

Committee: **Community Services Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting: **7th June 2021**
Report Subject: **Highway Capital Works Programme 2021 – 2022**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr. Joanna Wilkins, Executive Member Environment**
Report Submitted by: **Head of Community Services, Clive Rogers**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
13.05.21	20.05.21	26.05.21			07.06.21	16.06.21		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide scrutiny members with an update on progress of the current Highway Capital Works programme 2017 – 2021 and present options around a future 2021 – 22 works programme.

2. Scope and Background

Highways Capital Works Programme 2017 – 2022

- 2.1 Building on the success of a previous Highways Capital Works Programme, which improved the nature and condition of the classified network, a programme targeting unclassified/ residential roads was approved by the Authority in 2017.
- 2.2 A capital sum of £2.115million was generated from a 20 year prudential borrow based on revenue contributions of £130k per year.
- 2.3 This Capital Sum has been augmented by Welsh Government Highways Refurbishment grant funding over the period 2017 to 2021 as detailed below:

Funding	Amount
Prudential Borrowing	£2,115,000
WG Grant 2017-2018	£553,000
WG Grant 2018-2019	£380,065
WG Grant 2019-2020	£409,776
WG Grant 2020-2021	£383,000
WG Refurbishment Grant 21/22 & carry over 20/21 WG Revenue Grant	£602,000
Total	£4,442,841

Network

- 2.4 The current gross replacement value of the Highway Network is estimated at £1.093 billion and is the Authority's most valuable material asset.

- 2.5 Un-classified roads make up 74% of the total Highway network [198 miles] and forms the majority of the local road network – residential roads & rear lanes. The majority of reactive maintenance and insurance claims relate to the unclassified network.
- 2.6 Public perception of highways normally relates to the condition of local residential roads [un-classified roads]. Reactive repairs to pot holes and rutted surfacing are costly and the less effective way of maintaining the highway.

Planned maintenance works as against reactive maintenance are the more cost effective way of maintaining the highway network.

- 2.7 The overall % of poor conditioned Un-classified roads pre-commencement of works was 17%. As a result of the previous three years this figure has been maintained at 11.4%.
- 2.8 To date **82** Residential highways have been resurfaced along with priority works to the A & B Classified Network.

A schedule of Works completed to date can be found in **Appendix A:**

2018/19 Phase 1 Programme of Works

2019/20 Phase 2 Programme of Works

2020/21 Phase 3 Programme of Works

Highway Capital Works Programme 2021-22 – Priorities & Options

- 2.9 Welsh Government Refurbishment Grant is awarded to Authorities on the basis that it will be expended in line with Authority's Highways Asset Management Plan [HAMP].
- 2.10 In accordance with the HAMP, with its identified priorities & risks to the Blaenau Gwent Highways Network, it is proposed that the 2021/22 programme will continue to pay due attention to high priority works to the Network whilst retaining a focus around improving the residential/ unclassified network.
- 2.11 Following on from the previous works programme it is proposed that a priority ranking of residential streets is determined, utilising the assessment matrix criteria that was developed in line with the specific features associated with residential highways as follows:

See **Appendix B:** Highway Assessment Matrix – Residential Roads

See **Appendix C:** Highway Assessment Matrix – Residential Roads: Worked Example

2.12 Additional Programme of Welsh Government Highway Related Funded Works 21/22

Listed below are other Highway related schemes receiving WG funding for 21/22

Local Transport and Resilient Road Fund – £1,695,000

Local Transport Fund

- Bedwellty Pits, Tredegar – improve a sub-standard junction, provide a suitable footway and bus stop infrastructure - £990,000

(the Authority is not allowed to utilise the grant for possible compensation claims by the resident as part of the scheme so there is a risk that any successful claims may fall to the Authority)

- Bus Stop Infrastructure through-out the Borough - £405,000

Resilient Road Fund - £300,000

- Aberbeeg Road A4046 – A feasibility study to assess the road condition and to support future scheme development between Cwm and Aberbeeg - £300,000

Road Safety Revenue and Safe Routes in Communities - £64,971

Road Safety Revenue Grant

- Road Safety (staff costs) to deliver Kerb Craft and National Standard Cycle Training (NSCT) - £39,971

Safe Routes in Communities

- Safe routes in communities – a feasibility study to assess footway links to Georgetown Primary School via Mafeking Terrace or an alternative route - £25,000

Active Travel Fund - £399,000

Core Allocation - £364,000

- The Works Site to Ebbw Vale Town Centre sustainable link – feasibility study.
- Minor Works
- Heathfield, Tredegar.
- The Dingle, Brynmawr.

Glyncoed, Ebbw Vale.

- Upgrade existing footpath - £35,000 (feasibility/minor works)

3. Options for recommendation

3.1 Option 1: Highest Priority Residential Road in each Ward [16 total] & Blaenant Industrial Estate Road – Estimated Total Cost £602,000

Residential Roads: 16 schemes – 1 per Ward

- Southend and Walter Street, Georgetown
- Mount Pleasant Road, Ebbw Vale North
- Institution Terrace, Ebbw Vale South
- Maes-y-Cynw Terrace, Llanhilleth
- Jubilee Road and Graig Road, Six Bells
- Powell Street and High Street (section), Abertillery
- Coronation Street, Blaina
- South and Hereford Street, Beaufort
- Aneurin Crescent, Brynmawr

- King Street, Cwm
- Railway Terrace, Sirhowy
- Stable Lane & Parkville, Tredegar C&W
- School Road, Rassau
- Waunheulog, Nantyglo
- Victoria Street, Cwmtillery
- Rhyd Y Blew Roundabout, Badminton
- Blaenant Ind Est Resurfacing

Option 2 (Preferred Option): As Option 1 plus A & B Priority Roads & Highway Safety Works – Estimated Total Cost £912,000

A & B Priority Roads:

- A4048 Heathfield Full Reconstruction Works
- A4046 Cwm Bypass Resurfacing

Highway Safety Traffic Management Works: -

- Crash Barrier Replacement at A4281 Garnlydan
- Crash Barrier Replacement at A467 Abertillery

4. Evidence of how does this topic support the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan

- 4.1 The report has been developed to provide an update on progress of the current Highway Capital Works programme 2017/22 and supports the key priorities identified in the Corporate Plan namely – “reinvestment in highways and improvements to the residential network”.

5. Implications Against Each Option

5.1 Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)

Option 1 can be fully funded from the WG 21/22 funding allocation of £602,000

Option 2 (preferred option)- the estimated costs of £912,000 will require additional funding of £310,000 when compared to Option 1. The current level of the Council’s Capital Programme Contingency funding is £1.26 million, agreeing the additional funding will reduce this contingency to £0.95 million.

Appendix D provides the updated capital programme for each of the above options.

The investment proposed in the report is in addition to the routine highways maintenance works funded by the Council’s revenue budget.

5.2 Risk including Mitigating Actions

There are risks associated with not maintaining the highway infrastructure in terms of highway safety and increased insurance claims, increased reactive maintenance and public perception.

5.3 Legal

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

5.4 Human Resources

There are no staffing implications associated with this report.

6. Supporting Evidence

6.1 Performance Information and Data:

The overall % of poor conditioned Un-classified roads pre-commencement of works was 17%. As a result of the previous years investment this figure has been maintained at 11.4%.

6.2 Expected Outcome for the Public

Improved quality of residential highways. Improved safety to highway network.

6.3 Involvement (Consultation, Engagement, Participation)

Where relevant, consultation, engagement and involvement with the public, members and interested parties have been carried out as part of the delivery requirements of the programme.

6.4 Thinking for the long term (forward planning)

Investment in the residential highway network in Blaenau Gwent is identified to ensure sustainability for the future, bringing our roads up to a good standard and improving our highway infrastructure to meet the service requirements of the future.

6.5 Preventative Focus

By investing now will prevent problems getting worse with our infrastructure, thus making prudent decisions to invest now rather than later when the costs are likely to be higher through further deterioration and inflation.

6.6 Collaboration / partnership working

N/A.

6.7 Integration (across service areas)

N/A.

6.8 EQIA (screening and indemnifying if full impact assessment is needed)

An EQIA is not relevant to the content of this report.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

7.1 These works are bi-annually reported to Corporate Overview Scrutiny (Contracts over £500k) and Annual Progress report to The Chair and Members of Community Services Scrutiny Committee.

Background Documents / Electronic Link

Appendix A: 2018 – 2021 Phases 1 - 3 Completed Programmes of Works

Appendix B: Highway Assessment Matrix – Residential Roads

Appendix C: Highway Assessment Matrix – Residential Roads: Worked Example

Appendix D: Capital Programme – impact of proposals