

**Decision Maker:** Environment Portfolio Holder

**For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Environment PDS Committee on**

**Date:** 29 January 2014

**Decision Type:** Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

**Title:** 2014/15 PLANNED HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME

**Contact Officer:** Paul Redman, Highways Asset Manager  
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**Chief Officer:** Nigel Davies, Executive Director of Environment & Community Services

**Ward:** All

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1. Reason for report

This report presents programmes of planned footway and carriageway maintenance identified for completion during the next financial year (2014/15), and lists of roads to be considered in subsequent years as reserve schemes or potential programmes of planned maintenance.

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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**That the Environment Portfolio Holder:**

- i) **Agrees that the schemes listed in Appendix A should form the basis of the Council's programme of planned highway maintenance for 2014/15 and, subject to budgetary provision, that the works should be progressed;**
- ii) **Notes the reserve schemes and potential programmes of work for future years as listed in Appendix B; and**
- iii) **Notes the proposed TfL funded programme of highway maintenance works (Principal A Roads) for 2014/15 as set out in Appendix C.**

## Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
  2. BBB Priority: Quality Environment
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## Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated Cost£3.319m
  2. Ongoing costs: Recurring Cost £3.319m
  3. Budget head/performance centre: Highways and TfL funding
  4. Total current budget for this head: £2.3m and £1.019m
  5. Source of funding: Existing highways revenue budget for 2013/14 and 2014/15 principal road maintenance capital allocation from TfL
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## Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional):4
  2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: 4 fte
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## Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement
  2. Call-in: Applicable
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## Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Borough wide
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## Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Yes
2. Summary of Ward Councillors' comments -
  - a) Cllr Stephen Wells: Bammerton Road should be patched and potholes filled (Kelsey and Eden Park ward).
  - b) Cllr Nicky Dykes: Disappointed with the limited amount of planned maintenance scheduled for Bromley Town Centre ward in comparison with other wards.
  - c) Cllr Julian Bennington: Plans for Biggin Hill noted.

### **3. COMMENTARY**

#### **Background**

- 3.1 Bromley has responsibility for a significant highway asset, with total carriageway and footway lengths of approximately 547 miles (880 Km) and 885 miles (1,425 Km ) respectively. The carriageways and footways are used by the majority of Bromley's residents, visitors and businesses on a daily basis. This valuable asset helps to facilitate safe and reliable travel around the borough for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. It thereby makes a significant contribution to the viability and vitality of the borough, and to the shops and trades who do business here. The gross replacement value of the carriageway and footway network is approximately £1.5bn according to Bromley's latest (summer 2013) submission to HM Treasury, and hence it is a valuable asset in the literal sense too.
- 3.2 Planned highway maintenance helps to minimise the amount of more expensive reactive maintenance required on the network, and therefore offers a prudent approach to asset management. It helps reduce the number of claims for damages against the Council and a well maintained, available highway should contribute to enhancing customer satisfaction. The case for continued investment in planned maintenance of the highway asset remains strong.

#### **Road Selection**

- 3.3 The lists of roads in appendices A and C set out the recommended planned programmes of work to be undertaken during 2014/15. Separate programmes of work have been published for the Council's principal 'A road' network (Appendix C) and the B, C and Unclassified road networks (Appendix A), including both carriageways and footways. Further lists have been included in Appendix B indicating reserve schemes and potential programmes of work for subsequent years.
- 3.4 The lists of roads were compiled following a two phase commission undertaken by an external highways consultant, a change in procurement strategy from the in-house approach adopted previously. The first phase comprised a condition survey of the whole of Bromley's highway network, both carriageway and footway. This provided a benchmark of physical deterioration evident at each location on the network, and also the data used to determine condition indices.
- 3.5 Condition surveys consistently show more locations requiring maintenance than can be targeted in any one financial year. Hence the second phase of the commission involved prioritisation through value management where data, such as highway location/use (near schools/shops/transport hubs), level of recent reactive maintenance undertaken and the outcomes of consultation, was used to help identify and rank those locations with the highest priority for treatment. This may help to explain why one road may be given a higher priority than another where deterioration in surface condition appears similar.

#### **Condition**

- 3.6 A capital allocation from TfL currently funds planned highway maintenance of the Principal 'A road' network. This network is approximately 42 miles (67 Km ) in length and continued annual investment of between £0.75m and £1.0m has helped to lower the proportion of roads requiring maintenance to 3%. The length of the remaining carriageway network is 505 miles ( 813 Km ), made up of 58 miles (93 Km) of non-principal classified roads and 447 miles ( 720 Km ) of unclassified roads where planned highway maintenance is funded from the Borough's revenue budget. The budget for planned maintenance of borough roads (carriageways) for the current year is £1.2m. Provisional 2012-13 condition indices show 5% of non-principal classified roads and 20% of unclassified roads requiring maintenance.

- 3.7 The highway condition indices identify the proportion of the network requiring planned maintenance 'soon' and are used as a means of tracking trends in highway condition on an annual basis. Condition of the Borough's non-principal classified roads (B&C) remains at a steady state in line with the Portfolio Plan. However there is firm evidence that the condition of unclassified roads is deteriorating. The corresponding proportion of unclassified roads requiring maintenance in 2009/10 was 16%, rising to 20% in 2011/12.

### **Treatments**

- 3.8 A range of treatments is available for highway maintenance including surface treatments, resurfacing and reconstruction. During the current financial year surface dressing was used extensively as a preventative treatment in rural areas of the borough. The process helps to extend the life of the highway by sealing the surface from the ingress of water and restoring skid resistance. It is a cost effective process and over 70,000 square metres of country lanes were surface dressed in the summer 2013. Had more traditional methods of resurfacing been used, a significantly lower area (approximately half as much) of highway would have been treated.

### **Discussion**

- 3.9 Value management has helped direct funds to the busiest roads in poorest condition. This represents a sound investment strategy. However, evidence indicates this may have been to the detriment of unclassified roads i.e. those estate and residential roads that are not through routes, but generally serve only the community who live in those roads. The condition index suggests that 20% of this highway asset, approximately 90 miles (144 Km), requires planned maintenance 'soon'. Furthermore, condition has been diminishing over time. Four years ago only 72 miles (115 Km) of unclassified road was identified as requiring planned maintenance.
- 3.10 Given this current trend it would be prudent to investigate alternative investment strategies focussing on the unclassified carriageway network. The investigation should examine the relationship between potential investment and the condition of unclassified roads. In developing alternative investment strategies the following approaches could be considered:
- Working on the basis that a fixed budget (at current levels) will continue to be allocated in the foreseeable future, identifying the impact this will have on the condition index and hence the length of road that will require maintenance in subsequent years.
  - Acknowledge that the current condition index represents an acceptable standard and determine the level of annual funding required to maintain the current condition in future years.
  - Identify an acceptable target condition for the unclassified road network and determine the budget required to meet the target condition. This option could be based on a target reduction in the condition index of, say, 5% over a five year period taking account of the impact this would have on budget requirements.
- 3.11 It would be possible to take forward the above scenarios and bring a report back with further information later in the year. Alternatively it has been found helpful in the past, prior to any study work, to first have broader discussions at a Member Working Group level. This would help ensure the most appropriate investment strategies are identified prior to modelling and reporting back. Guidance would be welcomed in respect of the preferred way to investigate this issue of diminishing unclassified carriageway condition.

#### 4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Environment Portfolio Plan 2013/16 states that “The condition of Bromley’s roads and pavements has been consistently identified by residents as a particularly important issue, and their maintenance continues to be a priority for the Council”, and notes that “Satisfaction with the condition of roads and pavements has a significant impact on residents’ confidence in the Council”. Maintaining the highway asset in an appropriate condition contributes to the Council’s vision of providing a place where people choose to live and do business, and links well with the Building a Better Bromley priorities of a quality environment, vibrant thriving town centres and safer communities.

#### 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Planned maintenance works for the Borough roads are funded from the annual revenue highways maintenance budget. The budgets for carriageways and footways are indicated in the table below.
- 5.2 Maintenance of the Principal Road Network is funded by TfL. These funds can only be used for maintenance work on these classified roads.
- 5.3 A summary of the available funding is set out in the table below: -

Funding	£'000	£'000
<u>Revenue - Appendix A</u>		
Carriageway maintenance 2013/14 budget	1,206	
Footway maintenance 2013/14 budget	1,094	
		2,300
<u>Capital - Appendix C</u>		
Pprincipal Road Network 2014/15 funding from TfL		1,019
<b>Total Funding available</b>		<b>3,319</b>

#### 6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Under the Highways Act 1980 the Council, as the Highway Authority, has duties to ensure the safe passage of highway users and to maintain the highway.

<b>Non-Applicable Sections:</b>	Personnel Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Environment Portfolio Plan 2013/16  ES 09093 – Planned Highway Maintenance 2009  Managing a valuable asset: Improving local road condition (October 2013 – APPG) <a href="http://www.highwaysmaintenance.org/images/library/files/APPG_Report_-_Managing_a_valuable_asset.pdf">http://www.highwaysmaintenance.org/images/library/files/APPG_Report_-_Managing_a_valuable_asset.pdf</a> Highway Infrastructure Asset Management- Guidance Document ( May 2013 – DfT ) <a href="http://www.ukroadsliasongroup.org/en/utilities/document-summary.cfm?docid=5C49F48E-1CE0-477F-933ACBFA169AF8CB">http://www.ukroadsliasongroup.org/en/utilities/document-summary.cfm?docid=5C49F48E-1CE0-477F-933ACBFA169AF8CB</a>