



Report of the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement and Infrastructure Management

Cabinet – 18 March 2021

FPR7 Capital Allocation to Highway Infrastructure Assets 2021-22

Purpose:	To confirm the Capital Work Programme for highway infrastructure assets.
Policy Framework:	The Revenue and Capital budget as reported to and approved by Council on 4 th March 2021.
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: 1) The proposed indicative allocations, together with the Financial Implications set out in Appendix A , are approved and included in the Capital Programme. 2) Authority is delegated to the Head of Service for Highways and Transportation with the agreement of the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement and Infrastructure Management to prioritise, finalise and allocate funding to the appropriate schemes in line with the prioritisation approach detailed in this report.
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 At its meeting of 4th March 2021, Council approved the Revenue and Capital Budget for 2021/22. The Capital budget included an allocation of **£3.468m** for highway and infrastructure assets.

- 1.2 An allocation of **£1.4m** has been received to help tackle the backlog of highway maintenance based on the evidence in the Highways commissioning report.
- 1.3 An allocation £550k has been made in relation to landslip and road reconstruction of Graig Road, Morriston.

2. Capital Programme

The City and County of Swansea's infrastructure is in need of significant investment and there is a significant backlog of works. The Authority is continuing to develop programmes of work based on the principles agreed as part of the all Wales Asset Management Project. This will ensure spending is targeted based on a whole life cost approach which will minimise financial and service demands.

- 2.1 The Authority considers a variety of different methods of repair and uses assessment approaches agreed across Wales. This enables decisions on the most efficient and effective approaches for managing the network based on a mix of preventative, reactive and planned maintenance works. The core funding is allocated to the highway capital programme (2020-25) which was developed with these principles.
- 2.2 The scheme prioritisation approach provides a framework whereby any additional funding will enable schemes in the 5 year plan to be brought forward for completion. These will be selected using the same asset management approach used to produce the forward works programme. There will be a split of approximately 60/40 between corrective work (e.g. resurfacing a road in poor condition) and preventative work (e.g. extending the life of a road in average condition). Carriageway and footway schemes will be selected based on a review of factors such as network importance, condition, network use and likely deterioration. A score for each assessed road will be calculated and the highest scoring schemes will be programmed. This prioritisation will be balanced by the need to give cost effective packages of work of similar types (for instance, surface dressing requires a minimum quantity of work to be cost effective when considering site set up costs).

3. Key Proposals

- 3.1 It is critical to ensure that investment in the highway network is sustained to minimise future deterioration. A steady state figure calculated to stop further deterioration of carriageways alone is £6.4m per annum with a backlog at over £70m (2019). There is also a significant backlog of works to refurbish footways. Total internal investment this year for is approximately £5.418m.

4. Allocation of the £3.468m Infrastructure Allocation.

The core allocation will fund the following priorities.

- 4.1 This allocation funds the second year of the 5 year programme of carriageway works. The programme for 2020-25 and is available at <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/highways>. This programme was heavily amended in 20/21 due to restrictions to work during the pandemic. There may be minor changes to this programme during the year as schemes may have been brought forward or pushed back for example to coordinate with utility works.
- 4.2 The continuation of the PATCH programme of minor resurfacing works which is complimentary to the main carriageway resurfacing programme will continue on a ward by ward basis.
- 4.3 This allocation funds the second year of the 5 year programme of footway works. The list of schemes planned is included in the published programme for 2020-25. The detail of the proposed schemes can be accessed at <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/highways>.
- 4.4 There are significant funding challenges for maintaining the bridges and structures as there are 147 bridges, 48 culverts, 11 subways and 3 gantries within highway ownership. The programme to update bridges has been prepared to reflect requirements on strategic routes and those where strengthening is required.
- 4.5 The condition of highway and council owned retaining walls continues to give cause for concern. There is a need to carry out proactive works to prevent others from failing. There are currently 4441 retaining walls on the asset register with an approximate total length of 13.5km.
- 4.6 The River Tawe barrage infrastructure requires sustained investment to ensure operations associated with Marina and other waterside activities are maintained.
- 4.7 Street lighting infrastructure remains a cause for concern. A testing regime has been put in place to identify lighting columns at risk, and this resulted in a significant number of columns being removed. A large number of these columns have been replaced however there around 1600 columns currently cut down and testing has identified further columns that need to be removed and replaced.
- 4.8 Longstanding works to reduce flooding on the highway will be implemented across the Authority. This will include specific works on several culverted watercourses. This element of the budget will also be used as match funding where Welsh Government funding streams are available.
- 4.9 An allocation has been made to deal with maintenance to Authority owned paved and surfaced areas that are in the public realm (non-Housing/Education). This is aligned with the "corporate ownership of assets". Highways & Transportation will maintain the safety of these areas as problems are identified on a prioritised basis. This allocation also includes for providing emergency strips on a one off basis where there are

life threatening emergencies on un-adopted privately maintained public highways (excluding private streets). This budget will also cover additional work on back lanes.

- 4.10 A programme to undertake capital maintenance on highway safety barriers. The funding for barriers will focus on repair and renewal on a reactive/ as identified basis.
- 4.11 Damaged sections of the coastal defences require investment to prevent further damage and to repair ongoing damage caused by winter storms. The allocation also includes provision to investigate flood risks as identified by the Flood Risk Management Plan.
- 4.12 An allocation has been made to allow design of improvement schemes to facilitate draw down of any additional grant or Capital.

5. The £1.4m Investment To Reduce The Backlog Of Works

This will include works on the carriageway, footway, works to tackle skid resistance, joint repairs, drainage/flooding improvements, junction improvements and bridge design works. Schemes on carriageways and footway will be prioritised on areas that give the highest concerns as described in 2.2. Other assets will be prioritised on engineering judgement. Budget split has been amended to allow for an increase in Drainage/flooding works.

- 5.1 In the current year the Infrastructure funds will be allocated as follows:

Annual Allocation **£3.468m**

Carriageway Resurfacing	£620k
Patch	£720k
Footway Renewals	£650k
Bridges and Retaining Walls	£400k
Marina & Barrage	£75k
Street Lighting Refurbishment	£250k
Drainage/Flooding Works	£493k
Unadopted Council-Owned Streets	£50k
Car Park Resurfacing and Improvements	£30k
Safety Barriers	£50k
Coastal Defence Works and Flood Risk Management	£50k
Telematics Upgrades	£80k
TOTAL	£3468.00

The additional **£1.4m** funds to reduce the backlog will be split as follows:

Carriageway Repairs (resurfacing schemes/joint repairs/machine patching/skid resistance)	£780k
Footway Repairs	£100k
Drainage Improvements	£440k
Junction Improvements	£50k
Bridges Design of Capital replacement schemes	£30k
TOTAL	£1,400K

5.2 The full additional programme for carriageways and footways supported by the increased funding will be made available online once complete and approved by the Cabinet Member. With all highways programmes it should be noted that some variation should be expected during the year due to issues like statutory undertakers works, accelerated deterioration etc.

6. Graig Road

6.1 An allocation of £550k has been made to allow for the adopted highway of Graig Road to be reconstructed. This project was approved in 2020 but is included in the 21/22 Capital programme for completeness.

7. Equality and Engagement Implications

7.1 The Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) and must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Our Equality Impact Assessment process ensures that we have paid due regard to the above.

7.2 The Capital investment in Highway and related Infrastructure will assist all road users. Individual projects will be subject to the EIA process on an individual basis where required.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 **Capital** - The cost of the Highways and Other Infrastructure works for 2021/22 funded by the Authority's own resources amounts to £5.418m. Details are set out in **Appendix A**.

8.2 **Revenue** - Future maintenance expenditure will be met from respective Revenue Service budgets. An effective capital investment programme will help reduce future revenue pressures.

9. **Legal Implications**

9.1 This investment will assist the Authority in discharging its statutory duty to maintain the Highway. All procurement activity and contracts intended to be let in respect of the above Schemes must comply with current UK Legislation, EU Directives and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix A – Financial Implications