

ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

9 May 2018

CO-ORDINATION OF STREETWORKS

Summary

1. The Panel will receive an overview of the organisation of streetworks with regards co-ordination of works on the public highway.
2. The Panel is keen to understand the role of the County Council in co-ordinating works on the public highway, and what can be done to try and minimise disruption.
3. The County Council's Network Control Manager has been invited to the meeting as well as the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways.

Background

4. Worcestershire County Council (WCC) operates a Permit Scheme to co-ordinate works on the public highway. All utility companies have a right to place their equipment in or on the public highway and to maintain that asset. Whilst WCC cannot prevent access, it does charge a fee on traffic sensitive routes to cover co-ordination of this work.
5. An electronic noticing system allows utility companies to advise the Council in advance of their works. The notice period is defined as 3 months, 10 days or 3 days, depending upon the duration of the works, thus allowing most time to co-ordinate the major works which cause the most disruption.
6. A report on the first year's annual report on the Permit Scheme will be presented to Cabinet in the Summer.

Co-ordination

7. With regard to co-ordinating works, joint working is encouraged through permit fee reduction to minimise congestion and repetitive works along the same section of highway. However, it is not always possible to pursue joint working for the following reasons:

- Insufficient working space for two programmes of work to be carried out at the same time
- Emergency works unknown at the time of scheduled works
- Requests to work at the same location not being received at the same time to enable co-ordination
- Nature of the works (for example, it is not good practice to mix water works and electrical works)

Maintenance

7. When maintenance works are carried out on the public highway, WCC can and do protect the surface for up to 5 years from utility works under section 58 of the Highways Act.

8. The Council provides advance notice to all works promoters to enable them to schedule any works they have in the area ahead of the maintenance works. If other works promoters wish to carry out works during the protected period they have to resurface significant areas rather than a patch just covering their works to protect the durability of the maintenance works.

9. Information on streetworks can be found on the Council's website at:
http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20007/travel_and_roads/688/highways_licences_and_permits/1

Purpose of the Meeting

10. Following the information provided and discussion of streetworks, the Scrutiny Panel is asked to:

- consider and comment on the information provided
- determine whether any further information or scrutiny is required at this stage
- agree any comments to highlight to the Cabinet Member.

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

County Council: 01905 763763

Worcestershire Hub: 01905 765765

Sally Everest, Network Control Manager

Email: severest@worcestershire.gov.uk

Specific Contact Points for this Report

Emma James / Jo Weston, Overview and Scrutiny Officers, Tel: 01905 844964 / 844965

Email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk