

Report Title: Scrutiny Review of Repairs to Highways and Footpaths

Report of: The Chair of the Repairs to Highways and Footpaths Review Panel

Wards(s) affected: **All**

Report for: **Non-Key Decision**

1. Purpose

To agree the conclusions and recommendations of the Review.

2. Recommendations

That Members consider and agree the conclusions and recommendations of the Review, as outlined in the Scrutiny Review report.

Report Authorised by: **Members' & Democratic Services Manager (Scrutiny)**

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3. Executive Summary

3.1 This Scrutiny Review was commissioned by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee as part of its work programme for 2005/06. The 33 London Boroughs are the highway and planning authorities for the majority of roads in London. It is each borough's responsibility to ensure that their roads are properly maintained and that development control decisions do not compromise the safety and efficiency of the transport network. Over the past twenty-five years the pressures on our roads have increased with the sheer volume of traffic and the increased axle loads of our heaviest vehicles. The privatised Utilities seem continually to be excavating and filling in holes to leave an unsightly patchwork of fixes and make goods.

- 3.2 All local authorities must respond to these challenges: this Scrutiny Review will look at Haringey's response and how this might be improved.
- 3.3 The Council has a responsibility under The Highways Act 1980 to maintain its carriageways and footpaths in a safe condition. It is not required to repair every defect, of which it becomes aware, but must undertake regular inspections and have in place a clear maintenance policy
- 3.4 For the last two years the Council has been investing a total of £1.375 annually on planned maintenance for roads, pavements and street furniture. Transport for London provides additional investment of around £800k for principal road maintenance.
- 3.5 This investment has mainly been allocated on a worst first basis, based on the results of the road condition survey. The focus initially has been on treating specific sections of highway rather than the entire length, although additional investment this year is allowing some complete roads to be resurfaced. A section by section approach can mean that while the worst sections of the highways may be treated in one year, other sections just below the intervention level continue to deteriorate and thus require treatment the next year.
- 3.6 The Government's national target to resolve the current backlog of highways maintenance is 2010. The Council's Highways Department has developed an Asset Management Plan for pavements and carriageways to address these longer term investment needs and has established the level of financial commitment required. Initial estimates indicate the required funding should be in the region of £35m, for the next ten years.
- 3.7 The intention of the inquiry is to focus on resources, repairs; maintenance and communication issues affecting the Highways Service. This includes looking at the role of Ward Members and the level and type of information they receive at the various stages of work on the highways.
- 3.8 In terms of the service delivery, the review set out to look at the balance between reactive and preventative maintenance and the life span of repairs. This included discussions on the relationship between the Highways Department and other agencies involved in works on the highways such as Utilities.
- 3.9 The Review Panel has put forward key conclusions and recommendations aimed at improving the performance of the service and the condition of the road network in the Borough These are outlined in the attached Scrutiny Review report.

4. Reasons for any change in policy or for new policy development (if applicable)

The Review has put forward recommendations aimed at improving the performance of the service and to improve the condition of the road network in the Borough.

5. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

The background papers relating to this report are:

Minutes of the Repairs to Highways and Footpaths Scrutiny Review Panel
September 2005 – February 2006.

These papers can be obtained from Sharon Miller, Principal Scrutiny Support
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6. Background

6.1 *Please refer to the Scrutiny Review report (attached).*

7. Description

7.1 *Please refer to the Scrutiny Review report (attached).*

8. Consultation

8.1 N/A.

9. Summary and Conclusions

9.1 *Please refer to the Scrutiny Review report (attached).*

10. Recommendations

10.1 *Please refer to the Scrutiny Review report (attached).*

11. Legal and Financial Comments

11.1 Full legal and financial comments will be sought to recommendations agreed by the Executive in the Executive Response.

12. Equalities Implications

12.1 Equalities Implications will be sought to recommendations agreed by the Executive in the Executive Response.

13. Use of Appendices / Tables / Photographs

13.1 Please find attached the Scrutiny Review report.