

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 13 June 2019

Report of the Head Service - Asset Management

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Moss Road Strategy

(Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer)

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Executive Summary

Moss roads provide specific maintenance difficulties due to the nature of the land on which they are constructed. The moss roads perform a variety of functions to the communities they serve. The Moss Roads Strategy aims to classify each of the roads by virtue of the function it provides and support the prioritisation for schemes for the Capital Maintenance Programme.

This is deemed to be a Key Decision and the provisions of Standing Order C19 have been complied with.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Approve the Moss Roads Strategy at Appendix 'A'.
- (ii) Approve the proposed programme of works at Appendix 'B'.

Background and Advice

Lancashire has approximately 590km of roads that are built on moss land. Whilst most of these 'moss roads' are located in the West Lancashire borough they are also present to a lesser extent in the districts of Wyre, Fylde, Chorley, Lancaster, Burnley and South Ribble. They are vehicular highways maintainable at public expense and subject to the Highway Safety Inspection Policy (as revised April 2018).

Extreme weather events over the last decade or so have had a major effect on the moss road network, as the peat upon which these roads are built responds to long

hot summers by shrinking and drying out. As a consequence some foundations have become severely deformed and cracked. Investigations have revealed that many cracks run deep into the substructure of the roads and wetter winters result in moisture penetrating the sub-grade and cause further deterioration.

Given that many of these roads are used extensively to support the local agricultural and horticultural economies of the Wyre, West Lancashire and Fylde districts in particular they are highly regarded and valued by the communities that rely on them.

The county council has a statutory duty to maintain highways, as outlined in the Highways Act 1980. Guidance informs highway specifications and case law informs the standard of maintenance of the surface. Each highway is to be fit for the use of the traffic usually expected to use it.

The Transport Asset Management Plan (2014) supports the view that it is not feasible to maintain the whole of the road network in Lancashire to the same standard and has proposed differing service standards between the A, B & C roads and the remaining categories of the vehicular network. The Transport Asset Management Plan also advocates the use of different service standards within a single asset group. As a result, each of the separate road classifications are being maintained to a different service standard, according to corporate priorities.

Given the range of usage and local importance of the moss road network it is proposed that it is not treated as a single asset group but made up of different classes. It is proposed to categorise each moss road according to its use and then group these into various classes which will then form the basis of the moss road hierarchy. There may be a need to sub-divide other asset groups in future and therefore generic class descriptions are proposed. The relationship between proposed categories and proposed classes is shown in the Moss Roads Strategy at Appendix 'A'.

A proposed programme of works, to be funded to a total value of £593,000, was developed which covered moss roads that have shown substantial deterioration and require priority treatments to ensure that the routes are kept open. The scheme costs have now been revised, after more investigatory work was needed, due to the complexity of peat roads and the special engineering difficulties that arise with the peat roads and the amount of civils work required. The costs have increased significantly to allow enough funding to the top priority schemes to allow the substantial remedial works to be undertaken correctly. The revised list of schemes that are able to now be funded are set out at Appendix 'B' under the heading 'Emerging Priorities'.

The schemes developed in line with the preventative approach described in the Moss Road Strategy are shown at Appendix 'B' under the heading 'Planned Preventative Maintenance'.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

As well as a prioritisation methodology for developing the Capital Maintenance Programme, the Moss Roads Strategy identifies actions to be taken to protect the public using those roads which are not attracting capital funding in this current year's programme.

Financial

Without a clear prioritisation strategy it would not be possible to target the resources for moss road capital repairs to the areas that will result in the greatest benefit to the communities they serve. With the prioritisation strategy in place it will be possible to determine the scale of the maintenance requirements and assign resources appropriately. The moss roads capital programme has an approved allocation of £1.2m in 2019/20 and funding is in place for the same. Profiling of the delivery of this amount will be considered with the wider re-profiling work in June 2019 to determine the 2019/20 delivery programme. Future year's programmes will be determined by reference to this strategy and linking to the wider county capital strategy being developed.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
Moss Roads; Planned Preventative Maintenance and Emerging Issues. Briefing Note October 2018	October 2018	Paul Binks/(01772) 532210
Moss Roads; Planned Preventative Maintenance and Emerging Issues. Briefing Note December 2018	December 2018	Paul Binks/(01772) 532210

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A