

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 25 JULY 2019

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

By David Brookes

Question

Could Members be assured that the extra investment allowed for each division within the budgets for highway improvements can be used in full and that there will be minimal and little administrative costs to allow maximum highway investment for the much-needed improvements and repairs ensuring maximum value to the ratepayer and residents of Staffordshire?

Reply

This one-off additional funding has been devolved to Members for locally identified maintenance priorities to directly replace or enhance the life of existing highway assets.

Members have been given the opportunity to discuss how to maximise the impact of the investment; including consideration of pooling divisional allocations, combining wider Divisional Highway Programme funding and the utilisation of the funding to secure additional external contributions.

A significant number of Member priorities have now been identified and work programmes are being drawn up and delivered. To ensure the available funding makes the greatest impact, effective planning and co-ordination is essential and delivery will take place throughout the financial year, with the majority of works completed by 31 March 2020.

Estimates for each element of identified work have been provided but all costs are indicative and are heavily dependent on factors such as site constraints, adverse weather and existing asset condition. In addition, works that involve excavations or tying in to existing structures can sometimes lead to unforeseen costs once on site.

The estimated costs for the Member's £20k maintenance schemes will include all associated activities to get the work on the ground, such as any necessary design; community engagement; legal noticing; statutory liaison with utility companies; and traffic management requirements (e.g. road closures, temporary traffic signals etc.). There are no additional funding streams to cover these activities and they would also have to be factored in to any works you were to commission yourself through a local contractor.