

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE & SPORT

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ADVISORY PANEL		
DATE:	24 MARCH 2009	AGENDA ITEM:	6
TITLE:	HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2009/2010		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR T PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	TRANSPORT	WARDS:	ALL WARDS EXCEPT NORCOT AND MAPLEDURHAM
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To inform the Panel of the £1.43 million (£1.35M works and £80,000 fees) programme for Highway Maintenance for 2009/2010 from the Local Transport Plan (LTP) settlement.
- 1.2 The report outlines the background to the selection of schemes and Appendix 1 details the list of schemes in each category to be undertaken in 2009/2010. The categories are Carriageway Resurfacing, Micro Asphalt surfacing, Footway Resurfacing, Road Assessment Surveys, Bridge Maintenance and Street Lighting and detailed breakdown of allocations in each category is shown in paragraph 4.2.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Advisory Panel notes the report.

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.

4. THE SETTLEMENT

4.1 The Borough Council's settlement for highway maintenance works is £1.35 million (£1.22 million in 2008/2009). This settlement covers the general headings of bridges, highways and lighting. The Government Office of the South East (GOSE) does not categorically specify how much should be spent against each heading but gives indicative figures of £711,925 for bridges, £472,943 for highways and £245,352 for street lighting (£647,204, £429,948 and £223,048 respectively in 2008/2009). The onus does however rest on us as Highway Authority to demonstrate that we have made sensible use of our allocation in accordance with Highway needs and within the general criteria for which LTP maintenance funding is allocated. Spend approval for the 2009/2010 Capital Programme was considered by Cabinet on 16 March 2009 and their decision will be reported verbally.

4.2 In previous years this allocation 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 allocation based on the 2009/2010 settlement for works only of £1,350,220. The 2008/2009 allocations are shown in brackets for comparison.

Carriageway Resurfacing	£625,000	(£600,000)
Micro Asphalt Surfacing	£100,000	(£85,000)
Footway Resurfacing	£100,000	(£140,000)
Bridge Maintenance	£300,000	(£280,000)
Road Assessment Surveys	£25,220	(£23,200)
Street Lighting	£200,000	(£92,000)

Carriageway Resurfacing (£625,000)

4.3 Due to the limited funds available it is necessary to prioritise the schemes based on nationally accepted technical assessment processes.

4.4 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:

- deflectograph surveys which checks the structural integrity and residual life of existing carriageways;
- SCRIM (sideways-force coefficient routine investigation machine) surveys to check skidding resistance.

4.5 Based on the above assessments the roads listed in Section A of Appendix 1 are recommended for treatment in 2009/2010. These are shown in priority order and would be progressed until the allocation is spent. Estimated costs based on current information are shown against each

scheme and would suggest that schemes 1 to 12 could be achieved this year.

- 4.6 Tenders for this work will be invited shortly and the documents will include reserve schemes (schemes 13 and 14 in list) in case the tender prices returned are more favourable than current estimates enabling us to do more schemes within the budget available.

Micro Asphalt Surfacing (£100,000)

- 4.7 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. The local highway inspectors will generally identify potential sites through their safety inspection regime. This list will then be assessed and a list of schemes identified for treatment using micro asphalt surfacing.
- 4.8 Based on the above a list of schemes has been prepared as detailed in Section B of Appendix 1.

Footway Resurfacing (£100,000)

- 4.9 Potential footway resurfacing schemes are identified by the local highway inspectors during their regular safety inspections. Many requests for footway resurfacing schemes are also received from Ward Councillors and members of public. This list is long and the amount of funding available is not sufficient to deal with every request.
- 4.10 During 2008/2009 as part of the street lighting replacement programme it was agreed that the footways would also be resurfaced following the completion of the lighting scheme where the footways were in need of resurfacing. The current budget for this year (2008/2009) was not sufficient to carry out resurfacing on all footways where the lighting has been upgraded. In view of this it is intended to continue with a programme based on the street lighting replacement programme. The schemes listed in Section C of Appendix 1 are recommended for action in 2009/2010 where the street lighting has been or is about to be upgraded. The number of schemes that can be carried out will be dependent on final costs for each site. However they will be progressed in the order shown until the funds are exhausted.

Road Assessment Surveys (£25,220)

- 4.11 This element of the allocation is to undertake the annual scanner, deflectograph and SCRIM surveys outlined in paragraph 4.4. This enables us to identify schemes for the following financial year.

Bridge Maintenance (£300,000)

- 4.12 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 D of Appendix 1 details the schemes proposed for 2009/2010.

Street Lighting (£200,000)

- 4.13 This allocation is used to replace life expired columns identified during the regular safety inspections carried out during the year. Typically around 60 to 70 columns are replaced on an annual basis equating to about 50% of the budget.
- 4.14 Changes in the Regulations regarding the illumination of traffic bollards allows local authorities to use non-illuminated bollards subject to prior authorisation from the Department for Transport (DfT) in certain circumstances. These provide a cost effective alternative to traditional illuminated bollards and do not require any electrical supply so reduces energy costs and CO2 emissions.
- 4.15 The Borough Council has approval from the DfT to use these at traffic signal junctions and where there are existing high level keep left signs. Authorisation for use of a solar panelled version for use at other locations where the above conditions don't apply is currently awaited from the DfT.
- 4.16 Over the last 12 months where existing bollards have been damaged or required replacement these alternative bollards have been used. However our revenue budget does not allow the wholesale replacement of these. Around 60 have been replaced so far and all new schemes recently introduced have included the reflectorised bollard.
- 4.17 There are currently around 1100 illuminated bollards remaining within the Borough. Replacement costs range between £350 and £475 depending on the type of bollard required. The annual savings in energy per bollard is about 200kW (around £16 per year on current energy rates). A reduction of around 0.1 tonnes per year of CO2 per bollard is anticipated. In addition general maintenance savings of about £50 per year are likely.
- 4.18 It is proposed to use a proportion of this year's allocation to implement a planned programme of replacements across the Borough.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 To promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

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

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Under the Highways Act 1980 the Borough Council is required to carry out highway maintenance and maintain highway structures.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The proposed work will be funded by the LTP settlement for Highways.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 LTP document.
- 9.2 Correspondence from GOSE.