

Agenda

Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Wednesday, 24 June 2015, 2.00 pm
County Hall, Worcester

All County Councillors are invited to attend and participate

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ਪੰਜਾਬੀ। ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦਾ ਸਮਝਣ ਸਮਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਦੇ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਤੱਕ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਇਸਦਾ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਲਈ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਕਰ ਸਕੇ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਮਦਦ ਲਈ 01905 765765 'ਤੇ ਫ਼ੋਨ ਕਰੋ। (Punjabi)

DISCLOSING INTERESTS

There are now 2 types of interests:
'Disclosable pecuniary interests' and **'other disclosable interests'**

WHAT IS A 'DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST' (DPI)?

- Any **employment**, office, trade or vocation carried on for profit or gain
- **Sponsorship** by a 3rd party of your member or election expenses
- Any **contract** for goods, services or works between the Council and you, a firm where you are a partner/director, or company in which you hold shares
- Interests in **land** in Worcestershire (including licence to occupy for a month or longer)
- **Shares** etc (with either a total nominal value above £25,000 or 1% of the total issued share capital) in companies with a place of business or land in Worcestershire.

NB Your DPIs include the interests of your spouse/partner as well as you

WHAT MUST I DO WITH A DPI?

- **Register** it within 28 days and
- **Declare** it where you have a DPI in a matter at a particular meeting
 - you must **not participate** and you **must withdraw**.

NB It is a criminal offence to participate in matters in which you have a DPI

WHAT ABOUT 'OTHER DISCLOSABLE INTERESTS'?

- No need to register them but
- You must **declare** them at a particular meeting where:
You/your family/person or body with whom you are associated have a **pecuniary interest** in or **close connection** with the matter under discussion.

WHAT ABOUT MEMBERSHIP OF ANOTHER AUTHORITY OR PUBLIC BODY?

You will not normally even need to declare this as an interest. The only exception is where the conflict of interest is so significant it is seen as likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

DO I HAVE TO WITHDRAW IF I HAVE A DISCLOSABLE INTEREST WHICH ISN'T A DPI?

Not normally. You must withdraw only if it:

- affects your **pecuniary interests OR** relates to a **planning or regulatory** matter
- **AND** it is seen as likely to **prejudice your judgement** of the public interest.

DON'T FORGET

- If you have a disclosable interest at a meeting you must **disclose both its existence and nature** – 'as noted/recorded' is insufficient
- **Declarations must relate to specific business** on the agenda
 - General scattergun declarations are not needed and achieve little
- Breaches of most of the **DPI provisions** are now **criminal offences** which may be referred to the police which can on conviction by a court lead to fines up to £5,000 and disqualification up to 5 years
- Formal **dispensation** in respect of interests can be sought in appropriate cases.

Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel Wednesday, 24 June 2015, 2.00 pm, County Hall, Worcester

Membership

Councillors:

Dr K A Pollock (Chairman), Mr G J Vickery (Vice Chairman), Mr A T Amos, Mr A A J Adams, Ms P Agar, Mr W P Gretton, Mr M E Jenkins, Mr J W R Thomas and Mr P A Tuthill

Agenda

Item No	Subject	Page No
1	Apologies and Welcome	
2	Declarations of Interest and of any Party Whip	
3	Public Participation <i>Members of the public wishing to take part should notify the Head of Legal and Democratic Services in writing or by email indicating the nature and content of their proposed participation no later than 9.00am on the working day before the meeting (in this case 23 June 2015). Enquiries can be made through the telephone number/email address below.</i>	
4	Confirmation of the Minutes of the previous meeting (To follow)	
5	Street Lighting	1 - 10
6	Highway Maintenance	11 - 18
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8	Ketch Roundabout	37 - 38

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Date of Issue: Tuesday, 16 June 2015

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STREET LIGHTING – PROGRESS

Summary

1. The Strategic Commissioner Major Projects and the Principal Project Engineer (Street lighting) have been invited to discuss progress on the roll out of Street Lighting reductions and potential energy savings.

Background

2. In 2012, the County Council spent £2.4 million per annum on energy costs for its 52,000 street lights and 8,000 illuminated road signs (19% of the Council's CO2 emissions). The County Council planned to reduce costs and emissions as part of the Council's Future Fit programme (previously BOLD). On 9 February 2012, Cabinet agreed to initiate a series of pilot projects to examine the benefits of street lighting reductions and asked scrutiny to consider the issue. A Scrutiny Task Group was set up to review: the various ways in which energy and cost savings could be made; the impact on communities; the views of local people; and recommend a way forward. The options considered were switching off, dimming and converting to energy saving lights.

Scrutiny Report

3. The scrutiny task group's report was published in December 2013. The scrutiny found that savings could be made by switching off lights for part of the night. The Task Group recommended dimming 250W high pressure sodium lights after 7.30pm and that a business case for LED should be developed using current figures. The Task Group also recommended clear criteria on which street lights should be kept on and a commitment to consult with local communities.

4. The report recognised some of the risks around tariff issues, the capital costs and reliability associated with the implementation of new technologies, the potential public response to significant turning off of street lights associated with perceptions of crime and disorder and potential legal liabilities associated with a potential increase in accidents on the highway.

5. Cabinet considered the report on 7 February 2013 and accepted the conclusions and detailed recommendations as the way forward. These are outlined in the Cabinet Member's response, attached at Appendix 1.

6. Following a successful trial in Droitwich, Cabinet approved a change in policy to switch off street lighting for part of the night and endorsed the street lighting energy saving project on 6 February 2014 ([see item 8, accessible at this weblink](#)). The legal position, options, challenges, work to date and next steps were outlined. The Director was authorised to undertake a public information exercise in affected areas in advance of the switch off programme

and proceed with the project as set out in the report. Areas deemed as traffic routes and major junctions were not part of the planned reductions. A total of 17,000 lighting points on residential roads were to be switched off between midnight and 6am. Feedback from residents in the trial area was mostly positive, although not all, with some wishing more could be turned off.

7. The Panel received an update on progress in May 2014 as the roll out in Redditch was just beginning. It was confirmed that in residential areas, lights would be left on at road junctions and bends to provide reference points for residents. Overall, about one third of lights would be turned off.

8. A further report on progress is attached at Appendix 2.

9. The Panel are asked to consider progress made on street lighting. In doing so, Members may wish to discuss:

- How are Members and the public informed about the switch off in advance and what contact details are provided? What provision has been made for those with no computer access? What is there in terms of dedicated officer support?
- How are requests by the public to turn lights back on dealt with? How many complaints have been received and what is the nature of the complaints? Have any lights been turned back on as a result?
- What evidence is there about the effect on crime levels and road safety in areas where lights have been turned off
- The business case for LED technology is changing rapidly. What alternative ways of funding LED lighting have been investigated and what progress has been made
- What are the estimated cost savings and reductions in CO2 emissions (tonnes per year)?
- Has there been any rise in the Councils Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) payments?

10. Members are asked to determine whether it wishes to make any comments or recommendations to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility

- Appendix 1 – Cabinet Member's response to the Street Lighting Scrutiny Report (December 2012)
- Appendix 2 – Update on progress on the street lighting energy saving project

Purpose of the Meeting

Supporting Information

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points:

Worcester (01905) 763763, Kidderminster (01562) 822511 or Minicom: Worcester (01905) 766399

Background Papers

Specific Contact Points for this Report:

Stella Wood (Tel: 01905 82 2873)

Email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Resources) the following background papers relate to the subject matter of this report:

- Cabinet Agenda and Minutes of 9 February 2012, 7 February 2013, and 6 February 2014
- Agenda and Minutes of the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 27 February 2013, 9 May 2014
- Street Lighting Scrutiny Report (December 2013)

All of which are available on the Council's website at <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/democratic-services/minutes-and-agendas.aspx>

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Cabinet – 7 February 2013

7. Scrutiny Report: Street Lighting

Response of the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways and Transport

I would like at the outset to thank Cllr Dr Pollock and his colleagues of the Scrutiny Task Group for a considered and well researched report. I believe it adds to the body of knowledge on street lighting and "shines a light" on the complexities of the issues faced by the County Council.

The energy costs for the County Council's street lighting stock have increased over the last few years as a result of above inflation increases in energy costs. This upward trend is projected to continue, particularly given the current financial climate. This poses a real challenge for the County Council.

As the report outlines, street lighting also accounts for 21% of the County Council's current CO2 emissions and the Council, as part of the Carbon Management Plan, is committed to reducing this figure.

As a highway authority, the County Council has a power, not a duty under the Highways Act 1980, to provide and maintain road lighting. Where it is provided, it must be provided to the standard set in the County Council street lighting policy. In exercising its powers in respect of the extent, operation and maintenance of lighting, a highway authority should act reasonably. Street lighting is provided for the safe movement of pedestrians and vehicles using the highway after the hours of darkness. Lighting does though provide a secondary community benefit in its potential to assist in reducing crime and the fear of crime

In exercising its powers, a highway authority has a duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to exercise its functions with due regard to their effect on crime and disorder in its area.

Public opinion appears, is split on the issue. Some see the benefits in reducing the amount of street lighting and associated financial savings. For others, lighting offers a sense of security and is greatly valued. It is clear to me that the issue requires a considered plan in taking forward changes to the current situation. The Scrutiny Task Group clearly acknowledges this point.

The report also recognises some of the potential risks existing when reducing street lighting:

- Tariff issues – changes by energy suppliers to the tariffs charged to the County Council as a result of changes in the energy profile, i.e. a reduction in overnight "cheaper" electricity
- Capital costs and reliability associated with the implementation of new technologies. However both the cost and reliability is expected to improve significantly in the near future

- Potential public response to significant turning off of street lights associated with perceptions of crime and disorder that may result
- Potential legal liabilities associated with a potential increase in accidents on the highway as a result of reduced street lighting.

All of these issues are significant.

Scrutiny Task Group Detailed Conclusions and Recommendations

1. *The scrutiny has found that energy tariffs would increase if the authority uses less base load electricity, but the increase should not outweigh the savings, so that some reductions in lighting will be financially worthwhile.*

This point is agreed and a plan of action should include the potential impact of changes to the current energy tariffs and loadings.

2. *Current policy is to light all night across the County, but complete switch off and disconnection is not sensible, due to eventual removal costs. However, savings can be made by switching off lights for part of the night, particularly given the on-going increase in energy prices and the need to reduce carbon emissions. The payback period for switching off half of the 30,000 street lights in residential areas between midnight and 6.00am is estimated to be less than 2 years*
3. *However, there is no blanket solution. There are many circumstances that need to be taken into account and appropriate levels of lighting need to be considered on a street by street basis.*
4. *Feedback needs to be sought from the local community and any switch off needs to be acceptable. We therefore welcome the switch off trials that are planned over the winter and look forward to seeing the outcomes.*

Conclusions 2, 3 and 4 go to the heart of the dilemma about public acceptability. The County Council is currently conducting a pilot project in Droitwich to determine both the practicalities of delivery and customer views, on a part-night switch off project. This pilot project, when completed in May, will be reviewed and form the basis of any next steps.

5. *Whilst the views of residents are important, they are unlikely to be unanimous, so the Council will need to take the final decision.*

Experience elsewhere, particularly in Gloucestershire as highlighted by the Scrutiny Task Group, demonstrates the value of this approach.

6. *We therefore recommend that Cabinet agrees a new policy on its approach to street lighting. This should include:*
 - *Clear criteria (similar to Gloucestershire) on which street lights should be kept on – agreed in consultation with residents*
 - *A commitment to consult with local communities on whether and what times lights should be switched off. This is likely to need some identified, dedicated officer support.*

For the reasons outlined above, I concur with this assessment.

7. *On traffic routes, the payback period for dimming 250w high pressure sodium lamps is now less than 5 years). We recommend investing approximately £150,000 capital to dim 250w high pressure sodium lamps from 7.30pm, achieving annual savings of approximately £34,000.*

In recent years the County Council has dimmed over 2000 high wattage lighting points and converted 6000 columns. This programme will continue subject to available capital investment.

8. *Low pressure sodium street lights are gradually being converted to dimmable, energy efficient white light (Cosmo Polis) where end of life replacement is needed (not just the bulb) at a rate of 200 lights p.a. In future, the most energy efficient light is likely to be LED and we recommend that the cost and savings of dimming these are calculated to see if dimming is worthwhile.*

In recent years the County Council has converted over 6000 lighting points to White Light. This programme will continue subject to available capital investment.

9. *LED lights may well be considered the best option in future, but it would be unwise to invest in these now, at a time of rapid technological advance and falling prices. However, we recommend that a business case for LED is developed using current figures.*

The business case for LED technology is changing rapidly and the County Council will continue to review the case for investment.

10. *Similarly, there is the risk that investing extensively in Cosmo Polis white lights now would prevent the Council taking advantage of possibly cheaper and more efficient lighting technology in future. At current replacement rates it would take around 100 years to convert all the existing residential street lights to energy saving lights. However, replacing large numbers of fully functioning lights with white lights or LED is not cost effective whilst payback periods are over 5 years.*

This is agreed but the County Council will continue to keep the business case under review.

11. *A Central Management System would be too expensive and should only be considered on large new estates.*

This is again accepted as a sensible way forward.

Mr J H Smith
January 2013

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Appendix 2

Street Lighting Energy Saving Progress report

The consumption of energy by street lighting is continually reducing due to various energy saving opportunities being implemented.

- Savings are being achieved through converting some lights to part-night, dimming, requiring LEDs in new highway schemes,
- Replacement of high-wattage lamps with energy efficient lamps within the lighting maintenance contract energy saving obligation,
- Renewal of knock-downs with LEDs. ,
- Replacement of most failed units which cannot be repaired.

The largest contributor to energy saving is currently the part-night switching off of some inefficient lights within residential areas as previously set out.

The roll-out of this project is currently in its 14th month and is currently on target for the planned completion in April 2016

The project has produced the following benefits:

Number of lights switched to part night illumination	-	11,000
Annual energy saving	-	1,354,000 kWh
Annual energy cost saving (@ 11p per kwh)	-	£150,000
Annual carbon commitment charges saving per annum (@ £16 per tonne)	-	£9700

Comments

To date, approximately 400 comments have been received from residents and stakeholders. Many requests from residents are for individual lights to be switched back on or for the initiative to be halted giving reasons such as that crime may increase, vehicles are left vulnerable on unlit highways and people do not feel safe to use the highway after midnight. However, there is no hard evidence from the police that reduced lighting is directly linked to individual crimes.

The project team have ongoing discussions with local policing teams however, to date, none of these have resulted in lights being switched back on.

All of these comments are reviewed and responded to individually by the project team however there is no dedicated resource for this project so responses are given within the authorities standard timescales.

Information and Communication

All of the mapping showing which assets are to be part-night illuminated and which will remain on all night are published on the County Council's website. Alongside this, each plan is sent the local library to which it relates as soon as it is finalised so that it can be displayed. Initially the team ran sessions in local supermarkets to promote the initiative and field questions but the take up of this was very low. To make better use of limited project team staff resources more emphasis is given to promoting the initiative through local media and to direct readers of the website to the Worcestershire Hub and libraries for more information.

Since the initial Scrutiny report was published, the use of LED lighting has become common place in highway lighting applications throughout the country including within Worcestershire. Almost all replacement units required in the lighting maintenance contract are now LED. As expected, the cost of LED units has steadily fallen over the past 4 years and now in many applications provides to be a cost effective, energy-efficient solution when compared to traditional light sources.

In order to obtain long-term energy savings across more of the asset requires capital investment.

Options to convert for different sectors of the asset and the benefits are shown below

Lamp Type	Quantity	Estimated cost to convert total asset to LED	Energy saving following completion (per annum)	Lamp replacement cost saving following completion (per annum)	Payback – Years (all figures have been rounded up)
35w Low pressure sodium	19,500	£5,000,000	£400k	£100k	10
55w Low Pressure sodium	2500	£700k	£70k	£15k	8
50w High Pressure Sodium	6500	£1,700,000	£150k	£8k	11
70w High Pressure sodium	3100	£800k	£100k	£4k	8
35w Compact fluorescent	50	£15k	£800	£200	15
50w Compact fluorescent	270	£70k	£8k	£800	10
100w High pressure sodium	2700	£1,100,000	£80k	£5k	13
150w High Pressure Sodium	6100	£3,100,000	£215k	£11k	14
250w High Pressure Sodium	1300	£600k	£40k	£2k	14
45w Cosmopolis	3000	£720k	£50k	£20k	11
60w Cosmopolis	3000	£715k	£55k	£20k	10

Lamp types highlighted in green are currently affected by the Part night lighting initiative.

The team are currently working these options into a business case and considering a number of factors including potential financing arrangements.

HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

Summary

1. The Strategic Commissioner – Major Projects, the Infrastructure Asset Manager and the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways have been invited to discuss the Highways Maintenance Contract.

Background

2. The Council's previous Highways Maintenance Contract finished at the end of March 2014. Following an 18 month commissioning exercise, Cabinet agreed on 12 December 2013, that the new Highways Maintenance Contract be awarded to Ringway (from 1 April 2014). It was suggested that, in support of the review process, a scrutiny review be undertaken 12 to 18 months from contract award. This was added to the Panel's work programme, agreed at Council in May 2015.

3. On 27 March 2014 the Panel received an update on the differences between the old and the new contract and how the new contract was expected to deliver better value for money.

4. The 12 December 2014 Cabinet agenda ([item 9, accessible at this weblink](#)) provides:

- The existing term maintenance contract arrangements with Ringway and the performance improvements secured as part of the current contract
- The commissioning process, including key findings from the 'Evaluate' phase which helped establish recommendations for future service provision [see paragraph 11]. This included for example that customer feedback was increasingly important
- The Council spends circa £28m per annum through the Highways Services contract - new arrangements are expected to deliver significant savings
- The contract extension earning mechanism with its associated performance requirements, along with structured regular joint management discussions, provides a robust review structure for the life of the contract and ensures outcomes and standards are maintained. Performance against KPIs is captured and reported monthly, with the Joint Contract Management Team being accountable for corrective action where required. Achievement of excellent service is rewarded by extension of the contract term.
- Additional features of the new contract which will drive efficiency and performance [set out below]

Purpose of the Meeting

Supporting Information Contact Points

- a. A refined efficiency factor to ensure that the maximum benefit is afforded to the Council whilst still making the contract sustainable
- b. A mechanism which links performance to the ability to earn extensions to the contract term. A strategic suite of gateway and scored indicators across the Service ensures all service areas are considered:
 - i. All defects are repaired on time
 - ii. Right first time delivery
 - iii. Accuracy of programme and minimised disruption to the highway network
 - iv. Positive Local Impact to deliver Social Value Act 2012 obligations
 - v. Delivering added value by providing more for the same
 - vi. Year on year reduction in customer complaints regarding routine cyclic service
 - vii. 99.5% of the drainage asset is effective
 - viii. Minimise customer complaints regarding planned works and vehicle crossings
 - ix. Re-use of materials generated from works within the contract
 - x. Fleet Vehicle Reliability
 - xi. Minimising the cost of management and facilities against service delivery costs

5. Further detail on the new contract is attached at Appendix 1.

6. Members are asked to consider the update on the Highways Maintenance Contract and associated issues. In doing so, Members may wish to discuss:

- Whether the new contract is delivering better value for money
- How the additional features of the new contract (set out above) have driven efficiency and performance.

7. The Panel is asked to determine whether they wish to make any comments or recommendations to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility.

- Appendix 1 – Update on Highways Maintenance Contract

County Council Contact Points:

Worcester (01905) 763763, Kidderminster (01562) 822511 or Minicom: Worcester (01905) 766399

Specific Contact Points for this Report:

Stella Wood (Tel: 01905 82 2873)

Background Papers

Email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Resources) the following background papers relate to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and Minutes of the Economy, Environment and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 3 July and 5 September 2013
- Agenda and Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board on 17 July 2013
- Cabinet Agenda and Minutes of 12 December 2013

All of which are available on the Council's website at <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/democratic-services/minutes-and-agendas.aspx>

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The Highways Maintenance Service Contract (HMSC) has now been delivering the County's Highway Maintenance needs for 14 months.

Headline statistics for the first 12 months include:

- 154km (5.2% of the network) of planned Carriageway Surfacing projects and 138,000sqm of structural Carriageway patching delivered
- 32,423 Safety Defects completed (all within the allocated time)
- Over 49k Gullies emptied
- Over 12,000t of recycled material produced at Stamford Depot
- £400k of Vehicle Restraint Systems upgraded.

A major change from the previous Contract is how the various cyclic services are delivered. In the HMSC, these Core Services are defined by outcome specifications. This allows the Contractor to programme the various cyclic works within the constraints detailed in the Service Information in order to maximise efficiency producing a saving of £850k when compared to the previous Contract.

Obvious savings such as carrying out a number of cyclic activities under the same Traffic Management on high speed roads has contributed to reducing costs.

We are also inviting our partner organisations for Worcestershire including District Councils to utilise the same traffic management to carry out their functions such as litter picking.

The Worcestershire Highways team are continually looking at ways of improving delivery of these services to enhance efficiency further and reduce costs.

As previously stated, the new HMSC has a number of mechanisms to control prices and costs year on year. These are based on the successful mechanisms included in the last Maintenance Contract but using the experience of that Contract they have been modified to enhance the effects:

- Price Adjustment Factor (PAF) – This mechanism adjusts the service prices to account for inflation. This mechanism has been refined for the HMSC with different indices for different service areas to better reflect variable cost elements used in each Service Area.
- The Contractors Share (Pain / Gain) – This mechanism ensures that the Contractor strives to work as efficiently as possible, keeping WCC costs to a minimum. The mechanism works by comparing the actual costs to the Target Prices established from the tender. If the total costs for the year are less than the total of the prices then the Contract is in gain. This gain is split between the Contractor and WCC on a percentage basis as set out in the Contract. Should the costs be more than the total of the target prices then the Contract is in pain, this again is shared in accordance with the Contract.

For the first two years of the contract the Contractor is entitled to the first 2% of the gain and if greater than 2% it is split 50/50. If in pain the Contract pays WCC the 2% back in full.

The percentages reduce after year two, with WCC keeping more of the savings.

- Efficiency Factor – This mechanism helps drive down the tendered prices within the Contract period should there be any gain in the Contract. It does not allow any overall increases though, should the Contract in pain.

The mechanism has been modified in the HMSC so that its effect can be applied to the next financial year's prices by calculating the effect on schemes completed by the 31st December on a rolling 12 month basis. This allows (by using some forecasting) the factor to be applied the following April.

The factor is calculated by reducing the total of tendered prices by 50% of any gain achieved. Thus if £500k of gain was achieved, prices would be reduced by the equivalent of £250k in the service area where the gain was made.

The PAF has lead to Prices being reduced in a range between -0.2% and -5.5% for 2015/16.

The efficiency factor was calculated based on the first 9 months of the Contract to 31st December. The anticipated Contractor's share at that time was 0% so no efficiency factor was applied to 2015/16 Prices.

The Contractor's share for the entire 2014/15 period will be calculated next month when all final costs have either been established or it becomes too late to submit them. It is currently forecasted as a gain of £110k. This is mainly due to Ringway investing heavily in a number of the Core Services to ensure Contract targets were met. These activities taking place during the summer of 2014 so being included in the Efficiency Factor Calculation on the 31st December and a number of larger Public Realm and major maintenance schemes being completed post December 31st and making an amount of gain. This gain not being accounted for in the efficiency factor calculation in December but it will count towards the next calculation in December 2015.

The Contract encourages the use of recycled materials. Ringway have a dedicated facility at Stamford Depot where Recycled Hot Asphalt, Foam Base and Type One Stone are produced. Over 12,000t of these materials were produced and re-used in our projects during 2014/15. This has resulted in considerable savings. We also return asphalt planings to the quarry using the quarry's delivery trucks and receive £4 for each tonne returned.

Ringway are encouraged to keep Contract Management costs to a minimum. An example of this has been centred around the Purchasing Team. Having won a similar Maintenance Contract in Shropshire, a single purchasing team serves both Contracts. This team is based here in Worcestershire but costs are divided between Shropshire and Worcestershire Contracts. This saving is approximately £30k per year.

Ringway made some commitments in their Tender to add value and fulfil obligations under the Social Value Act 2012. To this end they have completed or are on target to complete these commitments. These include four Parish Makeover days and employing a number of apprentices a year.

There is no cash associated with KPIs on this Contract, the money being invested in work. Instead, excellent performance wins extensions to the Contract. The first six months were used to validate and ensure the proposed KPIs were viable and measurable. We are now

9 months into the first 12 months of recording results that will count towards the first extension opportunity. Performance so far is very promising.

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PUBLIC SATISFACTION WITH ROAD CONDITION

Summary

1. The Head of Community and Environment, Highways Operations Manager, the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways and the Project Manager have been invited to discuss progress on how public satisfaction with the condition of roads might be improved.

Background

2. In autumn/winter 2013/14, the Directorate, investigated why public satisfaction had declined from 42% to around 31% even though road condition was being maintained or improved. The Panel was advised that the aim of the exercise was to gather objective evidence to understand the drivers of public satisfaction with road condition and identify how it might be improved either by highway service activity and/or communications campaigns.

3. On 27 March 2014, the Panel considered the report subsequently produced, 'Public Satisfaction with Roads in Worcestershire' (March 2014).

4. The research findings showed that the top reasons for reducing satisfaction with road condition were:

- potholes
- road signs
- road markings
- poor quality repair
- poor road surfaces
- parking

5. The report identified that satisfaction potentially might be improved if the Council chose to re-direct some spending to the top reasons for dissatisfaction. It suggested that spending could be targeted in areas where satisfaction was known to be poorest. The impact of improvements on satisfaction (compared to similar areas where no improvements have been made) could then be measured and evaluated.

6. Local satisfaction levels were reducing similar to other authorities across much of the country. It was not the case that Worcestershire's roads are of lower quality, or even that Worcestershire residents were less satisfied with the County's roads than in other areas. Members questioned whether improvements to increase satisfaction were affordable and whether other maintenance work might be compromised resulting in worse road conditions. They felt it was vital to maintain the

quality of the road.

7. It was noted that as a part of the collation, qualitative information was secured from focus groups who had viewed video clips of roads in Worcestershire, to ascertain their views and perception of roads in the County. Signage had been removed in some photos to conceal the location and may have been a factor in lack of satisfaction with signage.

8. The Panel's view was that some spending should be targeted, as part of a trial, in areas where satisfaction was known to be poorest as outlined in the report. A number of initiatives such as clearer road markings and signage could be carried out, possibly by local highway response gangs over the next 12 months. The impact on public satisfaction should be monitored and decisions made on further investment when the results were known. However, the Council could not target spending in areas where satisfaction was known to be poorest as it did not have this information.

Update

9. The Chairman asked about progress at Council in July 2014 and Members were advised that the Directorate was developing two pilot areas. This included the deployment of the new Highways Local Response Team (LRT) to deal with smaller scale Highways issues which, whilst not safety related, could affect the public's perception and satisfaction with roads. It was planned that the LRT would liaise closely with the relevant Parish Council and Community to identify and work on issues that matter to them. A review of the pilots would be carried out and a survey also completed to try and gauge any changes in levels of public satisfaction.

10. The Panel has subsequently asked for an update on progress.

11. To inform the report on 'Public Satisfaction with Highways in Worcestershire' a series of focus groups were held (by Oakham Research) across the County, where attendees observed and scored a variety of videos of road conditions. A review of all of the detailed comments of the focus groups has recently been carried out to determine the range of issues raised and common themes of concern. The aim is to identify specific areas on which to focus and potential key performance indicators to improve public satisfaction with road condition. This review is attached at Appendix 1.

12. An officer/member working group was also formed in November 2014 with the objective to review and implement cost effective ways to increase positive public perception and address the key issues identified from the Oakham Research. The group identified a number of key initiatives that could be achieved quickly

Purpose of the Meeting

to help improve satisfaction, including for example, parish makeovers, signage, and improving communication about highways with district, town and parish councils, as outlined in Appendix 2. The Group also agreed that the Council would join the national Highways and Transport Survey 2015 to enable comparison with similar authorities.

13. Ringway, the council's highway maintenance contractor, is committed to supporting the local communities, charities and good causes in the counties where it operates. Four parish makeovers and job fairs per year, form part of Ringway's corporate responsibility promise when it was re-awarded the highways contract in April 2014.

14. The Martley Parish Makeover was the first of four planned in 2014/15. Ringway operatives worked alongside volunteers from the village on issues that mattered to them. Together, they widened a footpath, realigned a safety barrier, renewed reflective bollards, renewed some of the signs, cut back overgrown hedges and verges, painted the bus shelter, as well as generally tidied up the area by cleaning benches, the grit bin and telephone box and sweeping the main road to the village. Ringway also held a job fair in the village hall to promote the various jobs and careers available in the company and in particular, the apprenticeship scheme in Worcestershire Highways.

15. Given this initiative, rather than go ahead with the two pilot studies with LRTs dealing with local highways issues (as previously planned) the Group felt it would be more efficient and effective to focus pilots on improving satisfaction by gathering qualitative data from the Martley and Cookley parish makeovers. A qualitative approach is currently favoured to understand the experiences and attitudes of the local community through face to face interviews and focus groups.

16. Members are asked to:

- a) consider the progress made and future plans on improving satisfaction with roads
- b) determine whether they wish to make any comments or recommendations to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility and if so agree those, and
- c) consider whether any further scrutiny work is needed

17. During the discussion, Members may wish to explore the following areas:

- next steps and progress.
- early thoughts on potential key performance indicators to help improve public satisfaction with road condition

Supporting Information

- Appendix 1 – Public Satisfaction of the condition of roads in Worcestershire
- Appendix 2 – Public Perception Working Group – Objectives and key initiatives.

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points:

Worcestershire County Council (01905) 763763

Worcestershire Hub (01905) 765765

Email: Worcestershirehub@worcestershire.gov.uk

Specific Contact Points for this Report:

Stella Wood, Overview and Scrutiny Officer, Commercial and Change Directorate Tel: 01905 82 2873

Email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) the following background papers relate to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and Minutes of the Economy, Environment and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 27 March 2014
- Council Agenda and Minutes of 9 July 2014

All of which are available on the Council's website at

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/democratic-services/minutes-and-agendas.aspx>

Public Satisfaction of the condition of roads in Worcestershire

Worcestershire County Council ran detailed customer focus groups through Oakham Research to gain perceptions of the condition of roads in Worcestershire. The focus groups represented different geographical areas around the county where attendees observed a number of videos and then commented on these. Scores were given out of ten given to create an average score with detailed comments then given to justify these scores.

The videos have been reviewed in detail, to determine the range of issues that were raised. There were many specific issues raised. For detailed specific information, please refer to the appendix.

When members of the focus groups were asked to justify their scores there were a number of common themes that were repeatedly raised which caused a loss of score, these are listed below.

Common themes of concern

- Carriageway/footway surface issues:
 - Potholes
 - Concerns about overuse of surface dressing
 - Concerns relating to patchwork quilt repairs
 - Concerns relating to the perceived lack of clearance of mud from the highway
 - Sweeping required of footways and cycle paths
 - Worn anti-skid lifting and in need of replacement
 - Condition of nearside of carriageway considered more important (for motorcyclists/cyclists)
- Worn road markings:
 - at junctions creating safety concerns
 - centre lines
 - advanced stop lines faded
- Overgrown vegetation masking signage and forward visibility
- Carriageway drainage concerns with blocked grips and ditches leading to surface issues and ice hazards
- Parking on footways creating obstructions for pedestrians
- Highway signage concerns:
 - Signage plates in need of cleaning
 - request for more wicket signs/ advanced direction signs around one way systems and on approaches to roundabouts
 - concerns about the amount of fly posting/ unauthorised signage
 - excessive highway signage creating clutter

- Request for more double yellow lines on main roads to keep traffic on main roads flowing
- Support for more graduated speed limits into villages (e.g. 60mph/40mph/30mph)
- Support for greater monitoring of utility reinstatement works
- Support for analysing traffic signals to maximise efficiency of operation

Recommendations

It is recommended that focus is given through the relevant teams to reviewing the above areas of concern. Where applicable, **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** could be developed or modified in a bid to improving the overall perceptions of the conditions of roads in Worcestershire.

Appendix: Focus Groups video review 'Public Satisfaction of the condition of roads in Worcestershire'

All video clips filmed in April 2013 (30 clips referenced)

Oakham research – (Attendees: Male dominated, Age 50+ typical, car driver typical)
Specific references from geographical focus groups

Worcester Focus Group

Clip 1 (5,6s,7) (URBAN - Vale)

Badly eroded surface

Obstructions in cyclepath

Cyclist on path near bridge

Potholes at end

Anti-skid near crossing degraded

Parking on the footway

Many dropped kerbs – misconception that you are allowed to block a dropped kerb

Poor surfaces in Worcester

Remove grit

Suggestion that inspectors travel by bike

Polarised opinions on utility reinstatements

Worcester Clip 2 (6,8s,9s) (RURAL)

Good surface and lining

Happy with signage

Worcester Clip 3 (URBAN7)

Not considered a safe junction

Signage to Alexandra Hospital questioned

Slip road access visibility questioned in the fog, better signage needed

Worcester Clip 4

Poor road markings

Signage issues

Markings at roundabout considered to be too late

Consider making 'Access only'

Consider making urban section 20mph

Worcester Clip 5

Request for clearer signage

Request for traffic signals

Signage confusing near chevron signs

Worcester Clip 6 (RURAL 6)

Drainage questioned

Signage at triangle/fork (Y-junction) questioned

Worcestershire (Worcester group) General

Bath Road, Worcester signals (toucan/pelican) questioned why they both stop traffic

Newtown Rd, Worcester (near Lidl) – tiny sign about bus lane / stop operations should be bigger

Powick Hams – claims of near misses because of people misinterpreting the crossings

Partial yellow boxes – Ombersley Road/Droitwich Road & Tybridge Street

Whittington island debate

Asda, Worcester – many uncontrolled and controlled crossings

User unhappy with conversion of pelicans to puffins

Issue with fly signage – Upton Music Festival in late August quoted

Tudor Way, Worcester – 20mph signs are obstructed

Redditch Focus Group

Redditch 1 (A) - Location in Worcester (URBAN 1)

Poor signage, issues getting into the correct lane, suggested additional advanced directions on carriageway in Worcester

Concerns with markings on Callow Hill/ Windmill Drive, Redditch

Redditch 2 (B)

Verges could be modified to improve visibility

Redditch 3 (C)

Inconsiderate parking issues (on footway)

Questioning arrow for turn right

Use of double yellow lines supported

Redditch 4 (D) rural road (Astwood Lane – RURAL 9)

Needs signage

Pothole issues

Drainage issues

Road through Burcot – drainage issues as ditch has disappeared

Horse warning signs requested as horses use lane

Consider lowering the speed limit

Redditch 5 (E) – 6s,7s, 8s (Clip URBAN 9 - A4184 Evesham)

Advanced signage to roundabout (Merstow Green)

Requires advanced signage to roadworks required

Redditch 6 (F) 6,7s,8,9 (Clip Rural 1 - A44 from Evesham towards Broadway) RURAL1

40mph limit could be reviewed 60 to 40mph location near a junction

Worcestershire (Redditch) General

Lane markings/ signage on approach to roundabouts (14:30) McDonalds, Redditch

J4 of M5 (lane markings)

A38s j/w M42 (lane markings)

A441 Evesham sign obscured by 40mph sign (two lanes to roundabout) markings worn out

Requested a response to feedback

Evesham Focus Group

Evesham 1 (A) (3,4,5,6,7,8) (Clip Urban, A44 London Road Worcester) (URBAN 2)

Parked vehicles – restrict parking to one side of the road

Suggested Park & Ride into city

Issues with garage at crossroads
Re-modelling layout to be more shared space

Evesham 2 (B) (6s, 9) (Clip Rural)
Clear signage
Solid white centre lines cause cars to squeeze cyclists
Foliage may create issues for HGVs

Evesham 3 (C) (3,4s,5s,7) (Clip URBAN 1, A44 St Johns towards Worcester)
Signage excessive
Re-planning – remove centre white lines

Evesham 4 (D) (4s,5s) (Rural between Redditch and Bromsgrove) (RURAL 4)
Poor surface
No warning sign for bridge with height
Suggested 30mph limit on narrow section near bridge rather than 40mph
Requested 'pedestrian in road' warning signs
Reallocate road space

Evesham 5 (E) (6,6,7,7,8,) (URBAN 3 or 4 Stourport town centre)
Poor signage around one way system in Stourport (advance directions)
Potholes and poor reinstatement from utilities
Re-marking of white lines

Evesham 6 (F) (4s,5s,6s,7) (village rural 2- Bewdley/Ombersley) (RURAL2)
Tired surface around roundabout, road needs re-laying
60mph to 30mph (Do graduated speed limit 60mph, 40mph, 30mph)
M42 Redditch – Evesham – 70mph & 40mph (camera) Make dual carriageway 50mph
Lack of footways
Support for inspectors (14:30 need stronger enforcement)
Little support for surface dressing
Oxfordshire and Warwickshire surfaces considered worse

Evesham (Worcestershire General)
Potholes in Honeybourne missing some holes
Workman Bridge – temporary sign issues
Abbey Bridge – Swan Lane communication issues/ decisions already made
Enforcement issues – cyclists on footways in Evesham
A46T cycle path (Highway Agency) – needs sweeping
Enforce mud clearance left on roads
B road poor surface past Tesco, Evesham

Kidderminster Focus Group

Kidderminster 1(Clip A) (7s, 6s) (Worcester – URBAN1)
Which lane to get into
Patches of surface
ASLs and other road markings not marked clearly combination with signage (positioning)
Difficult to navigate around city
Traffic signals not joined up
Badly worn anti-skid not maintained well enough

More double yellow lines to clear parked cars

Kidderminster 2 (Clip B) (9s, 7, 8) (country road, open road, A or good B road) (RURAL1 or 5)

Bends and black barn

Don't do blanket 50 mph, only where safety needs

Glare from diamond grade signs on rural routes

Kidderminster 3 (Clip C) (10,9s,8s) (Redditch Highway/ Bromsgrove Redditch) URBAN 7

Lack of central barriers

Number of signs in reserve

Kidderminster 4 (Clip D) (3s,4,5s,6s) RURAL 8 (Typical village road – black and painted conifer, bin day)

Bad state of repair of carriageway, worn out

Amount of loose material from potholes and verges

Poor drainage – ice trap

Signage worn

Poor junction road markings

Layout to island not good

30 and 40 limits

Franche Road roundabout issues (tight – visibility, markings, too small) – needs traffic signals

Reduce limit from 30 to 20 past church

Kidderminster 5 (Clip E) (5s, 6s, 7, 8) (URBAN 8 road works and white van) (024)

Road markings difficult to see

Bad surface – lots of patching

Hidden speed camera sign (Station Road) behind other sign before bend

[Elsewhere Hartlebury – patched sections criticised]

Signage not that clear

Road markings looked worn out

Misconception that Speed Camera sign is used as a traffic calming sign

Kidderminster 6 (Clip F) (4,6s,7s) (RURAL 6)

Maintenance of ditches - flooded because of snow

White lines not maintained

Suggested parish lengthsman intervention

[Elsewhere: Dowles Bridge drainage]

Worcestershire general

Between A449 Kidderminster and Worcester – leaving Ombersley junction

Gilgal badly painted doesn't help merge

Gritting very good from Wyre Forest to Worcester

Re-painting white lines generally at junctions

Support for mobile VAS - Belbroughton calibration challenged – needs to be calibrated to not bring into disrepute

Bromsgrove Highway into Bromsgrove – poor lane markings Lane 1/ Lane2 (Slideslow)

Quality assurance – speed limit Stourbridge Rd – wasted 30mph repeaters

Utilities – NRSWA – monitoring of utility reinstatement not as good as it could be

Communication – reported but no feedback to customer via online reporting
Junction with Safari Park on Bewdley Road – dangerous junction – suggested roundabout
Crossley Park – island worked better than signals
Call for Stourport bypass
Questioning Kidderminster link road – problems for Wilden Lane forecasted
Clean drains out more often
Improve estate roads
Speed bumps disliked – Hurcot Lane – no school remains
Inappropriate parking – introduce car parking prices

Bromsgrove Focus Group (0029)

Clip 1 (5s, 6s, 7s)

Residents parking and dangerous manoeuvres
Footways narrow and missing
Markings deteriorated
Patchwork quilt surface – suggested that larger sections are treated
Average town road
Signage could be improved (quality, size and cleanliness)
Park and ride suggested

Clip 2 (6s,7s,8,9) (Country road)

Enjoy driving such road
Issues with some of road surface
Good road markings
Hidden driveways
Suggested edge of carriageway markings
Don't want too many road signs
Lower speed limit to aid cycling
Dirt from verge edges on carriageway
Hedges cut be cut back to aid visibility

Clip 3 (4,5,6,8) Stourport one way system

Not enough signage on Worcester Road approach, signage needed earlier to aid positioning
Lane markings issues
Lane discipline issues
Badly repaired with ridges
Build a Stourport bypass
Suggested bicycle lanes for healthier nation
Poor surface issues
Suggested 20mph limit around one way system
Questioned location of warning sign near a crossing
Truck unloading causing an issue (time restrictions)
Cycle lanes on wider sections

Clip 4 (2,3s,) Country Lane RURAL 9

Potholes
Dirt in road
Centre line worn out / no double white lines/ no cats eyes
No signage
No warning of horses

Slippy surface, mud on road
Overhanging trees
Farm vehicles signage
No signage of bends
Carriageway not wide enough – use part of verges
Driver education – aim to reduce irresponsible speeding driving

Clip 5 (5s,6s,7s) (40 limit)
Footway parking an issue for pedestrians/ cyclists
40 could be a 30
Lack of enforcement - police not interested in footway parking – obstruction of footway, not wide enough for mobility scooters and pushchairs, no place to cross
Insufficient pedestrian crossings
Possible cycle lanes
Possible double yellow lines down one side of road
Bus layby requested
Support for parking meters
Best practice exchange

Clip 6 (6s,7s,8,9s) (second bit in the country)
Well maintained, signed and marked
Possible warning signs for sharp bends
Weeds on footway
Support for graduated speed limits 60-40-30
Need road sweeping

Worcestershire general
Dissatisfaction with quality of repairs after utility works (sinking)
Request for adoption of unadopted roads around Bromsgrove
Ridges around metal work create issues for bicycle but wouldn't be intervention level or an issue
Patching approach causing frustration, surface larger sections
Road safety – young drivers – bad habits around schools – re-educating people
Issues with footway conditions, not fit for wheelchair users
PEMs 'closed by service area' – require more information
Inspectors suggested to walk parts of the network looking for drainage issues
Better condition for left hand side required for scooters and bicycles
More inspections needed on motorcycle/bicycle to understand issues
Signs left behind after previous road works
Highways inspecting of utilities reinstatements supported
User believed that he had been told that a compactor could only be used ten minutes a day for health and safety reasons
Maintenance of road signage, trees clear, keep clean
Driver education – removing driver intolerance

Worcester Focus Group 2

Clip 1 A (5s,7s,8s) Stourport on Severn URBAN3
Travel sick watching videos departed
Yellow lines – lack of enforcement
Centre white lines not consistent – needed re-painting

Too much parking, need to free up road
Road signs could be improved
Surface rough for cyclists (nearside) – drain covers – different types of surfaces
Deposit of silt from rainwater
Footway trips
Visitor signage – priority to safety and direction – obscuring – suggested review of signage
Ironwork could be relayed
Block paving could be relayed

Clip 2 B (5,6s,7s,8,9) RURAL
High hedge rows at the beginning
Good markings
Reasonable surface
Possibility to lower speed limit
Verges – little space for pedestrians
White lines
Hedges cutting back

Clip 3 (C) (4s,5,6,7) (URBAN with three sets of road works) Pershore
Road works not clear
Obscured signs – Birmingham (re-position)
Back of footway would benefit from lengthsman clearance
Poor white lining
Support for local looking after verges/ sponsorship of roundabouts etc.
Were roadworks co-ordinated?
Support for road charging – spot the workman
Clip was too fast, described as 'terrible'
Lack of courtesy signs at roadworks
Support for co-ordinated road works – communicate plans on the web?

Clip 4 (D) (3s,4,5,6,7,8) (URBAN Wyche cutting)
Lacks footway in a cutting
Potholes near kerb
Road surface built up / cobbles at drainage point
Narrow
White lining
Flyposting needs to be removed

Clip 5 (E) (4,5,7s,8)
Lines needed re-doing
Potholes need repair
Originally a three lane road
Sections had failed – surface had broken up
Improve less sections but do them well (long term strategy) change the approach to funding
Cycle lane was good

Clip 6 (F) (1,2s3s,5)
Looks like a bridleway needs total rebuild
Disaster with surface
No foundations

How much traffic does it take. If hardly used then not an issue
Potholes looked dangerous
Lack of drainage and no grips/ ditch
If little used reduce speed limit

Worcestershire general

Obscured signs by hedges

Worn junction markings/ lining

Surface-dressing split opinions, contractors standard of jobs questioned (cracking up after three months)

Suggestion that contractor can fill all holes not just those highlighted

Spending at year end creates frustrations – creates waste

Congestion concerns – Southern Link and Sheriff Street not seen to have a viable plan
question of who involved

Whittington roundabout 'pathetic' – shunts – was it scored/audited

Consultants are the problem

County do not listen – suggest speaking to bus and taxi drivers

Signals do not appear phased on Barbourne Rd

Need to fund bus and park and ride otherwise more congestion

Support for zebra at viaduct on Croft Rd

Lowesmoor loss of pedestrian audible signal questioned

Build infrastructure before houses

Potholes used to repaired day after spotted

Release a road programme to the public – publicity

Old website described as appalling

Jon Fraser video of potholes split opinion

Traffic signals too many use right-hand lane for straight on and get blocked

Public Perception working group:

Participants:

Ian Bamforth, Neil Anderson, Councillor Lucy Hodgson, Councillor Simon Geraghty, Councillor John Smith, Jon Fraser, Katharine Clough, Paul Whittaker, Andrew Rudd, Dave Rowley (Ringway Infrastructure Services) and Adele Clarkson

Objectives:

To identify and implement cost effective ways to improve public perception, addressing the findings from completed research. The Working Group meet regularly to review and agree ongoing actions and progress.

Key initiatives:

- a) Three Parish Makeovers have been successfully carried out in Cookley, Malvern and Martley. The fourth Parish makeover has taken place in early June for Belbroughton. It is proposed that a qualitative survey to residents in Cookley and Martley will be carried out to assess the impact of the Local Response Team. (A qualitative method is favoured to understand the experiences and attitudes of the local community through face to face interviews).
- b) To increase the offer of a Parish Makeover scheme to a maximum of 20 per year by providing the opportunity for Councillors to utilise their own Highways Divisional Funds. These will be branded as WCC/Worcestershire Highways. A proposal has been drafted for approval and implementation.
- c) Worcestershire County Council has joined the National Highways & Transport survey for 2015. This will enable comparison between similar authorities & provide for a clearer like for like clarity over the breadth of the survey. This also includes a sample size of over 3000 respondents.
- d) 'Thank you for your patience, another Highways job done' signage is being displayed after successful prominent works have been completed around the county. (see image below)



- e) For high value prominent works such as the Cathedral Square, an exhibition is being hosted in the Guild Hall, Worcester. For other Public Realm schemes, these include leaflets to local residents and businesses and information points such as the one shown below: (see shop front used for Tenbury Wells).



- f) Prominent signing to promote the £3.95m investment into the surface dressing programme is being displayed around the county for the duration of the works (see below), alongside significant positive media messages and press releases for public awareness via the Communications team, making reference to both the pre-patching and surfacing programmes. The aim is to help increase the public's understanding and awareness of the rationale of using these methods.



- g) Parish Conference 4th June titled 'Digital Parishes'. This included an agenda item about how we are improving communications about Highways with Parish Councils and to further promote the 'Report it online' system.
- h) In partnership with the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, a proposal has been agreed to erect new county boundary plates. Following a pilot of two new plates on the county boundary of the A38 and A44, the WLEP have agreed to fund the erection of a further 9 prominent county boundary sites. This is in addition to 20 white county boundary locations where the County Council's white Worcestershire signs will be significantly improved. The design is shown below.



- i) To improve the communication from County to District, Town and Parish council level, a new model of communication is being proposed at the next Working Group meeting.
- j) Traffic flows in key hotspots of the county are being investigated to identify if any changes to sequencing of traffic lights may have a positive impact and to alleviate traffic disruption.
- k) Fortnightly meetings are in place to ensure programmes of work, including those by utility companies do not coincide with key events in and around Worcester City (as an initial pilot). There is also a separate piece of Lean work to ensure greater coordination between Severn Trent and National Grid to reduce disruption on major works.
- l) To improve public perception about lining and other road markings around the county, as part of the Highways term contract with Ringway, they are implementing a significant three year lining improvement programme across the county.
- m) To better coordinate and manage utility works, permitting for traffic management is being introduced in 2015/16. This will see a significant increase in the effective monitoring and management of all utility works across the county.
- n) To further improve highway verge clearance and sign clearance etc, we are working closely in partnership with the District and Parish councils to develop improved service delivery through a series of pilot schemes as part of Project Optimise.

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KETCH ROUNDABOUT

Background

1. The recent public concerns about the Ketch Roundabout were raised at the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board on 8 June 2015. Given the public interest, the Board asked this Panel look into the issue at its next meeting.

2. The Director of Business, Environment and Communities has therefore been invited to discuss the issue.

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points:

Worcester (01905) 763763, Kidderminster (01562) 822511 or
Minicom: Worcester (01905) 766399

Specific Contact Points for this Report:

Stella Wood (Tel: 01905 82 2873)

Email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) the following background papers relate to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board on 8 June 2015

All of which are available on the Council's website at
<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/democratic-services/minutes-and-agendas.aspx>

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