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To: Environment, Highways & Waste Policy Overview & Scrutiny
Committee – 18 January 2011

Subject: Planned Carriageway and Footway Maintenance Programme
2011/12

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report informs members as to the profile of the Planned Carriageway and Footway Maintenance Programme for 2011/12

1. Introduction

Kent County Council as Highway Authority is responsible for the maintenance of over 8,400 km of carriageway and associated footways. The highway network represents the authority's most valuable physical asset not just in financial terms but also in its value to the Kent community. Safety and reliability of the highway network is therefore a key goal of the Authority.

In order to deliver the services in a cost effective manner, it is essential that the funding allocated for the purpose of highway maintenance is targeted correctly. Whilst the safety of the highway network is generally managed through routine maintenance, the annual Planned Carriageway and Footway Maintenance Programme is the key factor in both preserving and improving the condition of the highway network in Kent.

This report therefore sets out to inform Members on the profile of the provisional programme for 2011/12 and to provide a description of the process used to produce the programme.

2. Background

In accordance with the good practice provided within 'Well-maintained Highways Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management' produced by the Road Liaison Group, Kent County Council has in place an inspection and survey regime to establish the condition of the carriageway network. The regime incorporates both manual and machine based surveys. The condition data that is collected as part of this exercise is processed within a maintenance optimisation system to produce a prioritised list of roads for treatment. In addition to the above process, sites are promoted for treatment by the local Operational Maintenance teams. The sites promoted by the Maintenance teams include those that have been identified by Members, Parish Councils, the community, highway users and highway

inspectors and engineers within the local teams. All footway schemes are promoted by this method.

The sites identified using the process are collated to form what is known as the 1st Draft Programme. Engineers then verify the sites within the programme to ensure that they have been correctly identified both in respect of the need for maintenance and the proposed treatment. At this stage the extents of each site is determined which allows for an indicative cost estimation which is necessary for the next stage. For 2011/12 a total of 1125 potential sites were contained within the 1st Draft Programme.

Once verified there is a need to prioritise schemes contained in the draft programme within the anticipated financial framework for the year. In determining the sites which go forward officers consider the following issues

- Compliance with KCC policy e.g. Skid Deficiency
- Economic ranking
 - Avoidance of significant routine maintenance costs
 - Avoidance of continued deterioration requiring more extensive and expensive action at later date.
- Delivers against the needs/wants of the community and the highway user

This process of prioritisation produces what is known as the 2nd Draft Programme (Baseline Programme) and forms the basis for the necessary detailed design and procurement. This exercise is undertaken in readiness for when funding is announced and so as to commence the works at the start of the financial year in April.

When the detailed financial allocation is confirmed in February 2011 the Baseline Programme will be reviewed and adjusted to conform to the allocation. The programme then will be confirmed as the Baseline Programme (Funded) and will be submitted for approval and then published.

3. Overview of Rationale for 2011/12 Programme

The effective use of resources is always of prime consideration when determining the Planned Carriageway and Footway Maintenance Programme. However it is clear that the level of resources available for the delivery of the programme will be significantly lower than recent years. This brings greater focus to the need to ensure that the resources available are used as effectively and efficiently as possible across the whole of the network. It is therefore important that the correct sites are matched to the most effective treatments.

Preventative maintenance techniques, such as surface dressing and micro asphalt, are cost effective way of arresting the deterioration of the carriageway network. They both seal and restore the surface texture of existing road surfaces making them far less vulnerable to pot holes and so reduce the need for emergency and routine patching. Both surface dressing and micro asphalt can be delivered at a fraction of the cost associated with resurfacing and with significantly less disruption. Whilst neither of these techniques should be used on a road surface that has deteriorated beyond a condition where resurfacing is the only appropriate treatment, they both are effective methods of preventing roads getting to this condition and therefore capable of significantly extending the life of the road, so

resurfacing, a considerably more expensive and disruptive process, would not be required. The level of preventative maintenance contained within the programme is significantly higher than previous years. This is in response to the severe impact that the 2009/10 winter had on the highway network which required a significant increase in the level of expenditure on reactive patching. This increased level of preventative maintenance will both seal many roads that have been patched as part of this year's remedial works, thus capitalising on the significant Find & Fix investment, and prevent the formation of potholes in others.

The increase in preventative maintenance will mean that less funding will be available for the resurfacing element of the programme. Resurfacing has therefore been proposed on roads that are critical either in terms of safety or are in such a condition that deferring them in the short term would leave them to change from a thin surfacing scheme to a more extensive and expensive strengthening or reconstruction scheme.

4. Provisional profile of the Planned Carriageway and Footway Maintenance Programme for 2011/12

As indicated above, when the detailed financial framework for 2011/12 is confirmed during February 2011 the definitive programme for next financial year will be drawn up for approval. Based on the Baseline Programme, the details provided in table below identifies the indicative profile for treatment types that will form the 2011/12 programme.

Carriageway	Resurfacing	32%
	Surface Dressing	54%
	Micro Asphalt	
Footway	Resurfacing	14%

4. Recommendations

Members are asked to note the provisional profile of the Planned Carriageway and Footway Maintenance Programme for 2011/12.

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