S A L F O R D C I T Y C O U N C I L

**Sustainable Regeneration Directorate**

STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION UNIT

**Network Recovery Plan 2011/12 Update**

**Briefing Note to Scrutiny Committee - 5 September 2011**

 **Network Recovery:**

1. The concept of Network Recovery was adopted and implemented in 2010/11, with a programme of carriageway works costing £4.072 million. Highways Investment Funding was used for the purpose. The overall aim of the Network Recovery Programme is to return the whole highway network to a sustainable, stable state of repair over four years. That meant tackling the £37.500 million repair backlog. The effect of the work carried out in 2010/11, was to reduce that repair backlog by approximately £11.000 million.

2. It should be noted that there has been £5m/annum allocated to Highways investment over the last 4 years, and the amount of capital allocated in 2011/12 (£4.966 m), with an appropriate distribution between footpaths, carriageways and street lighting, is maintaining investment in a very challenging budgetary context for the City Council. This has all built upon continuing work on footpaths across the City in recent years, which has not only secured investment but also enabled the City Council to have in place a section 58 defence against third party claims. The improvement in the Network has improved sufficiently to ensure focus on repairing potholes.

3. It should be noted that the network condition generally deteriorates by approximately £5.750 million per annum, when averaged over several years. However, as has been demonstrated by the success achieved so far, the techniques employed by Urban Vision are far less expensive than the conventional engineering approach adopted by others.

 **Programme for 2011/12:**

4. For 2011/12, a sum of £4.966 million has been made available for the Highways Investment Programme (HIP). In view of the restrictions on the Highways Revenue Budget, £1.200 million of this HIP funding will need to be used to support the revenue programme, in order to maintain the City Council’s Section 58 defence. The remaining HIP funding will be split between the Network Recovery Programme and the Street Lighting “Invest to Save” Programme.

5. Through financial necessity, the City Council’s priorities for the use of the maintenance funding available will be:

- to ensure the Section 58 defence (through the repair of reported and actionable faults in the highway); followed by

- the Street Lighting “invest to save” programme (as street lighting energy savings form part of the City Council’s budget efficiencies); and finally

- the Network Recovery Programme.

6. At the present time, it is envisaged that approximately £1.800 million will be available to support the Network Recovery Programme. This figure could well be reduced as the year progresses, depending on decisions regarding balancing the City Council’s overall budget in general.

 **Conclusion:**

7. In view of this position, the Network Recovery Plan will progress to only a limited degree this year. For example, there will be only surface dressing works, and a reduced and limited micro-asphalt programme. There will be no carriageway black-top schemes. In addition, there will be no programmed maintenance schemes for footways. The City Council will no doubt seek to continue the Network Recovery Plan in future years, balancing requirements here against other budget priorities, and bearing in mind that any reductions in capital budgets will place increased pressures on revenue maintenance budgets in future years.