

**Highways Budget: Allocation of additional capital funding for carriageway structural maintenance and bridge structural repairs**

Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste

***Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Cabinet (and confirmation under the provisions of the Council's Constitution) before taking effect.***

**Recommendations:** It is recommended that

- (a) Cabinet approves the increase in the 2018/19 Highways, Infrastructure, Development and Waste capital programme by £18,754,000, funded by external grant;**
- (b) Cabinet notes the proposed allocation of these monies to the programmes identified in the report;**
- (c) the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste, be given delegated powers to make variations to the programme to maximise delivery.**

**1. Summary**

This report seeks approval from Cabinet to increase the 2018/19 Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste (HIDW) capital programme with the additional funding received by the Government. The report also clarifies how Devon proposes to allocate the funding.

**2. Background**

The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in the Budget in November 2018, that the Government was allocating £420 million in the 2018/19 financial year 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.

The funding was distributed formulaically, based on the Department for Transport's existing local highways maintenance capital funding needs element formula, which takes into account highway assets for which each authority is responsible. Devon County Councils share was £18.754m.

This allocation is in addition to the £41.132 million included in the 11 April 2018 Cabinet report (HIW/18/20), for the County Road highway maintenance capital programme.

The Department for Transport expects local authorities to publish a brief note on their website by the end of March 2019, setting out how the original funding and this new extra funding, has been utilised. A selection of schemes will also need to be published with pictorial evidence on our website which shows the 'before' and 'after' photographs of the works undertaken.

### 3. Proposal

It is proposed to allocate the new funding across the following programmes of the highways and structures capital programme: -

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Value £'000</b>
Principal Named schemes	4,932
Principal Pre-patching for 2020/21 Preventative programme	1,099
Non-Principal Road Recovery Programme	6,501
Non-Principal Pre-patching for 2020/21 Preventative programme	4,434
Spray Injection Patching	530
Major refurbishments – bridges	1,258
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,754</b>

The agreed asset-based approach based on the national code of practice is being used to identify and complete these programmes.

For most of the carriageway elements countywide road condition data and pothole data is used to generate a list of schemes requiring further investigation. Prioritisation is based upon condition and the level of need for structural repair. A second iteration of prioritisation considers maintenance category with busier roads having a raised priority over the unclassified network.

The programmes also take in consideration future road condition on a route basis to establish whether there is added value in early treatment of these future sites with a view to reducing disruption and making efficiencies.

The asset strategy recognises that in addition to survey data it is important to consider other information in delivering programmes. To that end about 20% of the work in the carriageway programmes are driven by other data. Sites are initially promoted by the Neighbourhood Teams through visual assessment, complaints, reported defects and local councillor requests.

The bridgeworks programme development also follows national guidance. Based upon the Asset Management Plan the programmes are developed through structural inspections and the condition of the structure. Prioritisation is then based upon the classification of the road or roads it is serving, vehicle usage and how the structure is listed or is classified as substandard.

The asset approach targets funding to identified needs on the network rather than equally distributing funding throughout the county. Consequently, electoral divisions receive varying amounts and the proportion of funding tends to vary for each division from year to year as survey data is reviewed.

The overall programme has been identified and programmed for delivery through a range of highway contractors and there is sufficient capacity in the market to complete these works during the remainder of this financial year.

### 4. Consultations

The results of the 2017 National Highways and Transport (NHT) Public Satisfaction Survey reflect public perception of performance, importance and desire for various activities to be

funded. Analysis shows that the condition of the highway network and the speed and quality of repairs are important to the public.

The complete survey can be seen at <http://nhtsurvey.econtrack.com>

## **5. Financial Considerations**

£18.754 million was received from the Department for Transport in November 2018. It is expected that it will be spent by 31 March 2019, on the programmes listed in section 3 of this report.

The additional funding provides a welcome injection of funding and will help in providing a value for money approach in reducing the backlog of repairs required to maintain and operate the highway network more effectively. In order to ensure that all electoral divisions benefit from this additional funding, it is proposed to allocate 20% of the funding to be evenly distributed to all divisions in the forward annual programme. This will provide a minimum of £60k to each division. Funding priorities will be identified by the locality teams with input from Councillor and Parish concerns, customer feedback and other local knowledge.

## **6. Environmental Impact Considerations**

The ability to efficiently transport people and goods around the County underpins Devon's economy and has a direct impact on the quality of our environment.

When maintenance work is undertaken it is managed to ensure that the effect on the surrounding environment is kept to a minimum. On carriageways, surface treatment and reconstruction work is tightly controlled to achieve long term durability. Recycled materials and secondary aggregates are used whenever possible. When carriageway surfacing incorporating primary materials is required, a durable low noise material such as stone mastic asphalt is considered.

Construction contracts include for recycling plans to ensure that the use of natural resources is reduced where recycled alternatives exist.

## **7. Equality Considerations**

Where relevant to the decision, the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision makers to give due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

Taking account of age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), gender and gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women/new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage/civil partnership status in coming to a decision, a decision maker may also consider other relevant factors such as caring responsibilities, rural isolation or socio-economic disadvantage.

This may be achieved, for example, through completing a full Equality Impact Needs Assessment/Impact Assessment or other form of options/project management appraisal that achieves the same objective.

A copy of an updated overview of the Budget 2018-19 Equality Impact Assessment for all service areas has been circulated separately and is available to all Members of the Council at: <https://new.devon.gov.uk/impact/published/budget-impact-assessment-201819/>

## **8. Legal Considerations**

The lawful implications/consequences of the proposals/recommendations/proposed course of action have been considered and taken into account in the preparation of this report and formulation of the recommendations set out above.

## **9. Risk Management Considerations**

This proposal has been assessed and all necessary safeguards or action have been taken/included to safeguard the Council's position.

The Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Strategy adopts a risk-based approach.

A requirement of the additional funding provision is to ensure that spending is achieved in the current financial year.

## **10. Public Health Impact**

No adverse Public Health impacts have been identified in relation to the proposal.

## **11. Options/Alternatives**

Two different options were considered in responding to the budget announcement of this additional funding.

One was to accelerate the current Highway programme by identifying additional programmes of work to be completed within the current financial year. A number of factors would have made this extremely difficult: availability of appropriate resource to identify and design additional schemes; availability of contractors to deliver the additional work; concern about the level of traffic disruption and lack of advance warning associated with delivery; and concern and risk associated with the effectiveness and value for money associated with delivery during the winter period. This was not considered an effective response.

The preferred option of maintaining the existing capital programme and identifying slippage of highway funding into future years was also considered. The highways programme is already over programmed as part of our risk-based approach and the additional funding enables this programme to be delivered, whilst also providing opportunity to adequately plan and prepare for effective use of the additional slippage available for future years.

## **12. Reason for Recommendation/Conclusion**

The recommendation enables the Council to take best advantage of the welcome additional funding allocation announced in November. By minimising disruption to the current programme and taking a longer-term approach, all localities will see benefits and the funding can be used in an effective way to address the backlog of highway and structures repairs.

Meg Booth  
Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste

**Electoral Divisions: All**

Cabinet Member for Highway Management: Councillor Stuart Hughes

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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Background Paper	Date	File Reference
Nil		

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