



**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 3 MARCH 2022**

**HIGHWAYS INITIATIVE - DELIVERING FOR PARISHES AND
COMMUNITIES**

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on the Highways Initiative - Delivering for Parishes and Communities.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. At its meeting on the 25 June 2019, the Cabinet agreed the allocation of an additional £550,000 resources for the provision of a service for parishes and communities from October 2019, and to enable the accelerated development of future works programmes. The Cabinet also agreed that further reports be brought to the Scrutiny Committee updating on progress of this initiative.

Background

3. Of the £550,000 parishes and communities funding, the sum of £180,000 was allocated to rejuvenating existing assets which are considered low risk, but are important to communities, such as edging back footways, and accelerating response times for tree and hedging work.
4. The sum of £300,000 was allocated to fund the costs for a survey of lining and signing asset data across the County. The condition data collected from this exercise was intended to develop future works programmes.
5. The sum of £70,000 was allocated to increase officer capacity in order to enable timely conversations with communities and parishes and sustain/improve relationships.
6. In February 2020 approval was given for a further £7.3m to be included in the 2020/21 budget for:
 - Maintenance – keeping the network safe (£3.5m which forms part of the maintenance base budget); and
 - Additional provision for the road network (£3.7m one-off funding).

7. The following table shows how the spend was allocated from June 2019 to March 2021:

	2019/20	2020/21	Totals
Communications & Engagement	£ 70,000	£ 80,000	£ 150,000
Vegetation Works	£ 180,000	£ 280,000	£ 460,000
Lining / Condition Data	£ 300,000	£ 500,000	£ 800,000
Community Speed Management Initiative	£0	£ 690,000	£ 690,000
Parish & Communities Fund	£0	£990,000	£990,000
Minor Improvement Schemes	£0	£1,160,000	£1,160,000
Totals	£550,000	£3,700,000	£4,250,000

Fund Update

	Budget	Spend	Committed	Planned	Underspend
Communications & Engagement	£150,000	£150,000	£0	£0	£0
Vegetation Works	£460,000	£460,000	£0	£0	£0
Lining / Condition Data	£800,000	£800,000	£0	£0	£0
Community Speed Management Initiative	£690,000	£55,000	£0	£635,000	£0
Parish & Communities Fund	£990,000	£299,971	£10,000	£680,029	£0
Minor Improvement Schemes	£1,160,000	£924,785	£90,618	£60,000	£84,597
Total	£4,250,000	£2,689,756	£100,618	£1,375,029	£84,597

Communications and Engagement £150,000

8. Since June 2019, the amount of resource available to support Members has increased by two FTEs. The capacity has enabled increased levels of liaison with Members and communities, regular attendance at parish clerk meetings, the provision of workshops for communities on traffic management and biodiversity and drop-in sessions for Members on the use of mobile applications.
9. In addition, the website Leicestershire Highways: A roads to zebras, has been produced, which outlines the different traffic schemes that are available to improve roads in local areas. It also provides estimated costs and advice on where schemes would be appropriate.

Vegetation Works £460,000

10. Between June 2019 and March 2021, 184 jobs at over 70 different localities were undertaken. The works were primarily edging back of pathways.

Lining / Condition Data £800,000

11. A condition survey of the highway network lining was undertaken. The findings of which have been used to inform the 2022/23 lining maintenance programme and will continue to inform future years work programmes.
12. The remaining funds were used to undertake cats eyes renewal and lining refresh in 39 locations across the County.

Community Speed Management Initiative / Parish and Communities Fund £1,680,000

13. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the work on the Community Speed Management Initiative was put on hold and this continues to be the case. As a result, £1m was reallocated to support communities that were not able to benefit from the "Reopening the High Street Fund", that was made available from the Government and distributed via district councils. The £1m Parish and Communities Fund was primarily aimed at either temporary or permanent measures that would support social distancing and active travel.
14. The Parish and Communities Fund received over 100 applications and supported a variety of schemes across the County as shown in the table below:

Type of Improvements	Number of Schemes
Minor Network Improvements & VAS	47
Public Rights of Way	3
Street Furniture	6
Temporary / Permanent Speed Limit Changes	22
Vegetation	36
Total	114

15. A number of the improvement schemes are still to be delivered due to ongoing consultation requirements and £634,000 of the fund has been committed to delivering these schemes. The remaining £356,000 will be returned to the Community Speed Initiative.

Minor improvements £1,160,000

16. The minor improvement schemes were used to fund specific works, including, the Sacheverell Way lighting scheme, flood gates at Watery Gate Lane and the dual crossing at Thurmaston, Barkby Thorpe Lane. The works at Thurmaston are complete, however, the budget was exceeded by £10,000 due to design considerations. The works at Sacheverell Way are now complete and achieved a saving of £84,597. Barrow crossing is complete and under budget by £20,000. The unspent money will be used to offset the overspend at Thurmaston and additional flooding enforcement works that are still under development for Slash Lane, Barrow and Watery Gate Lane, Thurlaston.

Distribution of works across the County

17. A request has been made by Members to show the breakdown of this work and similar maintenance works, via locality and to identify where the works have taken place in parished and non-parished areas.
18. Whilst every effort has been made to do this, the Department's asset records are not maintained in a format that allows for this information to be easily accessible. Therefore, the below figures represent our best understanding. The financial data for our core maintenance budget is not available as this is recorded via packages of works, which are undertaken at multiple locations, and it has not been possible to disaggregate these figures.
19. It is worth highlighting that core highways spend is allocated based on evidence i.e., if a road requires surface dressing it is programmed accordingly. The same applies to other services such as speed interventions. The data dictates investment, not local government structure.
20. The following information should be taken in the context of the highways network, 83% of which is in parished areas whilst 17% is within non-parished.
21. Vegetation Works from Additional Funding, as below:

	Number of Jobs	% of Jobs
Non-parished	41	22
Parished	143	78
Totals	184	100

22. County Lining Works Programme 2019/20, including, works undertaken as part of the additional funding as below:

	Number of Jobs	Approximate Spend	% of spend

Non-parished	154	£ 541,031	39
Parished	313	£ 856,785	61
Totals	467	£ 1,397,816	100

23. All jobs on our Asset Management System, including the core maintenance works, Planned & Reactive 2019/20 as well as some of the works from the £550,000 as below:

		Number of Jobs	% of Jobs
Carriageway Deterioration	Non-parished	1024	27
	Parished	2761	73
Flooding	Non-parished	219	15
	Parished	1245	85
Footway Deterioration	Non-parished	2287	48
	Parished	2432	52
Gully / Drainage	Non-parished	845	21
	Parished	3119	79
Iron Works	Non-parished	110	21
	Parished	426	79
Kerbing	Non-parished	627	30
	Parished	1464	70
Nuisance	Non-parished	406	29
	Parished	984	71
Other	Non-parished	1808	24
	Parished	5574	76
Patching	Non-parished	505	32
	Parished	1073	68
Potholes	Non-parished	2463	24
	Parished	7787	76
Spillage	Non-parished	171	27
	Parished	470	73
Street Furniture	Non-parished	715	25
	Parished	2113	75
Vegetation	Non-parished	127	22
	Parished	460	78
Total	Non-parished	11307	27
	Parished	29908	73
Grand Total		41215	100

24. Parish and Communities Fund 2020/21, as below:

	Number of Applications	Approximate Planned & Spent	% of spend
Non-parished	21	£ 182,000	29
Parished	95	£ 452,000	71
Totals	116	£ 634,000	100

25. The remaining £356,000 will be returned to the Community Speed Initiative.

Resource implications

26. There are no additional resource implications.
27. The Director of Law and Governance and the Director of Corporate Resources have been consulted on the content of this report.

Background papers

Report to Cabinet 25 June 2019 Highways Initiative - Delivering for Parishes and Communities

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s146579/Highways%20Initiative%20-%20Delivering%20for%20Parishes%20and%20Communitites.pdf>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

28. This report will be circulated to all Members of the County Council.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

29. There are no equality or human rights implications arising from the report.
30. An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment is not required as the fund operates within the scope of existing discretionary services which are already provided.
31. The opportunity to access these discretionary services will be countywide regardless of local governance arrangements or other factors such as local demographics.

Other Relevant Impact Assessments

None.

Officer to Contact

Ann Carruthers
Director, Environment and Transport
Tel: (0116) 305 7000
Email: Ann.Carruthers@leics.gov.uk

Janna Walker
Assistant Director, Development and Growth
Tel: (0116) 305 0785
Email: Janna.Walker@leics.gov.uk