



FOR PUBLICATION

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

21 September 2023

Report of the Executive Director - Place

A6 Matlock to Whatstandwell Highway Retaining Wall Maintenance Works

(Cabinet Member for Highways, Assets and Transport)

1. Divisions Affected

1.1 Alport and Derwent, Matlock and Wirksworth.

2. Key Decision

2.1 This is a key decision because it is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or savings which are significant having regard to the budget for the service or function concerned (this is currently defined as £500,000) and it is likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral areas in the County.

3. Purpose

3.1 To seek Cabinet approval, in accordance with Protocol 1 of the Financial Regulations and standing order contracts and the Public Regulations (PCR) 2015, to procure suitable contractor(s) to deliver the A6 Matlock to Whatstandwell Highway Retaining Wall Maintenance Works.

3.2 To seek Cabinet approval for the Executive Director – Place to award contracts, in line with the Council's Financial Regulations and the Scheme of Delegation.

4. Information and Analysis

- 4.1 The structures' ongoing maintenance has revealed that, as traffic volumes and vehicle weights have increased, several parts of the retaining wall require considerable repairs. The partial fall of a retaining wall near Matlock Bath showed the importance of targeted repairs to ensure vehicle access. The present Department for Transport (DfT) funding formula excludes retaining walls, posing a severe risk to the Council's capacity to provide sufficient maintenance on existing retaining walls and necessitating a reliance on reactive maintenance and pressure bids.
- 4.2 Following a successful bid, the DfT awarded the Council £4.867 million from its Highways Maintenance Challenge Fund to undertake the maintenance of retaining walls along the A6 between Matlock and Whatstandwell. Approvals gained, under Protocol 2(a) and (b) of the Council's Financial Regulations, led to the award of a contract through the Midlands Highway Alliance medium scheme framework (MSF3).
- 4.3 Designers and the Principal Contractor were engaged at an early stage in the project to undertake extensive ground investigations to determine the condition of these walls. Priority designs for the repair work were developed and a target price submitted. A target price is the best estimate of costs, which may increase during the project, especially given the current unstable market with ongoing price increases for labour and materials. To maximise the available project budget, the Council's Project board has agreed to prioritise specific sites for repair, based on the findings from the extensive site investigations already undertaken. The Project board intends to review and apply for further funding to undertake additional work along the A6 retaining wall corridor.
- 4.4 The knowledge gained from the ground investigations and the wall repair designs remains invaluable. The Council now has a true understanding of the wall conditions, which will assist asset management, enable the development of a reactive plan to undertake the necessary repairs, and aid future bid applications.
- 4.5 The Council's Project Team has developed a priority risk scoring system, looking at each individual section of wall to consider the risks and the potential for a collapse if the Council does not undertake the wall repairs, and then ranking them in order of priority for repair. The results will be used to develop repair work packages for procurement to target spending where it is most needed. The types of repairs will include:

- Ground Anchors, including netting.
- Wall thickening techniques such as buttresses.
- Reinforcement of earthworks in front of wall.
- Pressure grouting to fill inaccessible voids.
- Stonemasonry repairs, including full and partial wall rebuilds.
- Associated drainage works.

4.6 In order to deliver best value while ensuring effective financial control, there will be a need to procure and contract repair work through open tendering. The estimated total value of these contracts will be approximately £2.400 million.

4.7 It is intended that the delivery programme will see procurement completion by Winter 2023-24, with work mobilisation in Spring 2024 and completion in Winter 2024-25. In order to minimise any possible disruption to Derbyshire residents and road users, network availability will need to be secured for the repair work while ensuring coordination between all works on the network. If clashes are identified, work may have to be rearranged, which may have an impact on the delivery programme.

4.8 These repairs will strengthen and prolong the life of the retaining walls, reducing the risk of collapse and improving the resilience of the A6 and the highway network as a whole.

5. Consultation

5.1 Not required.

6. Alternative Options Considered

6.1 Do nothing: Under the Highways Act 1980, the Council has a duty to maintain the public highway in a condition that is safe for users; therefore, 'do nothing' is not a viable option.

7. Implications

7.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

8. Background Papers

8.1 None identified.

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 – Implications.

10. Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- a) Approves, in accordance with Protocol 1 of the Financial Regulations and standing order contracts and the Public Regulations (PCR) 2015, to procure suitable contractor(s) to deliver the A6 Matlock to Whatstandwell Highway Retaining Wall Maintenance Works.
- b) Gives approval for the Executive Director – Place to award contracts, in line with the Council's Financial Regulations and the Scheme of Delegation.

11. Reasons for Recommendations

11.1 To ensure that the Council meets its legislative duty to maintain the public highway in a condition that is safe for users.

11.2 Giving added resilience to the A6 and the highway network as a whole.

12. Is it necessary to waive the call in period?

12.1 No.

Report Author: Karen Nurse

Contact details: Karen.Nurse@derbyshire.gov.uk

Implications

Financial

- 1.1 The estimated value available for repairs is approximately £2.400 million.
- 1.2 There is an allocation of £2.145m from the DfT grant allocation which remains unspent. The balance to make the budget up to £2.400m will be met from contingency held within the Highways Capital Programme.

Legal

- 2.1 Under the Highways Act 1980, the Council has a duty to maintain the public highway in a condition that is safe for users. The Traffic Management Act 2004 places a duty on the Council to manage its road network to reduce congestion and disruption to all road users.
- 2.2 The procurement will be carried out under Protocol 1 of the Council's Financial Regulations as the estimated contract value is above the Government's Find a Tender Service threshold value of £213,477 inclusive of VAT. With the total contract value exceeding £500,000 and not an approved procurement in the Departmental Service Plan, Cabinet will be required to approve the award of contracts.

Human Resources

- 3.1 All resources required to manage the delivery of this project will be funded by the A6 Local Highway Maintenance Challenge Fund.

Information Technology

- 4.1 None.

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 There is no requirement for an EIA at this stage, although this will be kept under review throughout the procurement process.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 6.1 These repair works will contribute directly to help support the delivery of the Place departmental Service Plan (Refresh 2023-25) focused priority: to deliver a high quality and cost-effective programme through a modern

service to maintain and improve the County Council's highway network and protect against flooding.

Other (for example, Health and Safety, Environmental Sustainability, Property and Asset Management, Risk Management and Safeguarding)

7.1 None.