

**COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 10 OCTOBER 2019**

**Question to Helen Fisher  
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

**By David Brookes**

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**Question**

“Would the Cabinet Member please outline the performance of the pot hole repairs within the County over the past three years?”

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**Reply**

In 2017 Cabinet agreed a 4-year x £5m/year highway maintenance extra investment strategy to help tackle what was a growing number of potholes across the County. As well as an increase in pothole repair activity the strategy includes and ongoing investment in preventative maintenance treatments and targeted drainage improvements.

During 2019/20 the strategy is providing:

- £2m to enable an extra 9,000 pothole repairs;
- £2m to provide around 40 miles of additional low-cost pothole prevention surface treatments; and
- £1m towards additional drainage repairs, targeted at locations where poor drainage is leading to premature road surface deterioration.

As we now approach the end of the main road-repair season, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of this 4-year programme, I am pleased to report that the programme is proving to be a big success: At the start of 2017 there were around 12,000 identified or reported pothole defects on Staffordshire’s local road network; and today that number has been reduced to around 6,500. That is a reduction of around 45% in less than 3-years.

However, it is important to be clear that the number of potholes that repeatedly occur on our roads is a direct symptom of the level of capital ‘life-adding’ investment made each year through central government capital-maintenance grant. Staffordshire’s Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (HIMAP), identifies that the level of funding currently provided each year’s is only around half of what is currently needed. We are continuing to make our case to government and hope that some of the money recently announced for road infrastructure will find its way to local road maintenance.