

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET MEETING

4 November 2014

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**ALLOCATION OF FUNDING FROM THE POTHOLE FUND
(JOBS, ECONOMY AND TRANSPORT)**

(1) **Purpose of the Report** To seek the approval of Cabinet to accept grant funding from Government for fixing potholes on local roads.

(2) **Information and Analysis**

Background

Weather conditions in recent winters have had a serious impact on the condition of local roads, with cold weather, heavy rainfall and flooding causing a significant increase in potholes and other faults. As reported to Cabinet at its meeting on 15 July 2014, the Government awarded the County Council a total of £4,030,000 in December 2012 and a further £2,946,577 in March 2014 to carry out repairs, and a programme of schemes is currently being implemented to deliver improvements (Minute No. 251/14 refers).

In June 2014, an additional £2,480,658 was granted to the County Council, with the specific aim of permanently fixing potholes or carrying out works to prevent their occurrence in the first place.

This funding has a number of conditions. The works must be completed by the end of March 2015 and should complement, rather than replace, the Authority's planned maintenance for 2014/15. It is expected, therefore, that external resources will be necessary to supplement in-house capacity and carry out the additional works. The County Council is at liberty to plan its programme of works but is required to report progress at quarterly intervals on the website and to the Department for Transport. It is expected that repairs to potholes will be permanent, rather than temporary.

The Accelerated Highways Maintenance Programme agreed by Cabinet on 5 August 2014 (Minute No. 283/14 refers), is focussed on preventative works that will ultimately prolong the life of the highway network and reduce the cost of maintenance in the future. Annual Local Transport maintenance funds will be needed for more costly carriageway construction, as well as looking after structures, retaining walls, rights of way and street lighting. It is therefore recommended that the recent award of funding is concentrated on pothole repairs to complement these other areas of maintenance. Potholes are a

Public

problem across the network and it is expected that both existing defects and those arising over the coming winter are targeted.

The careful integration of these three funding streams is essential if the most effective programme of maintenance works is to be implemented. Judicious use of the pothole funding will therefore, in certain locations, be used as preparation for further surface dressing works as part of the Accelerated Highways Maintenance Programme.

The random nature of potholes and the existing maintenance regime that aims to carry out repairs within 28 days of notification, mean that a forward programme of works cannot usually be planned well in advance. By its nature, the work will be mostly reactive and can only be planned over a short term period. Efficiencies will be made by grouping repair works to make best use of the resources deployed and, where appropriate, complementing the Accelerated Highways Maintenance Programme. To this end, it is further recommended that the content of the actual programme of works is delegated to the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment, following discussion with the Cabinet Member - Jobs, Economy and Transport.

(3) **Financial Considerations** All costs for the work will be met from the grant funding and will allow for any necessary preparation costs. It is emphasised that all work funded using the grant must be completed by the end of March 2015.

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors have been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

(4) **Key Decision** Yes.

(5) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(6) **Background Papers** Held on file in the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details – Glyn Dutton, extension 38636.

(7) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That Cabinet:

7.1 Authorises the acceptance of a grant of £2,480,658 to repair potholes in the local road network.

7.2 Authorises the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment to decide the programme of works following discussion with the Cabinet Member - Jobs, Economy and Transport.

Mike Ashworth
Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment