

Policy and Resources Committee, Thursday 15th August 2024

Agenda Item 18 – October 2023 Weather Event Update – Motion

The Council:

1. Acknowledges the sheer scale and severity of the impact on local infrastructure during the storms of October 2023 and recognises the complexity and speed of the response delivered by the Council at pace to restore vital routes and reinstate access to cut-off communities;
2. Notes the updates on works undertaken, completed and ongoing;
3. Notes the revised forecast overspend of £3.853m that is currently unfunded;
4. Agrees that the roads reconstruction schemes should continue and the overspend be funded as follows:

	£m
Utilise some of the unallocated capital funding for street lighting and cable and column replacements	0.100
Use Priorities Investment Fund	0.944
Use Crown Estate Funding *	0.780
Borrowing for additional expenditure and use £50k in the loans fund for street lighting improvements towards the cost of borrowing**	2.029
Total	3.853

*It being noted that the Crown Estate Funding for 2024-25 has not been confirmed as yet and therefore requesting the Section 95 Officer to advise Members by the end of the calendar year if funding has not been confirmed by that time or if funding confirmed is insufficient (further noting that £0.500m has already been confirmed as part of the 2024-25 budget).

**It being noted that much of the overspend is revenue in nature and that the Council cannot borrow for revenue expenditure. Further noting that the funding created from the additional borrowing will be substituted towards capital programme expenditure that was originally being funded by earmarked reserves and those earmarked reserves used for the weather related revenue expenditure. The cost to borrow is estimated to be £130k and £50k can be used from the loans fund revenue set aside for street lighting, leaving a net cost pressure of £80k that should be built into future years budget estimates.

5. Recognises that local authorities require additional support to cope with increasingly challenging and unforeseen impacts of severe weather and climate change, especially for Argyll and Bute whose rural and island communities absolutely depend upon reliable lifeline routes and infrastructure, and therefore agrees to lobby for both the funding that is needed now, and effective forward/longer term planning which addresses the need to maintain and safeguard infrastructure resilience as a key contributor to growing, thriving local and national economies.

Proposed: Cllr Jim Lynch Seconder: Cllr Gary Mulvaney