

Agenda item:

Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee

on 17 March 2008

Report Title: **Progress Update on the Scrutiny Review of repairs to highways and footpaths.**

Report of: **Niall Bolger, Director of Urban Environment**

Wards(s) affected: **All**

Report for: **Non Key decision**

1. Purpose

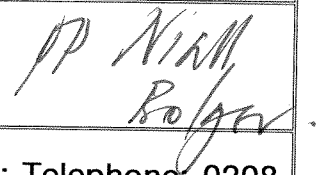
- 1.1 To provide a further update as requested by Overview and Scrutiny Committee in October 2007 on the report on progress in achieving the recommendations of the March 2006 Scrutiny Report on repairs to highways and footpaths.
- 1.2 To inform members of the progress on the Highways Asset Management Plan and the implementation plan which is being separately reported to Cabinet on 18 March.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 2.1 Notes progress to date in addressing the recommendations of the scrutiny report on repairs to highways and footpaths.
- 2.2 Notes the further action to be taken.

Report Authorised by: **Niall Bolger, Director of Urban Environment**



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3. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Background documents:

- 3.1 Executive Responses to Scrutiny Review of Repairs to Highways – 25 July 2006
- 3.2 Streetscene Business Plan 2007/8

4. Strategic Implications

- 4.1 The Government's national target to resolve the current backlog of highways maintenance was 2010 although this will not be achieved. The need for Highways Asset Management Plans however are likely to become an important part of future funding requirements. Improving the condition of the road infrastructure is a priority in the Council Plan and measures of improving the condition of roads and pavements are key performance indicators. The recommendations of the Scrutiny Report can contribute to achieving this priority and improved performance.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 A number of recommendations of the Scrutiny Review relate to the development of a Highways Asset Management Plan and using this to secure additional investment for pavements and carriageways. A report on the Highways Asset Management Plan is at Cabinet on 18 March.
- 5.2 The 2008/09 budget allocation for the planned maintenance of roads and pavements forms the basis of the Highways work plan which is also at Cabinet on 18 March.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 The Highway Authority has a duty of care under The Highways Act 1980 to maintain the public highway for safe use by all.
- 6.2 The New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) make Utility Companies entirely responsible for the management of their street works. The legislation empowers local highway authorities to improve co-ordination of road works to the benefit of road users and residents.
- 6.3 The Traffic Management Act 2004 places a statutory duty on all local authorities to expedite the movement of traffic (including pedestrians and cyclists) safely on its own and the networks of neighbouring boroughs and Transport for London's network.

7. Equalities Implications

- 7.1 The Council's Equal Opportunities Policy requires services to be provided to all stakeholders. It is therefore imperative that highway locations are adequately maintained to ensure safe use by all categories of highway users.
- 7.2 The Disability Discrimination Act also requires highway authorities to ensure that safe access is provided disabled users of the public highway. It is important that highway

locations are adequately maintained to avoid contraventions of the stipulations of this Act

8. Consultation

8.1 N/A

9. Background

- 9.1 Overview and Scrutiny conducted a review of the council's process and procedures for repairs to highways and footpaths in March 2006. The purpose of the review was primarily to focus on repairs; maintenance and communication issues affecting the Highways Service.
- 9.2 A report containing the executive responses to the report's recommendations was presented to the Cabinet of the Council in July 2006. The Cabinet agreed the report's recommendations and requested that these were incorporated within the Streetscene Business Plan for 2007/08.
- 9.3 The 2007/08 Streetscene Business Plan was produced in April 2007 and contains actions to take forward these recommendations. An update of progress in implementing the recommendations and further action planned were detailed in a report to this Committee in October 2007. This has been updated again ready for this Committee and is attached as Appendix 1.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 Improving the condition of the road network and infrastructure is a key priority for the council and the recommendations detailed in the Scrutiny Report have provided a useful contribution towards improving our services delivered to achieve this aim.
- 10.2 It is recommended that the Committee notes progress on the recommendations of the scrutiny report and further action planned.

11. Use of Appendices / Tables / Photographs

Appendix 1 – Update on implementation of recommendations of the Scrutiny Review on repairs to highways and pavements in Haringey

APPENDIX ONE
Update on implementation of recommendations of the Scrutiny Review on repairs to highways and pavements in Haringey

Summary of Recommendation	Updated Comments (Mar 2008)	Future Actions
<p>1. Utilise Asset Management Plan to secure appropriate investment in infrastructure.</p>	<p>A draft highway asset management plan has been produced and report to Cabinet 18.3.08. Action plan included Key areas of the plan include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT Systems • Procurement options • Survey information • Inventory Information 	<p>Detailed financial implications of implementing actions proposed in the Asset Management Plan will be considered as part of budget setting process.</p>
<p>2. Explore alternative funding for maintenance of road network.</p>	<p>This is being explored as part of the development and implementation of the recommendations contained in Highways Asset Management Plan.</p>	<p>As above</p>
<p>3. Prioritise future budgets so that better value for money can assist the department's move towards robust system of maintenance.</p>	<p>The Highways Works Plan is being considered by Cabinet on 18.3.08 which details the use of the proposed budget allocation in 2008/09. It also (for the first time) looks at possible LIP funding bids for submission in June 08. It also starts to plan for two years ahead with future plans being 3 year plans annually reviewable.</p>	<p>As above</p>

Summary of Recommendation	Updated Comments (Mar 2008)	Future action
<p>4. Review practice of continual patching of defective surfaces just below intervention levels.</p>	<p>Previous investments limit the amount of locations that can be treated annually. However as the public see Pot Holes as a high priority a new Pothole Blitz will be carried out in 2008/09 and this is detailed in the Highways Works Plan. When the asset management plan and long term integrated works programme are fully financed defective locations identified via actual deterioration models will be treated in accordance with best practice</p>	<p>As above</p>
<p>5. Consider how life spans of highway locations can be prolonged & financial implications of changes in materials or practice to achieve this.</p>	<p>Streetscene is considering this as part of the development of the Asset Management Plan. Life spans of highway can be prolonged by carrying out total reconstruction of roads and pavements. The cost of total reconstruction is about five times the cost of conventional surface replacement.</p>	<p>Future mitigation of highway deterioration will be addressed through implementing an integrated forward works programme that is linked to the recommendations contained in the Highways Asset Management Plan.</p>
<p>6. Ensure housing developers reimburse the council for costs incurred to repair damage they cause to highway locations.</p>	<p>Highways have been successful in ensuring that large scale developments secure approval to construct temporary footway crossings during construction. An appropriate deposit is secured and costs incurred in repairing damaged</p>	<p>Streetscene will continue to improve liaison and communication with Development and Building Control departments to ensure all small scale domestic developments are notified and appropriate deposits secured to</p>

<p>Summary of Recommendation</p>	<p>sections is recovered from this amount. Updated Comments (Mar 2008)</p>	<p>cover repairs to damaged highway Future action</p>
<p>7. The Arboricultural section should adopt best practices for tree management & maintenance</p>	<p>There is currently a Trees Management plan in place. Trees form part of the Asset Management Plan. Highway trees are inspected and maintained at specified intervals. Pro-active works to minimise nuisance issues are also undertaken as and when required. We are currently surveying the entire tree stock with a view to update the existing database.</p>	<p>Management of the trees will be improved through the tree survey and the actions identified as part of the Asset Management Plan.</p>
<p>8. Lobby TfL to secure additional budget allocations to finance damage caused by buses using minor residential roads.</p>	<p>The department actively pursues this at regular Traffic liaison meetings and this recommendation has been formally put to them for comments/action</p>	<p>Highways Services will continue to make representations to seek appropriate funding from TfL and escalate the matter if necessary.</p>
<p>9. Explore strategies to involve Statutory Undertakers in agreeing co-ordinated approach to streetworks to ensure costs & disruptions are minimised.</p>	<p>We hold quarterly meetings for co-ordination of streetworks. This statutory requirement. Monthly or bi-monthly liaison meetings held for major schemes. LBH took part in TfL advance planning pilot with neighbouring boroughs and will use experience gained for future streetworks management.</p>	<p>We are arranging for future periodic meetings with Utilities to develop good working relationships and identify areas of mutual assistance.</p> <p>The most recent meeting was held on 09 October, one of the key actions agreed was for an annual meeting to be held to discuss longer term plans and the implications of the Traffic Management Act.</p>

Summary of Recommendation	Updated Comments (Mar 2008)	Future action
<p>10. The Highways Services & Thames Water should undertake assessment of main drains to establish condition and long term implications of the borough's drainage system.</p>	<p>This has been incorporated in proposals detailed in the council's highway Asset Management Plan.</p>	<p>Future condition surveys and assessments will be conducted as part of updating of inventory data with a view to identify areas for long term maintenance and upgrading.</p>
<p>11. All Statutory Undertakers undertaking work in the borough should leaflet all stakeholders with details of work, duration & contacts for emergencies.</p>	<p>This practice is in place for major and planned works. Weekly leaders briefing also provided detailing ongoing/proposed works</p>	<p>We have contacted all utility companies working in the borough to provide better information on project details on site, particularly and we will continue to monitor and enforce this rigorously.</p>
<p>12 Highways to review communication procedures involving stakeholders</p>	<p>Highways service is actively involved in Area based working which is also an initiative designed to improve communication links with stakeholders. 'A Road to improvement' survey has also been completed. This survey was designed to identify key areas for improvements as perceived by residents, over 3500 responses were received and this is reported in the Highways Works Programme and has been used to prioritise certain work where the technical need is identical.</p>	<p>We are starting to conduct customer satisfaction surveys on some completed highway improvement schemes.</p> <p>We will also be looking at doing a follow up to the Road to Improvement survey looking more at some of the key policy issues that need Borough wide agreement.</p> <p>As part of the Highways Works Plan we have suggested a more targeted consultation process for future schemes agreed as part of the plan at</p>

Summary of Recommendation	Updated Comments (Mar 2008)	Cabinet on 18.3.08 Future action
<p>13. Highways to review channel of communications between respective council departments and how this can be improved.</p>	<p>Streetscene is constantly reviewing channels of communications between respective departments. In a recent review of guidance notes on vehicle crossovers we worked very closely with development control resulting in more stringent criteria now in place for crossover construction. The Transportation planning team is now part of Streetscene services and this will ensure improved co-ordination of schemes and projects.</p>	<p>We will continue to work and liaise closely with the Housing and Education services Neighbourhood Assemblies on common projects to ensure improved and seamless project management in future.</p>
<p>14. Consider the training of community volunteer wardens to permit them to report highway defects.</p>	<p>Training of community volunteers on how to report highway defects has been concluded. Reference information packs have been distributed to relevant parties.</p> <p>This provision is already in place.</p>	<p>Regular updates will be provided in future</p>
<p>15. Council's website should include provisions for interactive reporting of highway defects.</p>	<p>This provision is already in place.</p>	<p>We plan to develop and incorporate specialist modules into the CONFIRM highway management system to improve the way we handle reported defects.</p>

Summary of Recommendation	Updated Comments (Mar 2008)	Future action
16. Review the role and responsibilities of the Business Support Unit and identify areas for improvement	The Business Support Unit now takes the lead for Urban Environment enquiries	There is a review being carried out of all Urban Environment support teams.