

## CORE OFFER BUDGET FOR HIGHWAY AUTHORITY ROLE

### WHY DOES THE COUNCIL HAVE TO PROVIDE THIS SERVICE AND WHAT DOES IT NEED TO COVER?

Roads facilitate the transport of people and goods, provide access to homes, businesses and other destinations, and provide public space where people shop, socialise or relax.

The Government has set a series of laws and rules nationally to ensure all roads perform this function effectively and efficiently.

Councils are given the role of Highway Authority to manage and maintain the road network within the rules set by Government.

In Darlington this involves:

1. Maintaining all the parts that make up the road network, which includes:-
  - 546km of Road
  - 592km Footway
  - 305 Bridges and Structures
  - 346km Public Rights of Way (PROW)
  - 5km Vehicle Safety Barriers
  - 11,884 Street Lights
  - 65 sets of traffic signals
  - Signs and Road Marking
2. Managing the road network to make the best use of the current road network. This includes:
  - Ensuring the highway network best meet the needs of all road users e.g. cars, pedestrians, cyclists, buses, HGVs.
  - Providing and managing car parks and parking places.
  - Considering where people can and cannot park.
  - Considering what can and cannot be allowed on the road network.
  - Managing systems that control traffic, e.g. traffic lights, electronic signs and bollards.
3. Under the road surface lies the infrastructure for the communications and services that underpin a modern society. The Local Authority must manage and coordinate all requests from utility companies to open the road and access their infrastructure.
4. Planning the development of the future transport infrastructure requirements to support the town as it grows is a critical role of the highway authority. This involves securing funding from public and private sources to deliver this investment and ensuring it is constructed to standards that the Council can accept.

5. As Highway Authority the Council must promote road safety; undertake collision/casualty data analysis and to devise programmes, including engineering and road user education, training and publicity that will improve road safety.
6. The Council will retain a small sustainable transport function to provide public transport and sustainable transport statutory requirements. This will also enable the Council to continue to look to develop business cases and funding bids for local motion type activity and travel behaviour work
  - The Department of Transport have agreed to accept applications for Level 3 funding as part of their Bikeability Scheme meaning the service can continue through external grant funding.
  - A successful bid has been obtained for child Pedestrian Training for calendar year 2016/17. Further bids will be submitted for future years and provided external funding applications are successful this service will be continued.
  - A successful bid has been obtained for a Tees Valley sustainable transport programme for 2016/17, which will support the sustainable transport function. Further bids will be submitted for future years and provided external funding applications are successful this service will be continued.

In addition the council also provides a school crossing patrol (SCP) service across 28 locations across the borough. The service contributes to strategies to reduce the number of cars on the road network and at the school gate in the morning and afternoon traffic peaks as part of the Council's traffic management duty.

## **HOW DOES THE CORE OFFER BUDGET MEET THE COUNCIL'S OBLIGATIONS?**

The Council's core offer budget alone is not sufficient to meet the Council's obligations.

Budgets are supplemented by funding received from the Department for Transport (Local Transport Plan). The resources available are prioritised in the following order:

1. Maintenance
2. Management
3. Improvement

The Council is not able to undertake all identified maintenance and management priorities on the highway network and as such must prioritise further. The safety of road users is paramount and this is the criteria used to sift competing demands for resources. The Council employs techniques that are fit for purpose to restore the road network to a safe condition. Improvement works are generally only undertaken when funding has been secured specifically for those projects and cannot be spent on other Council services.

## **DOES THIS DIFFER FROM THE CURRENT SERVICE?**

The Council's core budget offer has been reduced to minimum levels with a significant reliance on Department for Transport funding (LTP) for maintenance and management of the Highway Network.

In 2010/11 the Council received over £3.064m per year from the DfT. In 2015/16 this reduced to £2.624m and by 2018/19 could reduce further to £2.284m. This reduction in funding will have an impact on the amount of maintenance activity undertaken and could impact on the Council's statutory obligations.

The current staffing level of Civil Enforcement Officers is nine FTEs including two supervisors and one vacant post. The intention is to reduce this number to seven FTEs, retaining two supervisors. This will lead to a reduced enforcement presence, but the impact will be offset by the new multi storey car park which will not need a high level of patrol as it is a pay on exit facility.

Regulatory Services management restructure should have little direct impact on front line service but will reduce capacity of management.

Introduction of charging for Blue Badge holders in council off-street car parks. This is a charging proposal as oppose to an expenditure cut and therefore reduces cost of the service and the overall expenditure reduction required. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and can be found in Appendix 4.

## WHAT IS THE CORE BUDGET MADE UP OF?

**2019/20 budget £1,189,838**

	<b>Highways (excl parking) 2019/20 £</b>	<b>Parking 2019/20 £</b>
Employee	2,063,277	263,983
Premises*	1,156,734	890,403
Transport	56,660	3,319
Supplies and Services^	175,680	377,870
Support Services	38,301	0
Capital Charges	133,660	31,778
Income#	(1,210,846)	(2,888,070)
Overheads	68,536	28,553
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,482,002</b>	<b>(1,292,164)</b>

\*Premises costs refer to the repairs and maintenance of the network and car parks. Over £850,000 is spent on highways, footpaths and drainage while £138,000 is spent on traffic management each year. The cost of running the car parks includes £578,000 in non-domestic rates as well as £66,000 in utilities and £210,000 in CCTV monitoring.

^Parking includes £166,000 for the running cost the Feethams MSCP which includes utilities and maintenance both planned and responsive. In addition parking also incurs over £200,000 in costs associated with running, maintaining and emptying the car parking pay stations.

#Income for Highways is mainly derived from fees or grant funding. Income from car parking comes from both on and off street car parking and includes contract parking.