

Report to:	Environment and Neighbourhood Committee	Date:	11 March 2020
Report title:	Planned Highway Maintenance and Street lighting Programme 2020/21		
Report from:	Simon Latham, Interim Strategic Director, Environment, Housing and Regeneration		
Ward/Areas affected:	Borough Wide		
Chair of Committee/Lead Member:	Councillor Manuel Abellan		
Author(s)/Contact Number(s):	Olga Gilevska, Highways Contracts and Delivery Team Leader		
Corporate Plan Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Being Active ● Making Informed Choices ● Living Well Independently ● Keeping People Safe 		
Open/Exempt:	Open		
Signed:		Date:	27 February 2020

1. Summary

- 1.1 As part of the Council's 'Ambitious for Sutton' plan, the Council is committed to maintaining and improving the physical environment for all its residents. The Council's highway network is the most visible, used and valuable physical asset for which the Council is responsible. To meet the Council's corporate objective of being a great place to live, work and raise a family, considerable investment in the heavily used highway assets is required to maintain them in a serviceable condition. Highway maintenance needs for footways, carriageways and street lighting have been reviewed, and the proposed programme for 2020/21 is set out in Appendices A and B and prioritised on a Borough-wide basis.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To incur capital expenditure in 2020/21 for the proposed highway maintenance programme for footways and carriageways and street lighting column replacement programme, as detailed in paragraph 6.1 (subject to funding confirmation), so that the schedule of works identified under Appendices A and B can be undertaken.

- 2.2 To delegate authority to the Assistant Director, Highways, Transport, and Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Chair of the Environment and Neighbourhood Committee, to make in-year changes to the prioritised planned highway maintenance programme to facilitate effective delivery and to respond in-year to emerging priorities or unforeseen events, e.g. severe weather conditions.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council's public highway network is the most valuable asset the Council owns and has a major significance to borough residents, communities and businesses. A well-maintained network is critical to the way that the borough is perceived and provides one of the bedrocks underpinning the 'Ambitious for Sutton' agenda. As described in the Capital Strategy, key rolling programmes for the Council include highway asset maintenance, pavement improvements and resurfacing, and street lighting works. It is also a requirement of the "Well managed highway infrastructure" Code of Practice to develop planned maintenance programmes.
- 3.2 A provisional planned highway maintenance programme is prepared each year from Council highways inspectors' safety condition reports and road condition surveys. This is coupled with the level of capital funding available and allows for a list of borough public highway locations most in need of planned maintenance to be put into a works programme.
- 3.3 All carriageway and footway locations on the provisional planned maintenance list are prioritised using a weighted score condition assessment, which takes account of the overall condition and usage of each location and incorporates feedback received from councillors and members of the public throughout the year, including petitions (e.g. the petition to resurface Woodmansterne Road has received 191 signatures). Under this process, strategic roads, bus routes and cycleways receive a higher priority, as do footways in shopping areas and those close to hospitals, schools and care homes. Street lighting columns are identified for replacement based on their age and condition. The prioritised lists are set out in the Appendices.
- 3.4 The Council's annual highway investment programme uses capital funding to fund the planned highways maintenance programme for local (non-principal) roads. The £1.23m of capital funding for footways and carriageways and £400k for street lighting column replacement programme was agreed by the Council for 2019/20.
- 3.5 External capital funding, provided by Transport for London (TfL), is used to deliver Borough Principal Road Network (BPRN) maintenance. A pan-London allocation of approximately £3m was set aside by TfL for the highest priority sites on all the London local authorities Principal Road Networks. It is yet to be agreed how this allocation will be targeted.
- 3.6 The prioritised list of roads is sent to all public utility companies for consultation, as required under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991. This allows the utilities to give notice of their future planned works and provides an opportunity for schemes to be programmed in to minimise the level of any disruption to the local community. The street works team is responsible for coordinating and monitoring all roadworks carried out within the Borough.

3.7 Local residents, and transport providers are informed of pending works through an advance letter drop in the weeks leading up to planned maintenance works taking place. The term contractor also affixes notices to lamp columns in the days preceding the works, to provide information to highway users, and the bus operators then advise passengers about any diversions required.

3.8 As referenced above, the Council is in receipt of a petition from residents about the need for investment in Woodmansterne Lane. The programme in 2020/21 includes resurfacing of the carriageway.

4. Issues

4.1 A selection of planned maintenance methods are used to carry out the works. The choice of the most appropriate method to be used is dictated by the existing condition and construction of the highway. Methods range from using materials where a full reconstruction is required (most expensive option) to thinner surface inlays or overlays (cheapest option). The option chosen is designed to give the greatest longevity to the road at the most economical cost i.e. whole life costing.

5. Options Considered

5.1 There is an option of doing nothing. This option has been disregarded as unrealistic, as this will have a significantly negative impact on asset condition and on revenue budgets, as assets will require more ad hoc reactive maintenance.

6. Impacts and Implications

Financial

6.1 The capital funding proposal is as follows and includes staff costs and contingencies for schemes proposed for 2020 / 2021:

- Carriageways £718k;
- Footways £512k;
- street lighting column replacement programme £400k.

Agreement is needed from the Environment and Neighbourhood Committee to incur capital expenditure for the Planned Highway Maintenance and Street Lighting Column Replacement Programmes so that the schedule of works identified under Appendices A and B can be undertaken during 2020/21 financial year. At the time of writing this report the overall budget and capital programme remains to be confirmed at Budget Council in February 2020.

Legal

- 6.2 The Council is the Highway Authority for its administrative area. The Authority has a duty under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 (the 1980 Act) to maintain the highways for which they are responsible.
- 6.3 Any claim brought against the Authority, alleging damage resulting from a breach of their 'duty' is subject to the above statutory defence under Section 58 of the 1980 Act . In considering the defence, the court is required to have regard to the following matters:-
- (a) The character of the highway, and the traffic reasonably to be expected to use it.
 - (b) The standard of maintenance appropriate for a highway of that character and used by such traffic.
 - (c) The state of repair in which a reasonable person would have expected to find the highway.
 - (d) Whether the Authority knew, or could have reasonably have been expected to know, that the condition of the relevant highway was likely to cause danger to users of it.

By undertaking a programme of maintenance work prioritised in accordance with the criteria set out above, and having had regard to Sections 41 and 58 of the 1980 Act , the Authority seeks to perform its statutory duty, and reduce the potential liability for insurance claims.

Community (including safety, localism, public health).

- 6.4 Letter drops to affected residents and businesses will be carried out by our Contractor 10 working days in advance of the works commencing, advising them of the arrangements and timescale. Copies are also sent to ward councillors.
- 6.5 Undertaking planned highway works improves the safety of public highway users and takes into consideration the need for facilities for disabled people, pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users.
- 6.6 This aligns with the Council's corporate plan theme "Being Active Citizen" which aims to maintain and improve the physical environment.
- 6.7 If the highway network is allowed to deteriorate there will be considerable congestion caused by increased amounts of responsive maintenance. Therefore officers develop a prioritised list of proposed footway and carriageway interventions in order to maintain our assets in a safe and serviceable condition. Responsive maintenance also puts increased pressure on scarce revenue budgets.
- 6.8 Prior to footway schemes commencing, residents will be contacted and asked if they would like to take the opportunity to apply for a new vehicle crossover or extend an existing one, if sites meet the current Vehicle Crossover Policy, and these works can be undertaken during footway works. Otherwise this service is provided on a demand basis. This approach has proved to be

beneficial in the past to all parties, and is critical to ensure the integrity of new footways is protected and does not incur any vehicle overruns to access properties.

- 6.9 Within Conservation areas, every effort is made to ensure that materials match the existing. When work has to be carried out at night, residents are informed at least two weeks in advance.
- 6.10 Works will be scheduled to commence as early in the new financial year as possible. However, the actual timing of scheme works will be determined and coordinated with other activities, such as statutory undertakers' planned works, school holidays and other relevant events as part of the Council's network management duties.
- 6.11 Prolonged periods of very wet, cold or hot weather can have a significant influence on the works programme and priorities. Additionally, works by statutory undertakers may result in some schemes needing to be delayed to a later year. In this event, it is proposed that the next road(s) on the prioritised list would be brought forward for implementation.

Risk

- 6.12 The failure to fulfil our statutory duty as the Highway Authority would have legal and financial implications and be potentially harmful to the reputation of the Council.
- 6.13 The procurement of new highways and street lighting works term contracts is still ongoing.

7. Appendices and Background Documents

Appendix letter	Title
A	List of carriageways and footways to be resurfaced
B	List of roads for street lighting column replacement programme

Background documents
None

Audit Trail		
Version	Final	Date: 5 February 2020
Consultation with other officers		
Finance	Yes	Al Mawji
Legal	Yes	David Fellows
Equality Impact Assessment required?	No	N/A