



**CABINET MEMBER FOR  
TRANSPORT, TECHNOLOGY  
STRATEGY AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE**

**COUNCILLOR STUART  
WHITTINGHAM**

**CABINET**

**Monday, 7 March 2016**

**HIGHWAY STRUCTURAL  
MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME**

**2016/17 TO 2018/19**

**Councillor Stuart Whittingham, Cabinet Member - Transport & Technology Infrastructure, said:**

*“Transport and the related infrastructure needed to provide safe, effective and efficient networks and services are crucial to everything the Council and its partners have pledged to achieve in the Wirral “2020 Vision” Plan.*

*Development of a three year programme is a key strand of our new approach to management of the network, looking at longer term asset maintenance needs, as is improving our overall management of our £1.9 Billion highway infrastructure so that we are able to secure Department for Transport Incentive Fund funding in addition to the core grant. I am pleased that we are also adding one million pounds from the Council’s own Capital Programme, approved in 2014/15, for the maintenance of unclassified and residential roads.*

*Our knowledge of the asset condition, based on condition surveys and feedback from residents and Councillors has enabled us to set out a detailed programme for the three years, for the continued national top-quartile condition of the network. “*

**REPORT SUMMARY**

The Department for Transport (DfT) wrote to the Council in December 2014 setting out the indicative maintenance allocation within the Local Highways Maintenance Capital Block

Funding 2016/17 to 2020/21. This includes indicative funding for the Highways Maintenance Block for Wirral totalling £3.030 million for 2016/17, together with a further £165,000 from the DfT Incentive Fund. It is expected these amounts will be confirmed by the DfT by 31 March 2016.

The Report presents both the proposed breakdown of that highway maintenance allocation between Bridges, Lighting and Roads/Footway elements of the network and also the proposed detailed Highway Structural Maintenance Programme 2016/17 to 2018/19, for approval.

The replacement of life-expired street lighting columns is the subject of a full condition survey to be carried out in 2016/17, as part of the feasibility study for further upgrading of lighting with LED lamps, and will be the subject of a separate application for funding from the Capital Programme for 2017/18 and beyond.

The Council's Capital Programme and Financing 2016/19 report approved at the last meeting includes a further £0.5million allocation for both 2016/17 and 2017/18 for highway maintenance improvements, funded from Council Resources, for unclassified/residential roads.

At Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee on 3 December 2014 it was resolved that long term maintenance strategies should form the basis for development of future structural maintenance programmes for highway infrastructure. To fulfil this recommendation a three year programme has been developed and is detailed in the attached Appendix.

The maintenance of highways is a statutory duty for the Council under the Highways Act 1980 (as amended).

This report is linked to the "*Transport and Technology Infrastructure*" Pledge of the Wirral 2020 Plan. Improvement and maintenance of the highway network also supports the "*Vibrant Tourism Economy*" and "*Increase Inward Investment*" Pledges in the Wirral Plan.

This is a key decision and all wards are affected.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

Cabinet is requested to:

- i) Approve the acceptance of the Local Highways Maintenance Capital Block Funding (indicative £3,030,000) and Incentive Fund (indicative £165,000) for 2016/17, to be confirmed by DfT by 31 March 2016;
- ii) Approve the proposed allocation of the Local Highways Maintenance Capital Block 2016/17 to 2018/19 between Street Lighting, Bridges and Roads/Footways;
- iii) Approve the detailed Highway Structural Maintenance Programme for 2016/17 to 2018/19 outlined in the Appendix; and
- iv) Authorise the Head of Environment and Regulation in conjunction with the Cabinet

Portfolio Holder to be able to make necessary adjustments to the programme should the need arise due to financial, condition or other factors.

**SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

## **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1.1 The investment in the maintenance of the highway network will enable the Council to comply with its statutory duty to maintain the highway. The establishment of a prioritised programme allows both transparency that the Council is addressing those highway elements in greatest need of maintenance and proper management of the allocated finances, and to permit co-ordination of road roads with the utilities' programmes of work.
- 1.2 Winter salting and freeze/thaw action has a detrimental effect on the condition of highway services, allowing further degradation due to the ingress of water.

## **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 None. The programme is based on meeting the highest priority needs within the funding available against the condition and assessment criteria.

## **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The highway network and other transport infrastructure assets together represent by far the largest capital asset the Council holds, and the value of replacing those assets is estimated to be £1.911 billion. The highway network for which Wirral Council is responsible comprises approximately 1,200 kilometres of road.
- 3.2 Local Highways Maintenance Capital Block Funding 2016/17 to 2020/21

Following consultation with local highway authorities and other interested bodies, DfT has established a revised methodology for calculating the allocation of highway maintenance funding for local highway authorities and, in addition to core funding allocations, has introduced an element called Incentive Fund which is subject to the Council carrying out a self-assessment against a range of highways management and maintenance criteria. DfT wrote to the Council on 4 December 2014 setting out the new methodology and confirmed the amount of highway maintenance funding including Wirral's indicative allocation for 2016/17 and for future years up to 2020/21. Cabinet is requested to approve acceptance of the Local Highways Maintenance Capital Block Funding (indicative £3,030,000) and Incentive Fund (indicative £165,000) for 2016/17, to be confirmed by DfT by 31 March 2016.

- 3.3 Wirral Council Funding for Highway Structural -Maintenance/Improvements for Unclassified Roads

The Council's Capital Programme and Financing 2016/21 report approved at the last meeting includes a further £0.5million allocation for 2016/17 and 2017/18 for highway maintenance improvements, funded from Council Resources, for unclassified/residential roads.

Therefore a summary of the total resources for the next three years is as follows:

	<b>2016/2017</b>	<b>2017/2018</b>	<b>2018/2019</b>
<b>DfT Core Allocation</b> (indicative)	£3,030,000	£2,938,000	£2,659,000
<b>DfT Incentive Fund</b> (indicative)	£165,000 <sup>1</sup>	£248,000 <sup>2</sup>	£554,000 <sup>3</sup>
<b>Capital Maintenance Allocation</b>	£500,000	£500,000	-
<b>Total</b>	£3,695,000	£3,686,000	£3,213,000

*Table 1: Allocation of the LHM Capital Programme 2016/17 to 2018/19 Maintenance Block*

<sup>1</sup> Based on the Lowest, Band 1, allocation

<sup>2</sup> Based on progression to the Middle, Band 2, allocation

<sup>3</sup> Based on progression to the Highest, Band 3, allocation

3.4 The above £3.695 million, £3.686 million and £3.213 million allocations are intended for all highway infrastructure maintenance. An assessment of the priority structural needs of the bridges, street lighting, roads and footways elements of the network has been undertaken and the need for essential replacements to lighting columns and a number of priority bridge maintenance and strengthening schemes are included within the overall programme. We will be assessing the Value for Money of carrying out LED replacement lighting the approximate 28,500 street lights which have yet to be upgraded, and any proposal for investment for 2017/18 and beyond will be the subject of a separate report in due course. A number of high priority repairs have been identified as a result of routine bridge inspections requiring approximately £150,000 per annum over three years. A refurbishment of Port Causeway Bridge, Bromborough is required in 2016/17 at an estimated cost of £420,000 and a scheme to replace Lingham Lane Footbridge in Moreton has been identified for 2017/18 at an estimated cost of £500,000.

3.5 Accordingly, Cabinet is now recommended to approve the following allocation of the maintenance block as Table 2 below.

	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>
<b>Street Lighting</b> Column Replacements	£60,000	To be assessed after condition survey in 2016/17	
<b>Bridges</b>	£570,000	£650,000	£150,000
<b>Roads and Footways</b>	£3,065,000	£3,036,000	£3,063,000
<b>Total</b>	£3,695,000	£3,686,000	£3,213,000

*Table 2: Allocation of the LHM Capital Programme 2016/17- 2018/19 Maintenance Block  
(Figures based on planned, indicative, Incentive Fund allocations)*

### 3.6 Network Condition and Assessment Criteria

In order to fulfil its duty to maintain the highway, it is necessary to consider how the Council will prioritise the maintenance schemes to be undertaken and what treatment the prioritised schemes should comprise in order to repair and prevent further deterioration of those lengths of road and footway. The following criteria are used in carrying out this analysis:

- (i) In accordance with national best practice the Council undertakes surveys of the highway network in order to determine the condition of the carriageways.
- (ii) Areas of constant repairs; mainly due to vehicle over-ride; are highlighted in the Highway Inspectors' safety inspections.
- (iii) Particular roads brought to the Council's attention, as warranting significant repair, by Constituency Committees, Ward Councillors, the public and Streetscene officers.
- (iv) Feedback from the Council's Term Maintenance Contractor regarding the suitability of different repair solutions depending on the existing road condition and use.

3.7 All Ward Councillors were given the opportunity to contribute to the three year programme and submit lists of roads they considered to be local priorities for significant repair. The programme of schemes is set out in the Appendix and Ward Councillor priorities are denoted on those schemes with a "C".

3.8 From the surveys undertaken, the existing condition of the highway network is reported through a small number of former National Indicators (NI). Choices relating to structural repairs to carriageway surfacing is dependent on a number of factors including cost, traffic flows and type and the condition of the underlying road and foundation. Certain

routes require more expensive and durable surfacing whereas in other cases the priority, particularly on relatively lowly trafficked routes, is to prevent further deterioration of the road surface by sealing against ingress of water, whilst restoring skid resistance.

- 3.9 The road condition network is shown on Table 3 and details the last five years. All the recorded measurements indicate the percentage of the network that requires immediate maintenance for each classification of road. Additional funding from the DfT, together with funding provided from the Council's Capital Maintenance Allocation has had a positive effect on the results.

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
<b><u>Principal Roads</u></b> Single Data List Item 130-01. (Replacing Former National Indicator 168)	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%
<b><u>Non -Principal Roads</u></b> Single Data List Item 130-02. (Replacing Former National Indicator 168)	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%
<b><u>Unclassified Roads</u></b> Formerly BVPI 224b	6%	5%	5%	5%	5%

*Table 3 Condition Data – National Indicators, percentage of the network that requires immediate maintenance*

3.10 Proposed Structural Maintenance Programme for 2015/16 to 2018/19

The proposed three year Structural Maintenance Programme for roads and a one year programme for footways is **set out in the attached Appendix** and has been prepared taking into account the funding described in Section 3.5 and the priorities assessed from the criteria described in Section 3.6 All of the schemes in the programme have been identified from the surveys as requiring maintenance intervention now. A future, two year, footway programme will be introduced from 2017/18 when the condition data collection is completed.

- 3.11 Cabinet should note that the list of schemes shown in the priority listing is greater than the proposed funding. This is to allow certainty of priority yet flexibility to extend/alter the proposed schemes to be delivered in the event that, for example, there are clashes with major utility activities, severe winter damage to certain roads, some scheme requirements/extent/costs are reduced or less costly treatment is selected when the schemes are prepared in detail.

### 3.12 Valuing the Benefits of Highways Maintenance

DfT has published a model to value the benefits of maintenance that can be used by local highway authorities making decisions on maintenance funding; allowing local highway authorities to assess the economic cost and benefits of their proposed asset management strategies and compare between different options.

Whilst detailed modelling has yet to be carried out for Wirral 's proposals, the DfT cite that compared with continued use of a current budget, a scenario of a temporarily increased budget provides a benefit in terms of reduced user costs of £2.70 (discounted) for each extra £1 spent on direct works costs. Similarly, reducing the budget for 5 years resulted in a reduction in benefits of £2.90 for every £1 saved in direct costs.

## **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Schemes identified in the programme will be funded from the Local Highways Maintenance Capital Block Funding, the Incentive Fund allocation and the Council's Capital Programme, as set out in Section 3 above.

## **5.0 LEGAL**

5.1 Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 imposes a duty on the Council, as Highway Authority, to maintain highways at the public expense.

## **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

6.1 ICT: None

6.2 STAFFING: Existing staff resources will be used for the detailed investigation, design and monitoring of these schemes.

6.3 ASSETS: Preventative maintenance to the highway assets will increase their residual life and asset value, and future spending will be targeted to maintain the carriageway condition indicators at their current level.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

7.1 The duty to maintain the highway is achieved in part through structural maintenance of carriageways and footways, and withdrawal or reduction of funding would mean that that duty would not be met to the same degree.

7.2 As with most highway authorities, the network is deteriorating, and without a structural maintenance programme to address the highest priority routes, then the network will deteriorate further, the asset value will decrease and the cost of carrying much greater maintenance at a later date will be disproportionately higher.



- 7.3 Withdrawal of funding would lead to the deterioration of the network. This would have an adverse effect on the amount of substantiated claims received by the authority for Slips, Trips and Falls together with Road Traffic Accidents.
- 7.4 The Devolution Agreement recently approved by the Council includes provision for a Key Route Network (KRN) comprising routes which are of strategic importance to the Region, and controlled by the Combined Authority. After 2016/17, the Combined authority will receive all DfT allocated Capital Highway Maintenance funding and will determine its allocation to the KRN and to the Districts for non-KRN routes. The KRN will be introduced from May 2017, and this may impact on the three year programme proposed in this report.
- 7.5 The Indicative Allocations from the DfT Incentive Fund for 2017/18 and 2018/19 are based on the Council improving its Self-Assessment scoring to target levels to meet the next highest level by November 2016, and to meet the highest level by November 2017, as set out in the proposed Transport Strategy 2015 - 2020. If these are not achieved, then the indicative allocation from the Incentive Fund will be lower.
- 7.6 A three year programme is more susceptible to changing constraints than the traditional single year programme, whether that be financial or network condition.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 Local Ward Councillors have been consulted as described in Section 3.7.

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

(a) Yes and impact review is attached –

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-2010-0>

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix – Proposed Highway Structural Maintenance Programme 2016/17 to 2018/19.

## REFERENCE MATERIAL

United Kingdom Pavement Management Systems (UKPMS) Survey Condition Data held by the report author.

Single Data List Items (Former National Indicators N.I.168, N.I.169 and former BVPI 224b.) held by the report author.

2012 Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme Potholes Review held by the report author.

DfT Guidance on the benefits of highway maintenance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-highways-maintenance-economic-costs-and-benefits-tool>

DfT Indicative Allocations Incentive Fund:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/highways-maintenance-funding-incentive-element>

## SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Cabinet Member – Revision to Structural Maintenance Programme 2015/16</b>	<b>19 October 2015</b>
<b>Cabinet - Highway Maintenance Funding and Structural Maintenance Programme 2015/16</b>	<b>10 February 2015</b>
<b>Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee – Notice of Motion “Investing in Wirral’s Infrastructure” – Management of Highway Assets</b>	<b>3 December 2014</b>
<b>Cabinet Member Briefing – Highways Maintenance Capital Funding: Department for Transport Incentive Fund Self-assessment Process</b>	<b>2 December 2014</b>
<b>Cabinet – Highway Maintenance Funding and Structural Maintenance Programme 2014/15</b>	<b>16 January 2014</b>

**Cabinet – Highway Maintenance Funding and  
Structural Maintenance Programme 2013/14**

**24 January 2013**