



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17th OCTOBER 2019

FRONTLINE SERVICES - HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR PROSPERITY, DEVELOPMENT AND FRONTLINE SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, COUNCILLOR A MORGAN.

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 Further to the approval of the Council's Three Year Capital Programme 2019/20 - 2021/22 on 6th March 2019 (Council), subsequent approval of the Supplementary Capital Programme on 21st March 2019 (Cabinet) and Highways Improvement Schemes on 18th June 2019 (Cabinet) this report further updates on the progress made to date and sets out the next phase in respect of the Highway Improvement Scheme.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note the continued excellent progress made to date as detailed within this report.
- 2.2 Note the additional schemes brought forward for implementation.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Highways Improvements

- 3.1.1 The Highways Network represents the most significant asset of the Council, valued in excess of £3.4Bn and comprises of carriageways, footways, structures (bridges, retaining walls, culverts, etc.), street lighting, traffic signals and signs, safety barriers, highway drainage, etc.
- 3.1.2 At its meeting of 6th March 2019, Council approved the budget for the Highways Improvement schemes.
- 3.1.3 The network has now benefitted from eight years of enhanced levels of investment and this critically important additional funding will continue into 2021/22, improving and protecting the fabric of the highways network and dealing with the impact of winter weather conditions.

- 3.1.4 Continued enhanced levels of investment in our carriageway and footway assets means that interventions can be undertaken in a more pro-active manner where more efficient and cost effective preventative maintenance is carried out rather than expensive reactive treatments and reconstruction of roads where they have become life expired.

3.2 Progress to Date

- 3.2.1 Progress in the first six months of 2019/20 has been excellent with 77 carriageway schemes and 21 footway schemes having already been completed to the combined value of £6.3 million.
- 3.2.2 On 21st March 2019 Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Group Director, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Director of Finance and Digital Services, to extend activity to approve additional projects during the financial year where capacity exists for accelerated planning and delivery in accordance with the purpose of the wider programme.
- 3.2.3 Given the excellent in-year progress made it is proposed to undertake additional schemes as listed in Appendix 1. The value of the additional schemes is approximately £5.84 million.
- 3.2.4 It is proposed these schemes be supplemented by a £0.500M allocation to carry out patching in advance of next seasons surface dressing, a £0.500M allocation to allow strategic patching on busy main roads, a £0.050M allocation to essential highway improvement repairs and £0.025M allocation towards improvements in disabled access.

4. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Equality and Diversity issues will be considered as part of determining the final detail of the proposed schemes.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 There are no consultation requirements relating directly to the report but the proposed schemes will (or have) involve varying degrees of consultation, some of which will relate to statutory processes (such as Traffic Regulation Orders). Members have noted that liaison and communication at project level has been extremely good.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The funding allocation to support schemes contained within the Highway Improvement Scheme was agreed by Cabinet on the 21st of March 2019 as part of the three year Capital Programme 2019/20 to 2021/22. This report does not commit any additional spend over and above the agreed allocation of £23.5 million.
- 6.2 Funding will be realigned within the three year Capital Programme as necessary between the financial years.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

7.1 There are no legal implications as a result of the recommendations set out in this report.

8. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.

8.1 The Highways Investment Programme supports the Council's Corporate Plan Priority 'Place – creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work'.

8.2 The programme is wide ranging. It deals with the maintenance of transport assets created in order to meet travel demand. The programme supports enhanced connectivity to link homes with employment opportunities, education and health facilities, and to act as a catalyst for development and regeneration. In conjunction with grant applications, a range of sustainable and active travel opportunities are promoted.

8.3 The programme supports the Well-Being goals fostering prosperity and resilience with inclusive and sustainable transport options supporting more cohesive and vibrant communities.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 The above programme continues the enhanced levels of investment under the RCTInvest initiative, delivering sustained improvements to the resilience and durability of our highways and transportation infrastructure, promoting sustainable transport opportunities and network efficiency.

9.2 The improvements to the standard of our network are supporting continued reductions in the Council's exposure to claims for slips, trips and falls on the highway network with the level of claims now at the lowest level ever experienced within RCT.

9.3 Frontline Services will coordinate and deliver significant investment in a number of important areas during 2019/20 and beyond and the proposed additional programme of schemes will further improve the condition of our highway network.

9.4 RCT is one of the few councils that continues to make significant investments in maintaining and improving our highways and transportation infrastructure. The table below demonstrates the level of progress that has been made since 2010/11.

Indicator	2010/11 Indicator	2018/19 Indicator
THS011a – percentage of A class roads requiring maintenance	16.2%	4.9%
THS011b – percentage of B class roads requiring maintenance	15.2%	6.5%
THS011c – percentage of C class roads requiring maintenance	15.3%	3.0%
THS012 – percentage of all classified roads requiring maintenance	15.7%	4.8%

9.5 The programme is as always subject to minor changes due to possible engineering difficulties or programming and coordination undertakers.
