

Council to use new way of prioritising spending on roads and pavements

At this week's Transport committee councillors will be recommended to spend the £23 million allocated in the council budget on roads and pavements using a different method of prioritising which streets get attention first.

Of the total budget around 70% is allocated to roads and footways and the new scheme for deciding where funding will be spent "considers additional characteristics for footways including width, deprivation and street design classification".

There is already a hierarchy which means that streets which are used more often get inspected more frequently, but now all pavements have been mapped according to their width. Those which do not meet minimum width requirements as set out in the Edinburgh Street Guidance will have additional weighting applied by officers deciding on workstreams.

in addition those pavements which lie in areas of deprivation will also attract additional weighting since "Footway condition can have a big impact of people living in areas of high deprivation. It can cause perceived safety concerns, particularly for people with mobility issues. Slipping and tripping on footways of poor quality and lack of drop kerbs

and tactiles also lead to poor public perception and can discourage walking.”

The council said it consulted with The Ripple Project and Living Streets on this new approach.

David Hunter, Convener of Living streets Edinburgh said: “We welcome the increasing investment in footway maintenance – especially targeting residential neighbourhoods where narrow, cluttered pavements with trip hazards can be a huge problem to people going about their daily business. Unfortunately, we need to see an awful lot more of this.”

Cllr Scott Arthur the Transport Convener said: “We believe that we are the first local authority in the country to look at it this way to help create a more equal city.”

The Convener also explained that when he was first appointed in 2022 he asked council officers what the position regarding funding and maintenance was. He was told then that “just to keep things as they are we need an additional £8 million per year”.

In last year’s budget which was proposed by the Liberal Democrat group an additional £11 million was allocated to the budget, and this year the council has increased the additional sum to £12.5 million. The council also hopes to maintain these additional sums for road maintenance for the next two years.

Cllr Arthur said: “In the coming year we are going to resurface around 419,000 square metres of roads and footpaths which equates to 219 projects. Mixed in there we will also spend £500,000 on reinforcing bus stops and we have doubled the budget for installing dropped kerbs right across the city. This is really a data driven process now where we’re using data to prioritise where the money is spent. The most recent data shows that the decline in road and footpath condition in Edinburgh has at least halted. Indeed the data shows it’s starting to improve. there’s still a long way to go but

hopefully we will see even. One of a difference in the coming year.”

[There is a handy list of all the streets where work will be carried out this year in the appendix to the report here.](#) Only three streets in the city centre are mentioned – Queen Street, Royal Terrace and Rose Street North Lane.

The council will also renew “heritage lighting” in the High Street closes and some streets in the West End as well as renewing lighting on Portobello Prom.

The committee meets on Thursday. Anyone can watch the meeting from the public gallery, watch live online or watched the recorded webcast after the meeting finishes. [The papers are here.](#)



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The Roads and Infrastructure Investment – Capital Delivery Priorities for 2024/25 report, to be considered by [Transport and Environment Committee](#) on Thursday (25 April), allocates an

additional £12.5m approved in February as part of the Council's budget-setting process. The extra investment brings the total roads and infrastructure capital budget to £22.986m.

The additional £12.5m of funding will be used to improve the road conditions, pavements and improve paths, and is part of the council's capital budget allocated across six different workstreams, including: road operations and structures, street lighting and traffic signals, carriageways and footways.

These schemes have been prioritised to the areas based on agreed criteria and weighting. 5% is applied to roads on the cycle network, promoting renewal schemes most used by cyclists. Edinburgh is the only local authority in Scotland to include such a weighting and reinforces the Council's commitment to active travel.

Cllr Scott Arthur, Transport and Environment Convener, said: "We're committed to improving our roads, pavements and infrastructure. The latest injection in funding will allow us to significantly increase the number of improvement schemes to enhance the condition of our roads and pavements. In total, we will resurface over 400,000 square metres of roads and footpaths. Additionally, will spend £500,000 on reinforcing the carriageway at bus stops and will double our spending on dropping kerbs.

"This funding builds on last year's record spend of £11m which saw improvements to more square metres of roads and pavements than in any other financial year.

"Residents have shared their concerns regarding the state of our roads and footpaths, and we have listened. We need to get the basics right, and this intensive programme of investment is essential for a safe, usable network. While we won't get footpaths and roads back to where we want them to be in one year, this investment will help get our capital back on track. Indeed, we hope to maintain this level of activity for at

least three years.”

Read the full report, [Roads and Infrastructure Investment – Capital Delivery Priorities](#) for 2024/25. [Watch Transport and Environment Committee](#) live or as a recording after the meeting has finished on the council webcast from 10am on Thursday, 25 April.