

Report for: Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel

Title: Update on Planned and Reactive Highways Maintenance

Report authorised by Stephen McDonnell, Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods

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Ward(s) affected: All

Non-Key Decision

1 Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 To provide the Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel an update on highways planned and responsive maintenance services.

2 Cabinet Member Introduction

N/A

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That the Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel notes the content of this report.

4. Background

- 4.1 The borough's highway infrastructure, estimated at a value in the region of £1 billion, is the most visible, well-used and valuable physical asset owned by the Council. It is crucial for the prosperity of the borough, enabling the safe and free movement of people and goods whether they are walking, cycling, driving, or using bus services. Highways are vital to the economic success of the borough.

Safety of the highway network is the Council's responsibility. Haringey has a duty to inspect and repair roads, pavements, and highway structures, and to ensure that street lighting and drainage systems work effectively.

The Council as a local highway authority is responsible for the repair and maintenance of all assets that form part of the public highway. This includes approximately:

- 332 km of roads
- 604 km of footways
- 32,120 street trees
- 15,500 street lights
- 14,300 drainage gullies
- guard posts and other street furniture and
- highway assets that include 41 structures, culverts and drainage pipes.

4.2 Historical under-investment in highways maintenance has resulted in a deteriorating road network. However, the increased funding in recent years has had a positive impact. This investment has been used to carry out maintenance improvements to the roads in the worst condition. This is a catch-up strategy and not a long-term solution. We propose to increase the life span of our roads and reduce the percentage of roads in need of repair by moving away from the “worst first” approach currently adopted and implement a programme of preventative maintenance. Such preventative measures will include carrying out regular lower cost repairs, which is a more cost-effective approach to asset management. These regular repairs to be carried out along with a resurfacing programme required to address the current backlog of schemes.

4.3 The investment of £19.2m over the past 5 years in maintenance of the highway has made significant improvements to the overall condition of the network. This will be demonstrated in a new borough wide highway condition survey, to be carried out later this year. However, it should be noted, that the footway condition remains noticeably poor. It is estimated that in the region of 59% of the footway network still requires structural maintenance. Therefore, a significant proportion of the future highways’ investment is required for footway reconstruction works.

4.4 Reactive maintenance deals with reinstatements in the footways and carriageways (potholes and trip hazards), gully cleansing and drainage repairs, replacing and maintenance of street lighting and furniture.

5 Existing Maintenance Contracts

5.1 For many years, all highways and street lighting maintenance and construction works have been outsourced. From June 2013 to September 2019 the service provider was Ringway-Jacobs through a single supplier framework agreement initiated by Transport for London and known as the London Highways Alliance Contract (LoHAC). The Council sought other alternative contractual arrangements, and in October 2019 appointed Marlborough Highways Limited as an Interim Highways Contractor until the 30th June 2020.

5.2 A longer-term highways contract was tendered and awarded to Marlborough Highways Limited, for an initial term of five (5) years commencing on the 1st July 2020 with an option for a two (2) year extension period. Under this contract

major highways maintenance includes for resurfacing and footways works being carried out alongside the reactive works e.g; potholes.

- 5.3 Some major highways and specialist projects are tendered, such as major public realm schemes, bridge repairs and other highways structures works.
- 5.4 The current street lighting maintenance contract was tendered and awarded to Marlborough Highways Limited, which commenced in October 2019 and is for a period of four (4) years with options to extend by up to a further four (4) years.
- 5.5 A Smart Management System contract (Central Management System) for street lighting will be awarded in March 2021. This will enable the major installation works to commence in 2021/22.

6 Future Investment

- 6.1 The Council's approach to asset management is to principally prioritise the works programmes for resurfacing and footway reconstruction to ensure that major investment is carried out to the roads in the worst condition. Reactive repairs are still necessary but are not the solution in terms of aesthetics and long-term cost-effective maintenance.
- 6.2 This year £4,373,000 is being invested in our roads and this will involve resurfacing the carriageway in 30 roads and relaying 22 footways throughout the borough. The Highways Investment Plan will be presented to Cabinet on 9 March 2021. Included within this investment is £873,000 allocated to support reactive maintenance and small-scale highways' projects. These reactive maintenance works include the repair of potholes and footway trip hazards.
- 6.3 From 2021/22 and over the next 5 years, it is proposed to invest a further £29m in highways maintenance. It is anticipated that a significant level of this funding will be spent through a direct service organisation (DSO).
- 6.4 Over the past 5 years, £9.2m has been invested in street lighting maintenance and improvements. Further investment of £10m has been agreed for the next 5 years and this will fund the following:
 - The completion of the upgrading of all highways lighting stock to the more efficient light emitting diodes (LED);
 - The installation of a Smart Management System (commonly known as a Central Management System) for all highways street lights;
 - Ongoing column replacement and refurbishment;
 - Reactive maintenance of the lighting infrastructure.

7 Direct Service Organisation (DSO)

- 7.1 A range of commissioning options for the delivery of highways works were considered. The desired delivery arrangement included a small direct labour work force. It is therefore proposed that a small DSO to undertake elements of the reactive and planned footway maintenance is established. It is expected that this new service will operate from the Sedge Road Depot, which is currently

occupied by the highways term contractor. Establishing the inhouse service will involve recruiting operatives, developing and implementing back office arrangements including works ordering and payment systems. The development of a detailed health and safety plan to support safe working practices is also essential to enable the DSO to operate.

- 7.2 The detailed business case and operational procedures are being developed and will be presented to Cabinet for approval, later in the new financial year. This report will include funding requirements for project development support to ensure that appropriate expertise is engaged at the right time.
- 7.3 Refurbishment of the Sedge Road Depot will also be required to provide a suitable base. This will need to take place by the beginning of 2022/23. This refurbishment will require negotiations with the term contractor over possible shared use of the depot as well as the necessary phasing of these works to ensure continuity of the highway maintenance service. While TUPE obligations will be considered, we anticipate that recruitment and staff training will need to be done in parallel with the depot refurbishment.
- 7.4 The plans at present, expect the DSO to become operational during late 2022/23. This will be for essential reactive maintenance works. If successful it will be expanded to include planned footway maintenance works and the installation of new crossovers from 2023/24.
- 7.5 The existing highways term contract, with Marlborough Highways Ltd, can expire in 2025 or be extended by up to two years. The tendering of a new highways term contract can take around 18 months. A decision will therefore be taken in early 2024 on expanding the DSO to take on additional highway works. Should a decision be taken to expand the DSO arrangement, an alternative form of highways contract will be tendered rather than just extending the existing highways term contract.

8 Contribution to strategic outcomes

- 8.1 Highways Maintenance supports two key Themes within the Borough Plan 2019-2023:
 - People Theme: A Haringey where strong families, strong networks and strong communities nurture all residents to live well and achieve their potential. A well-maintained highway network will contribute to specific outcomes within this Theme, by improving road safety, encouraging active travel and modal shift to improve air quality.
 - Place Theme: A place with strong, resilient & connected communities where people can lead active and healthy lives in an environment that is safe, clean and green. Highways Maintenance will contribute to specific outcomes within this Theme, by improving the public realm and road network condition, reducing road traffic collisions, while improving accessibility for all road users, in particular pedestrians and cyclists and motorcyclists.

9. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)

Finance

There are no specific Finance issues arising from this report.

Procurement

There are no specific Procurement issues arising from this report.

Legal

The Council as Highway Authority is under a statutory duty under section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 to maintain the highway. The Contents of this report sets out how the Council is intending to invest its resources in maintaining and improving its highway network which will ensure compliance with the statutory duty.

Equality

There are no specific Equalities issues arising from this report.

10 Use of Appendices

There are no Appendices with this report.

11 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- Borough Plan 2019-2023
- 2018 Transport Strategy
- Local Plan
- Highways Asset Management Plan
- Highways Works Plan 2020/21
- Local Implementation Plan – 3 Year Delivery Plan 2019 - 2022

12 Web links to schemes

- www.haringey.gov.uk/smartertravel
- www.haringey.gov.uk/majorschemes
- <http://haringey.roadworks.org>

