



REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 17TH JULY 2012

SUBJECT: APPORTIONMENT OF HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE BUDGET 2012/2013

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide members with details of the proposed apportionment of the highway maintenance budget.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The 2012/2013 Highway Maintenance budget is £7,013,381 which is inclusive of the deprivation grant which is now part of the base budget.
- 2.2 The street lighting budget allocation is £2,150,000 which is inclusive of energy costs.
- 2.3 The 2012/2013 capital budget allocation is £320,000 which is related to highway and flood alleviation works.
- 2.4 The report also makes reference to the Local Government Borrowing Initiative (LGBI) Works that are currently ongoing and previously reported and approved by Council on 23.02.12.
- 2.5 The ongoing strategy adopted is to try and maximise planned maintenance and reduce reactive maintenance where appropriate whilst always ensuring that the safety of the highway user is not compromised.
- 2.6 The highway asset is the authority's largest asset valued at over £1 billion. In order to try and maintain the highway at an acceptable standard that does not compromise user safety alternate strategies such as preventative maintenance are being more widely utilised as there is insufficient funding available to undertake much needed structural carriageway maintenance.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 To maintain to a satisfactory safety standard the developed integrated, efficient local and regional transport system on which public transport, cycling and walking networks operate.
- 3.2 To assist in mitigating the effects of climate change through improving energy efficiency and reducing emissions of greenhouse gasses within the county borough, whilst taking steps at adapt to the local effects of climate change.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The authority has recently confirmed that the available budget allocation for 2012/2013 is £7,013,381 as indicated in 2.1 above. The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) details that £50,000 is taken from highway maintenance, £50,000 and £40,000 is taken from winter maintenance, this has been considered within the apportionment. It should also be noted that the street lighting budget has been reduced by £50,000 in accordance with the authority's MTFP.
- 4.2 In addition to the above revenue allocation, there has also been a capital allocation of £250,000 to undertake carriageway resurfacing works, this capital money, when added to the revenue apportionment and the LGBI funding will provide over £3,300,000 carriageway surface treatments to be undertaken during 2012/2013.
- 4.3 The highway asset is currently valued at over £1 billion. Using simple comparatives it is evident that a maintenance budget of £7,013,381 will only allow assets to be renewed approximately every 145 years, well in excess of assets intended lifespan. It is therefore essential that the current strategy is developed to try and preserve the life of the authority's existing assets. The proposed budget apportionment is detailed in appendix 1.
- 4.4 The forward strategy has to ensure that any work undertaken is selected on a risk-prioritised basis. In order to assist this process the authority is currently finalising a Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP) which will consider the risk prioritisation process. The HAMP is being developed in conjunction with CSS Wales as an All Wales project to ensure there is a consistent approach in Wales and to achieve efficiencies in procurement of specialist expertise. This project is currently supported by WG with a CCBC representative sitting on the project board.
- 4.5 Additional works which include carriageway reconstruction, highway resurfacing, footway resurfacing and flood alleviation schemes are being undertaken this financial year utilising approximately £2.8m of prudential borrowing capital money which is being funded by Welsh Government over the next 22 years. A list of these works are included in Appendix 2 for members information. These works were approved by Council on 23.02.2012.
- 4.6 It is essential that highway maintenance is undertaken in the most cost effective manner. In order to achieve this, alternate preservation techniques such as surface dressing, micro asphaltting, and slurry sealing will need to be continued in 2012/2013 along with investment in a velocity-patching vehicle. It is intended that the velocity patcher will be funded via an invest to save proposal. These techniques have become more advanced and innovative over recent years and are being widely adopted by authorities for the value for money obtained in preserving the life of the highway network. The cost of surface dressing is approximately a third of traditional plane out and resurface. This therefore allows approximately three times the surface area to be treated for the same budget spend.
- 4.7 The revenue programme for surface dressing has been prioritised from specialist technical data surveys and is focussed on the high usage A and B road network. Additionally, the carriageway resurfacing programme is to be utilised on some high priority minor roads and/or where surface dressing is not considered an appropriate option. The priority programmes are identified in appendices 3 & 4 respectively.
- 4.8 The proposed apportionments have been undertaken to try and move the budget spend to the most needed areas at this time. The strategy is also targeted at attempting to reprofile the reactive spend into a more planned maintenance approach. It should be noted that this will be inherently difficult given the average renewal time of 145 years as stated in 4.3.
- 4.9 The drainage replacement/upgrade programme is continually being reviewed and risk prioritised. The current allocation will be insufficient to address the significant backlog of identified schemes. Those with the highest risk prioritisation which will consider risk to life and or property will be undertaken first. There will be insufficient funding to address all the highest

risks during 2012/2013. However, the LGBI funding has allowed some long-standing priorities to be progressed during 2012/2013, as identified in Appendix 5.

- 4.10 The footway resurfacing programme has again been prioritised and pedestrian areas with highest usage and risk have been programmed accordingly. The footway scheme programme for 2012/2013 is included in Appendix 6. Appendix 2 includes a list of footway schemes currently ongoing that is funded via the LGBI capital monies as approved by Council and highlighted in 4.5 above.
- 4.11 Street Lighting has received extensive funding over previous years and the CCBC asset is considered one of the best in Wales. It is therefore still appropriate to continue re-apportioning some of the budget to areas such as carriageway resurfacing. The proposed street lighting budget is included in the apportionment in Appendix 1. The budget has been reduced by £50,000 in accordance with the MTFP.
- 4.12 It should be noted that energy costs for street lighting increased significantly for 2011/2012. The actual increase was 20.6% which equated to an additional commitment of £236,200. For 2012/2013 the energy increase has been confirmed as 0.8% which along with increases in control charges equates to an increase of approximately £57,000. The difference between last year and the coming year demonstrates the volatility with this area of expenditure. It is essential that the street lighting team continue with trials such as Central Management Systems (CMS), dimming and LED's to obtain relevant data to review future approaches and investment options.
- 4.13 The maintenance programme for highway structures has been derived from a risk prioritisation process for bridges, culverts, retaining walls and landslips and erosion. The proposed list of works for 2012/2013 are included in Appendix 7. It should be noted that there maybe some amendments made to the programme should there be ecology elements that may impact on the proposals. Should this occur, works of similar priority will be substituted.
- 4.14 Over recent years there has appeared to be a trend in more severe weather events. Flooding and snow have caused major problems both locally and nationally as recently highlighted with the flooding in the Aberystwyth area. These incidents are inherently difficult to predict and there is very limited provision to deal with any instances within this budget.
- 4.15 An exercise is currently ongoing considering route optimisation for Winter Maintenance activities. The intention is to implement a more efficient route coverage from the data obtained. Further investment is continuing to be made by NCS, the authority's in-house contractor in the most up to date plant and resources to undertake these works.
- 4.16 A budget of £50,000 has been allocated to Traffic Management in 2012/2013. Appendix 8 identifies the programme for traffic regulation orders and minor works following consultation with Members. Every effort will be made to deliver the programme but resources will be prioritised to meet commitments for ongoing schemes.
- 4.17 Included in Appendix 9 is a plan detailing the highway inspector area boundaries for members information.
- 4.18 The budget apportionment continues to meet the requirements and proposals set out within the authority's medium term financial plan.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Financial implications are detailed within the report.

6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None.

7. CONSULTATIONS

7.1 Refer to attached list.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That members consider and note the report, providing comments as appropriate on the proposed apportionment and strategy.

9. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 To consider Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny comments and review the budget apportionment for 2012/2013 and the proposed strategy for highway maintenance if appropriate.

10. STATUTORY POWER

10.1 Highway Act 1980.

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Appendices:
Appendix 1 Highway Maintenance Budget Apportionment 2012/2013
Appendix 2 Local Government Borrowing Initiative Funded Schemes
Appendix 3 Surface Dressing/Thin Surfacing Schemes
Appendix 4 Carriageway Resurfacing Schemes
Appendix 5 Drainage Priorities
Appendix 6 Footway Schemes
Appendix 7 Structures Priorities
Appendix 8 Traffic Management Priorities
Appendix 9 Highway Inspectors Areas