

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	Parish Lengthsman Scheme - Additional Investment 2024/25
Date of decision:	30 th July 2024
Decision maker:	Corporate Director for Economy and Environment
Authority for delegated decision:	<p>On 9th February 2024, Full Council agreed the content of the 2024/25 Budget Setting report. As part of the report, Full Council agreed that £250k of the £945k increase in Rural Services Grant would be provided for additional investment in the Parish Lengthsman scheme. Full details of the decision taken can be seen in Recommendation I of the Council's 2024/25 budget setting report via the following link:</p> <p>Decision - To approve the 2024/25 budget and associated Medium Term Financial Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy.</p> <p>Delivery of the £250k of additional funding will be through the existing Parish Lengthsman contract process, which is permissible under the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.</p>
Ward:	Countywide.
Consultation:	None.
Decision made:	To deliver £250k of additional funding through the existing Parish Lengthsman contract process and which will be used to double the 2024/25 base funding that is allocated per Parish Council per km of C and U road network for maintenance or nominated activities.
Reasons for decision:	<p>Working with parishes on locally important maintenance, including the Parish Lengthsman scheme, forms part of the objective to 'Expand and maintain the transport infrastructure network in a sustainable way and improve connectivity across the county' in the Council's Delivery Plan 2024/25.</p> <p>On 9th February 2024, Full Council agreed the content of the 2024/25 Budget Setting report. As part of the report, Full Council agreed that £250k of the £945k increase in Rural Services Grant would be provided for additional investment in the Parish Lengthsman scheme.</p> <p>The Parish Lengthsman scheme operates on an annual basis and devolves some minor highway works to parish councils. It enables parish councils to identify minor defects and maintenance requirements and, in many instances, repair them with funds allocated by Herefordshire Council.</p> <p>Parishes can use the delegated budgets to employ a local contractor familiar with the area. Examples of the type of work available for delegation include drainage clearance, cleaning traffic signs and general grounds maintenance such as vegetation clearance.</p>

	The additional £250k of investment will be used to double the 2024/25 base funding that is allocated per Parish Council per km of C and U road network for maintenance or nominated activities, as set out in their submission.
Equality Considerations	None. This decision relates to increasing the funding associated with the Parish Lengthsman scheme.
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	<p>Financial Implications</p> <p>An additional £250k has been allocated to this project, provided through Rural Services Grant funding. A total budget of £500k exists for this project.</p> <p>In addition to those submissions already received, further submissions can be made by Town and Parish Councils and accepted by Officers but within the total available budget and timescales of the project.</p> <p>Project codes will be allocated so that the project manager assigned can monitor and review progress to enable reporting to the relevant programme boards.</p> <p>Risk Management</p> <p>The identified works should reduce the risk to users on the network as a result of improved condition.</p> <p>Legal Implications</p> <p>Town and Parish Councils have agreed to enter into Parish Lengthsman agreements to deliver their works, which must be fully completed by 31st March 2025.</p>
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	That this additional investment is not made and the Council continues to maintain Herefordshire's highway network in accordance with sound asset management practices but wholly within existing maintenance allocations and grant funding made available.
Details of any declarations of interest made:	None.