

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

**CABINET
24 May 2016**

**REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor John Brunt
Portfolio Holder for Highways**

SUBJECT: Highways Capital Programme 2016 - 2017

REPORT FOR: Decision

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report outlines proposals for the allocation of capital funding for the Highways and Transport service areas in line with the budget allocations in the Council's 2016-17 Budget Book. Funding secured through grant bids is also included.

2.0 Proposal

2.1 To allocate capital expenditure for the Highway network as set out in Appendix A and Appendix B.

3.0 One Powys Plan

3.1 The proposal supports the objectives for Stronger Communities and Financially Balanced and fit for purpose public service.

4.0 Background

4.1 The backlog of work across the highway network continues to exceed an estimated £40 million for carriageways. Condition surveys carried out during 15/16 indicate minor variations in road conditions compared with the previous year but there are still 19% of classified roads (A, B and C roads) in the red category that potentially require work in the near future. This amounts to around 1,100 km of road.

4.2 Around 20 bridges have failed their routine assessment and potentially require work, with half of these having weight restrictions imposed. The others have no restriction at present but are being monitored. Of those bridges left to assess it is estimated that a further 80 are likely to fail and require some form of remedial work. The projected costs for dealing with these is over £8 million. In addition, a further £9 million (exclusive of fees and environmental compliance costs) has been identified for maintenance works to bridges. These works are not sufficient to cause failure during the assessment process but will lead to accelerated deterioration and likely failure if not addressed.

- 4.3 Scheme priorities have been established using the approved scheme ranking system to help ensure appropriate allocation on a needs basis. Candidate schemes have been identified from routine inspections, stakeholder raised issues (e.g. public, Town & Community Councils) as well as those put forward for consideration by County Councillors through the regular area liaison forums between Members and Highways Grounds and Street Scene (HGSS) Managers.
- 4.4 The end of the Welsh Government Local Government Borrowing Initiative in 2014 has significantly reduced available funding. With a large number of schemes competing for less funding it has been necessary to review further the high priority schemes in order to target allocations appropriately. In light of these pressures it would seem appropriate to review the existing scheme ranking process as part of the update to the Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP) and to consider a potential growth bid for surface dressing, surfacing and bridge works for 2017/2018.

5.0 Recommendation.

- 5.1 The recommended allocation is as set out in Appendix A (Summary of Income and Proposed Expenditure) and Appendix B (Proposed Scheme Expenditure).
- 5.2 It is proposed that the moratorium on Major Strategic Schemes continues in order to focus on investment in the existing infrastructure. Such schemes will therefore only be considered if they unlock significant regeneration potential or are primarily funded through external sources. Any such proposals would require approval through Cabinet or Council.
- 5.3 The Transport allocations are funded from specific Welsh Government grants. Requests have been received for other schemes in this category, such as a bus stop at Welshpool Railway Station. Given the pressures from managing the condition of the existing infrastructure it is not proposed to make any allocation from core funding this year for such expenditure.
- 5.4 A specific allocation has been made to convert the remaining street lighting stock to energy efficient fitting using LED technology. This will enable significant cost saving on energy and is included within the MTFS.
- 5.5 The highway core funding of £1.5 million is proposed to be allocated to: major remedial earthworks; structural drainage; highway strengthening (resurfacing) as well as structures strengthening and renewals. For roads the proposed allocation is £1.982 million against a projected backlog of over £40 million. For bridge strengthening the proposed allocation is £0.35 million (projected £8 million backlog) whilst for bridge maintenance an allocation of £0.124 million is proposed (£9 million backlog).

- 5.6 Of the core funding the road safety and traffic management allocation of £100,000 will continue to deliver schemes approved by the Shire committees and are prioritised through the approved ranking system.
- 5.7 The council has made available funding of £1.12 million for the structural maintenance of roads. It should be noted that there will be no surface dressing programme in 16/17 with £850k being removed from the capital programme. This is a very cost effective maintenance technique and its removal will need to be carefully considered in relation to the update of the HAMP. To reintroduce a meaningful programme a potential growth bid will need to be considered for 17/18.
- 5.8 A number of grant bids have been submitted to Welsh Government with successful allocations this year for Road Safety Grants and Safe Routes in the Communities as well as transport (Local Transport Fund). Bids submitted for future years have not received allocations as yet but external funding opportunities will continue to be pursued where appropriate.
- 5.9 Welsh Government allocations for flood alleviation schemes continue and further bid submissions are being considered.

6.0 Sustainability and Environmental Issues/Equalities/Crime and Disorder,/Welsh Language/Other Policies etc

- 6.1 Issues of sustainability and environment will be considered on a scheme by scheme basis. There are no known overarching impacts at this time.

7.0 Children and Young People's Impact Statement - Safeguarding and Wellbeing

- 7.1 There are no identified impacts at this time.

8.0 Local Member(s)

- 8.1 Local Members have the opportunity to raise matters and discuss progress on schemes through the regular area liaison meetings with HGSS staff.

9.0 Other Front Line Services

- 9.1 There are no overarching impacts at this time. Issues may be identified on an individual scheme basis that will need to be addressed before the scheme can progress.

10.0 Support Services (Legal, Finance, Corporate Property, HR, ICT, Business Services)

- 10.1 The Capital and Financial Planning Accountant confirms that the budgets are included in the Capital Programme.

10.2 Legal: The recommendations can be supported from a legal point of view.

11.0 Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc

11.1 No implications have been identified at this time.

12.0 Corporate Communications

12.1 The report is of considerable public interest and requires full use of news release and social media to publicise the decision.

13.0 Statutory Officers

13.1 The Strategic Director Resources (Section 151 Officer) notes the comments made by finance.

13.2 The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report.

14.0 Members' Interests

14.1 The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If Members have an interest they should declare it at the start of the meeting and complete the relevant notification form.

Recommendation:	Reason for Recommendation:
That the funding proposals outlined in Appendix A and Appendix B are approved.	To enable delivery of infrastructure investment to protect council assets.

Relevant Policy (ies):			
Within Policy:	Y / N	Within Budget:	Y / N

Relevant Local Member(s):	n/a
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Person(s) To Implement Decision:	Head of Highways, Transport and Recycling
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	Relevant financial year

Contact Officer Name(s):	Tel:	Fax:	Email:
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Background Papers used to prepare Report:
Budget book