

Committee: **Community Services Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **19<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

Report Subject: **Additional Highways Maintenance Works 2021 – 2022**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr. Joanna Wilkins, Executive Member Environment**

Report Submitted by: **Head of Community Services, Clive Rogers  
Team Manager- Street Scene, David Watkins**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
N/A	7 <sup>th</sup> July 2021	9 <sup>th</sup> July 2021			19.07.21			

**1. Purpose of the Report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide scrutiny members with options for proposed additional works dealing with highways routine maintenance issues, such as potholes and patching works in the current financial year 2021/22.

**2. Scope and Background**

2.1 Over the past 3 years a number of reports have been presented to Scrutiny and the Executive in respect to capital investment in the highways infrastructure, the most recent being a report for capital works for 2021/22 which was considered at scrutiny committee on the 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021, this will result in over £4.4m capital investment into the highways infrastructure from 2017/18 to the end of 2021/22.

2.2 During these meetings members have raised concerns around the quality of some pothole and patching works related to residential roads (un-classified roads) across the County Borough, where in some instances patching works have been undertaken to make the highway safe but unfortunately have become to look unkempt.

2.3 In response to these concerns and to commence the process to improve pothole and patching works in respect of residential roads (un-classified roads) only, it is proposed to undertake additional pothole and patching works during 2021/22, although, it should be noted that there is no backlog of pothole works required in respect to safety issues, however, there are outstanding works required related to highways patching operations, which these proposed works would provide a longer term solution to the maintenance of such areas.

- 2.4 It is intended that all 16 wards across the County Borough would benefit from this proposal targeting 400 sq. metres of highways residential road repairs per ward in consultation with ward members.
- 2.5 Currently the council employs just one team made up of 3-4 operatives to undertake highways pot hole and patching works, this team would not be sufficient to undertake any additional works.
- 2.6 This report has been prepared to seek support from members to move forward with one of the options below to undertake this one-off proposal for additional highways maintenance works to residential roads (un-classified roads) in the current financial year 2021/22.

### 3.0 **Options for Recommendation**

#### 3.1 **Option 1**

##### Do nothing

This is simply not an option as the highway infrastructure will always be in need of repair and investment.

#### 3.2 **Option 2 (Preferred Option)**

##### Identify necessary works across all 16 wards and tender to a private contractor.

Undertake a tendering exercise to acquire a cost of highways patching works per sq. metre. Targeting around 400 sq. metres of highways repairs per ward covering residential roads in all 16 wards.

#### 3.3 **Option 3**

##### To carry out and undertake additional highways repair works in line with the Highways Maintenance Plan (HMP) and resurfacing scoring matrix.

This option would only allow for works to be undertaken on the roads most in need, however, would not allow for all wards to have works undertaken.

Works would be undertaken on a priority basis and would only allow for a total length of carriageway resurfacing of approximately 3,000 metres (with an approximately 7metre road width) based on earlier tendering exercises this could allow for an additional 9 or 10 resurfacing schemes being undertaken on residential estates.

### 3.4 **RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.4.1 It is recommended that;

- Option 2 is supported to undertake a tendering exercise to acquire a cost of highways patching works per sq. metre. Targeting around 400 sq. metres of highways repairs per ward covering residential roads in all 16 wards.
- Following the tender process, a further detailed report will be drafted for consideration at Council.

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

##### 4.1 **Corporate Priorities**

4.1.1 This report supports the key priorities identified in the Corporate Plan namely – “Protect and enhance our environment and infrastructure to benefit our communities” in line with the Council’s Highways Maintenance Plan (HMP).

4.1.2 This report supports the Corporate Priority to “reinvestment in highways and improvements to the residential network”.

##### **Well-being plan**

##### 4.2

4.2.1 This report supports the Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing Plan 2018-2023 by ensuring that having a “Street Scene and Landscape” that is well maintained enhances the perception of the area and can contribute to Blaenau Gwent being a better place to live, visit, invest in and work.

#### 5. **Implications Against Each Option**

##### 5.1.1 Option 1

No additional Highways works will be undertaken.

##### 5.1.2 Option 2

Should option 2 not be supported then an opportunity will be lost to undertake some additional highways works in every ward across the County Borough.

##### 5.1.3 Option 3

Although beneficial to highways maintenance, this option will not allow for all wards to have some work undertaken.

#### 5.2 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

##### 5.2.1 **Revenue/Capital Costs**

The level of funding available will be based on historic costs, to achieve approximately 400 sq. metres of highways repairs per electoral ward across the County Borough (dependant on a favourable tendering process being completed).

This would be funded by a contribution from the General Reserve.

### 5.3 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

5.3.1 The risks associated with this report are as follows;

- An opportunity to improve the quality of the highway network will be lost.
- Level of General Reserve would reduce however it will continue to be above the target level set by Council of 4%.

### 5.4 ***Legal***

5.4.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

### 5.5 ***Human Resources***

5.5.1 There are no direct staffing implications associated with this report other than allocating officer time to the drafting of work specifications and the tendering process.

## 6 **Supporting Evidence**

### 6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

6.1.1 The overall % of poor conditioned Un-classified roads pre-commencement of highways capital works in 2017 was 17%. As a result of the previous three years' investment this figure improved and now stands at 11.4%.

### 6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

6.2.1 The public will experience improved quality of residential highways patching works, improved safety to highway network and roads not looking unkempt.

### 6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

6.3.1 Where time allows, consultation, engagement and involvement with the public, members and interested parties will be carried out as part of the delivery process.

6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***

6.4.1 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***

6.5.1 By investing now will prevent problems getting worse with the highways 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)***

6.7.1 The highways maintenance team works closely with a number of services in the delivery of maintenance programmes including; education, regeneration and the council's engineering section.

6.8 ***EqIA***

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

**Monitoring Arrangements**

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7.1.1 The works will be initiated and monitored in line with contractual arrangement and progress can be reported if necessary through scrutiny and executive committees.

7.2 **Background Documents /Electronic Links**

*None*