and stability of bikes and their riders or result in cyclists having to make swerving manoeuvres to avoid them.

Property and Asset Management

- 7.1 As stated elsewhere in this report, the highway network is the Council's most valuable asset and the asset management principles we have adopted aim to set investment at a level which prevents or limits the deterioration of assets. However, current highway maintenance funding levels are below those recommended in our Transport Asset Management Plan and those required to maintain a steady state for our highway assets. Securing additional funding will make a small but positive contribution to that shortfall.

Risk Management

- 8.1 Poor highways conditions impact negatively on the Council's reputation; they contribute to delays and congestion on the highway network and require greater levels of reactive maintenance. Substandard highway surfaces can also increase the occurrence of collisions and third party claims against us.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 9.1 Good management of our highway assets contributes to the following ambitions in the Derby Plan:
- Inspiring working life by improving skills and creating jobs
 - Inspiring place to live by improving the inner city