

Wiltshire Council

Bradford on Avon Area Board

13 March 2019

Subject: Road Surfacing Programme 2019/20

Cabinet Member: Councillor Bridget Wayman - Highways, Transport and Waste

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary

There has been under investment in highways maintenance nationally for many years, but Wiltshire Council has been making a substantial investment in improving its road network, with a budget of up to £21 million annually in recent years. Since 2014 about 907 kilometres of the network has been resurfaced, which is about 20% of the total network.

146 kilometres of roads were resurfaced in 2018/19 and over 55,000 square metres of other road repairs carried out. This programme of surfacing work will continue in 2019/20 with a large number of sites identified for treatment (see **Appendix 1**). A provisional list of sites for treatment in future years has also been developed, which will be subject to annual review to ensure the priority sites are being addressed.

The overall condition of Wiltshire's roads compares favourably with the national average and the south-west average road conditions. However, it is appreciated that there is still much to do. As well as the roads it proposed to carry out programmes of footway maintenance, road marking renewals, and sign replacement in 2019/20.

Proposals

It is recommended that the Area Board:

- (i) Welcomes the road surfacing work and repairs carried out in 2018/19 and notes the improvement in the overall condition of Wiltshire's roads in recent years, but acknowledges that further investment is still required.
- (ii) Approves the highway maintenance scheme list for 2019/20 prepared for the Area Board.
- (iii) Notes the new provisional five year programme, which will reviewed annually to ensure best value for money and whole life costing for the highways asset.

Reason for Proposals

The highway network forms the Council's largest asset, and it is important that it is maintained in the most cost-effective way that provides value for money. This includes the use of asset management and whole life costing approaches to inform long-term investment decisions.

Asset management principles have been applied for many years in Wiltshire to ensure that there is appropriate investment with longer term planning for the management of the highways assets. The development of a long-term programme will help with the forward planning of work on the highway network.

Alistair Cunningham
Corporate Director

Wiltshire Council

Bradford on Avon Area Board

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Key Decision: No

Purpose of Report

1. To provide information on the progress made in improving the condition of the county's roads, and to advise on the road surfacing schemes to be undertaken in 2019/20.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. The Wiltshire Council Business Plan 2017 – 2027 sets out the vision to create strong communities, with priorities for growing the economy, strong communities and protecting the vulnerable. As part of growing the economy it is acknowledged that it is necessary to bring the county's roads up to an acceptable state. The goal is that road infrastructure is improved and to:
 - Improve asset management and the use of investment to improve the condition of Wiltshire roads (implementing our Highways Asset Management Strategy).
 - Promote and further development the MyWiltshire app to improve and increase the reporting of issues.

Background

3. The local highway network in Wiltshire comprises over 4,400 kilometres of roads and is vital for businesses and communities. Effective maintenance to ensure its availability is essential to the economic development of the county. Wiltshire Council recognises the importance of maintaining and managing its highway network effectively, and has been making a significant investment in improving the condition of its highway assets in recent years.
4. The condition of the county's roads is important to the public. This is demonstrated by the results of previous People's Voice surveys and the annual National Highways and Transportation (NHT) surveys, which indicate low levels of public satisfaction with road conditions nationally and in Wiltshire.
5. This report provides a summary of the progress to date on improving the condition of the county's roads, and the proposed road surfacing on the Council's current highway investment programme.

Main Considerations for the Council

6. Wiltshire Council has to address the longstanding under investment in highways maintenance and the consequent backlog, which has been a problem nationally for many years. The Council's major programme of investment in highway maintenance over the past decade has significantly improved the condition of the county's roads, and stopped the deterioration of the road network.
7. Nearly all of the schemes in the 2017/18 programme have been completed, and those not completed will form part of the future programme. Information about the type of road surfacing treatments undertaken by the Council is included in **Appendix 1**.
8. There are also a large number of skid resistance sites to be treated this year, which are required in order to keep the roads safe. They consist of various treatments, including surface retexturing and resurfacing. Some repairs and retexturing are needed as a result of the damage caused by the hot weather in the summer. The treatment for these sites is currently being finalised.
9. A provisional list of roads for treatment over the next five years has also been developed (See **Appendix 2**). This is based on current road conditions and anticipated deterioration in condition. This list will be reviewed annually to ensure that the priority sites are treated to keep the roads safe. The details of the proposals for 2019/20 are shown in the document.
10. The CATG and Area Board are welcome to identify any sites of local concern which may need to be prioritised, and possibly substituted for future schemes in the list. Any defects or areas of immediate concern should be raised with the area engineer or technician, or reported through My Wiltshire.

Safeguarding Implications

11. None.

Public Health Implications

12. The condition of roads and related infrastructure can have serious safety implications, especially with regard to skid resistance. Keeping the roads in good condition can help with reducing accidents. Roads, bridges, highway structures, signs and street lighting also need to be kept in good condition in order to protect the public and those maintaining the assets.

Corporate Procurement Implications

13. There are no procurement implications at this stage.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

14. The improved maintenance of the highway network, its management using sound asset management principles, and good performance by the highways contractors, should benefit all road users, including public transport, and vulnerable road users such as cyclists and pedestrians.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

15. The effects of climate change could be significant for the highway network. There was considerable damage to the roads, footways and drainage systems in the flooding of 2014, and such events could be repeated. The hot weather in the summer of 2018 caused damage costing over £1,000,000 to repair in Wiltshire. Having robust maintenance and investment strategies to improve the condition of the network helps build resilience into the highway network and the infrastructure.
16. Where possible, suitable materials arising from road resurfacing schemes are recycled. Large quantities of road planings are often used on rights of way to repair damage and on county farms, or provided to community groups. Trial sites for in-situ recycling of materials are carried out where feasible.

Risk Assessment

17. The application of good asset management principles, the planned maintenance of the highway infrastructure, and the establishment of formalised asset management policies and the programme of planned resurfacing, help reduce the risk of incidents and claims.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

18. There is a risk of increased collisions, claims and public dissatisfaction if highway maintenance is not carried out. The principles of asset management have been followed by this Council for many years, and there is a need to continue to demonstrate best practise and obtain best value for money.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

19. It is important to ensure that highways asset management and service delivery are implemented effectively. Processes are currently in place with Service Delivery Teams managing the various aspects of the highway service, and these are the appropriate groups to continue to manage the associated risks. The teams include representatives from the Council, consultants and contractors involved in carrying out the works, and they report to the Contract Management Meeting comprising senior managers from those organisations.

Financial Implications

20. The highway network and related infrastructure forms the Council's largest asset, and has a replacement value of over £5 billion. It is important that it is maintained in the most cost-effective way in order to obtain value for money. This includes the use of a whole life costing approach to inform investment decisions on highway maintenance.

Legal Implications

21. The Council has a duty under the Highways Act to maintain the county's roads. The highway inspection procedures, policies and improvement plans ensure that this duty is fulfilled. The investment and improved road conditions in recent years is helping the Council meet its responsibilities with regard to road maintenance.

Options Considered

22. The recent investment in highways maintenance has seen a substantial improvement in the condition of the county's roads, which are in better overall condition than most road networks in the south-west and nationally.
23. The proposed scheme list for 2019/20 has been developed based on the condition data and local knowledge and is considered to represent a realistic programme in view of current funding levels.

Conclusions

24. The highway network forms the Council's largest asset, and it is important that it is maintained in the most cost-effective way in order to show value for money. This includes the use of whole life costing approaches to inform investment decisions.
25. A programme of road resurfacing for 2019/2020 has been identified, based on safety needs and the need to improve the condition of the highway network and related assets. A provisional list of sites for treatment in future years has also been identified, which will be reviewed annually.

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March 2019

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

None

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Wiltshire Highways Maintenance Programme 2019/20
Appendix 2 – Area Board Surfacing Proposals