
PAVEMENT & FOOTWAY MAINTENANCE IN CARDIFF

Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the way in which pavement and footway maintenance is managed in Cardiff.

Background

2. Cardiff's Highway Asset is a £2.4 billion piece of infrastructure which comprises of carriageways, footways, drainage, street furniture, street lighting and other structures. It is a vast network which covers the whole of the city and is the fundamental infrastructure which allows the city to function. The Highway Asset includes 1,099 km of carriageway; 1,600 km of footways and footpaths; 103 km of cycleway; 101 bridges and 37,663 street lights. An asset summary for the whole Highway Asset is attached to this report as **Appendix 1**. The gross replacement cost for the whole Highway Asset is £2.414 billion; this overall total is broken down by asset group below in **Table 1**.
3. Pavements and footpaths (also referred to as 'footway' and 'footpath') cover a combined distance of 1,600 km across Cardiff, and have a combined gross replacement cost of almost £193 million.

Table 1 – Highway Asset - Gross Replacement Cost (GRC)

Asset Group	GRC (£,000)
Carriageway	£1,322,143
Footways & Cycle Tracks	£192,758
Structures (including tunnels)	£791,876
Lighting	£50,850
Traffic Management	£24,275
Street Furniture	£32,350
Total	£2,414,252

Highway Asset Investment Strategy – Footway Capital Investment Strategy

4. The Council is in the process of developing a ‘Highway Asset Investment Strategy’. A draft version of this strategy was considered by the Environmental Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on the 17 May 2016. A copy of the cover report for this meeting is attached to this report as **Appendix 2**.
5. Section 5 of the ‘Draft Highway Asset Investment Strategy’ (attached to this report as **Appendix 3**) is titled ‘Footway Capital Investment Strategy’. This addresses the current state of pavements and provides:
 - An overview of the footway asset;
 - A summary of the asset condition;
 - Details of current asset investment;
 - A detailed breakdown of the four capital investment options being modelled in the strategy.
6. The document builds on the case that over time the footways asset will deteriorate based on current funding levels. It explains that additional funding for footways maintenance and resurfacing works will be required in the longer term to:

- Improve condition/reduce deterioration;
- Improve safety by reducing reactive repairs;
- Reduce third party claims;
- Improve customer satisfaction – the improvements above may contribute to improved customer satisfaction.

7. Section 5 of the Footway Capital Investment Strategy (**Appendix 3**) then address the footway asset condition by considering the results of the footway network survey undertaken in 2013. It breaks footways into various construction types (for example, bituminous, PCC slabs, stone, concrete and PCC blocks) and assesses them by site **Condition** on a scale of 1 to 4. The four condition categories are described as:

- Condition 1 – as new;
- Condition 2 – aesthetically impaired;
- Condition 3 – functionally impaired;
- Condition 4 – structurally unsound.

8. Section 5 of the ‘Footway Capital Investment Strategy’ (**Appendix 3**) further develops this analysis by breaking pavements and footways into five footway **Classes** and then allocating each a ‘Condition’ using the scale shown above. The five footway classes are:

- Prestige Walking Zones (1a);
- Primary Walking Routes (1);
- Secondary Walking Routes (2);
- Link Footways (3);
- Local Access Footways (4).

9. **Table 2** provides details of the length and condition of footway classes across Cardiff. It illustrates that approximately 83% of footways in the city are rated as category 1 or 2 (as new or aesthetically impaired), with 3.76% listed as category 4 status (structurally unsound).

Table 2 – Length of Footway by Condition Type

Footway Class	Length (km)	Current Footway Condition			
		% in Condition 1	% in Condition 2	% in Condition 3	% in Condition 4
All Footways combined	1,285 km	52.48%	30.71%	13.39%	3.76%
Prestige Walking Zones (1a)	4.5 km	75%	22.5%	2%	0.5%
Primary Walking Routes (1)	15 km	64.59%	30.35%	5.13%	0%
Secondary Walking Routes (2)	47 km	51.45%	36.18%	3.88%	7.74%
Link Footways (3)	347 km	48.23%	40.05%	8.88%	2.96%
Local Access Footways (4)	871 km	53.65%	26.52%	16.38%	3.97%

10. Section 5 of the Footway Capital Investment Strategy (**Appendix 3**) concludes by setting out three capital investment options for future management of pavements and footways, these are:
- Capital Investment Option 1: Managed Decline based on a continuation of historic investment levels;
 - Capital Investment Option 2: Steady State Investment Level;
 - Capital Investment Option 3: Enhanced / Ideal State Investment Level.
11. The overall Highway Asset Investment Strategy advocates following ‘Capital Investment Option 2: Steady State Investment Level’. Based upon the funding profile illustrated in **Appendix 3** making a ‘Steady State Investment Level’ would result in little or no deterioration over time resulting in the percentage of footway in need of maintenance (red + amber condition) remaining constant over the 20 year period. This approach would also mean that the backlog of maintenance on footways in Condition 4 will generally remain in the region of £4.5m for the entire 20 year period.
12. The SWOT analysis undertaken for the ‘Steady State Investment Level’ option describes its objective as to *‘adequately maintain the footway network at a consistent level over a 20 year period’*. It also highlights the following:
- **Strengths**
 1. it prevents an increase in backlog and reduces revenue costs;
 2. it halts ongoing deterioration;

3. it improves safety by reducing reactive repairs;
4. it reduces third party claims;
5. it improves customer satisfaction and
6. it supports an asset management approach.

- **Weaknesses**

1. it increases cost on existing capital investment levels;
2. it results in no ongoing improvement of condition.

- **Opportunities**

1. it satisfies Welsh Government LGFI borrowing requirements;
2. it creates employment opportunities to satisfy increased investment;
3. it improves social and economic agendas of the Council.

- **Threats**

1. Budgets increasing in highways when overall Council funding is decreasing.

13. The overall 2016/17 Highway Asset budgets for revenue and capital are:

- Revenue Budget 2016/17 - £2.578 million;
- Capital Budget 2016/17 - £2.215 million.

14. In addition to the 2016/17 revenue and capital budgets the Council invested £750,000 in an additional one off Financial Pressure bid for carriageway reconstruction and £400,000 for carriageway and permanent patching improvements.

15. From the overall 2016/17 Highway Asset budget the following revenue and capital amounts have been allocated towards footway construction and maintenance:

- Footways Revenue Budget 2016/17 - £790,000;
- Footways Capital Budget 2016/17 - £595,000.

Way Forward

16. Officers from the City Operations Directorate have been invited to attend to give a presentation and to answer Members' questions. The meeting will provide the Environmental Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to scrutinise and comment on pavement and footway maintenance in Cardiff.

Legal Implications

17. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

18. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to:

- Consider the information in the report and appendices, and provided at the meeting;
- Decide whether they would like to make any comments to the Cabinet;
- Decide the way forward for any future scrutiny of the issues discussed.

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28 September 2016