



Department for **Transport**

From the Secretary of State

Great Minster House
76 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DR

Tel: 020 7944 3011
Fax: 020 7944 4399
E-Mail: philip.hammond@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Web site: www.dft.gov.uk

Dear Colleague,

23 February 2011

The Department for Transport recognises the economic and social importance of highways networks to local communities. That is why in the Spending Review we announced that we will be providing over £3 billion over the next four years to local highway authorities to support local highways maintenance.

We are mindful however of the abnormal damage to highways caused by the severe weather this winter; the Met Office advise that December 2010 was the coldest December for 100 years. Potholes and other road damage are a matter of significant concern to road users and local residents.

Due to the exceptional challenges faced by local highway authorities, the Department for Transport will be allocating at least £100m of extra resource funding in aggregate to local highway authorities in England from its 2010/11 budget. This is possible because the Department is expected to deliver a saving on its budget for 2010/11, following tough decisions already taken, including additional efficiencies made this year.

As the damage caused by severe weather was widespread across the country, and in order to minimise administrative burdens for all concerned, we intend to distribute the funds formulaically based on the Department's existing highways maintenance capital funding formula which takes into account road length and condition.

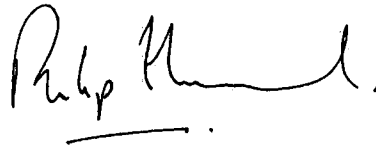
While it is for each authority to prioritise highways maintenance spending to maximise longer term value for money, if we are to tackle effectively the problem of winter damage, it is important that authorities do not use this extra DfT funding to displace planned highways maintenance expenditure. We will therefore only provide funding if you confirm in writing **by 16 March** that your authority will only use it for additional road maintenance, and that you commit to publishing a brief note on your website by 30 September 2011, copied to the DfT, setting out how this extra DfT funding has been

spent, what you originally budgeted to spend, and how this additional funding has complemented (rather than displaced) the wider highways maintenance expenditure by your authority. This will promote greater transparency and enable local communities to hold their highway authorities to account.

For authorities that agree to these conditions by 16 March, we will notify them of their specific funding allocation shortly after this date.

It should be noted that this exceptional funding was made possible by the Department's budgetary position for 2010/11. There should be no expectation that the Department will be able to provide additional funding following any future severe weather event. It remains the responsibility of local highway authorities to prioritise their resources and build in appropriate resilience as part of their overall maintenance programmes.

Yours ever

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Hammond', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

PHILIP HAMMOND