

30 January 2020

Agenda Item:4

REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR, PLACE

REVIEW OF COMMITTEE ACTIVITY AND ACHIEVEMENTS NOVEMBER 2018 TO JANUARY 2020

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with a review of the subjects it has considered between November 2018 and January 2020 and update Members about the service improvements it has instructed officers to pursue during this period.

Information

2. The subjects considered by the Committee are set out below in chronological order.

Targeted gully cleaning

3. The targeted gully cleansing project employs conventional gully emptiers equipped with GPS tracking systems which record the position of each gully being emptied, information about the amount of silt removed and any defects which may be encountered such as blockages or jammed gully grates.
4. Prior to establishing the targeted regime it was necessary to undertake two cleanses, the first to ensure the gulleys were cleaned and operating correctly and the second – *18 months later* – to establish how much silt had accumulated since the previous cleanse. Once the level of silting over the intervening period was known it was possible to establish which gullies needed more frequent cleansing and which could be placed on a two-year cycle.
5. In addition to considering levels of silt accumulation each road was also risk assessed to determine whether a reduced gully cleansing regime was appropriate, this exercise considered factors such as vehicle speeds and road hierarchy. All changes to the cleansing frequencies were done on a '*street by street*' rather than '*gully by gully*' basis.
6. The targeted gully cleansing project won the CIHT East Midlands award for innovation in 2018.
7. The targeted cleansing strategy has continued to evolve, and over the course of 2019, the following improvements have now been introduced:
 - Quarterly progress meetings have been taking place.
 - A gully emptier team has been assigned to work permanently on routes requiring traffic management.

- Gully emptier teams now follow smaller and more manageable routes.
- Gully emptier routes have been reconfigured to ensure that gullies on any roads previously missed are cleansed.
- Roads which are prone to parked cars, which makes it difficult for gully emptiers to access gullies, have been proactively targeted with letter drops and advance warning signs prior to gully emptier teams arriving on site.

Electronic Works Management systems

8. The electronic works management system used by Via EM Ltd. has been developed from the County Council's computerised Highway Asset Management System (*a computer application known as 'Confirm'*). HAMS was originally a customer services database however, it now includes electronic highway inspection and works ordering (which is vital for the defence of third-party claims against the authority).
9. Since its original installation the functionality of HAMS has been extended to allow hand held electronic devices to be used to record highway works. Hand held devices have been available to the Highway Inspectorate, the Highway Maintenance Assistants and some Operational teams for some time however, during 2019 they were rolled out to the street lighting maintenance gangs.
10. Other recent developments of the electronic works management system include the prioritisation of sites for the Spray Injection Patching and Mechanised Patching teams and the 'real-time' management of their works.

Self-provision of temporary traffic management

11. Via EM Ltd undertook a detailed analysis during 2018/19 of temporary traffic management arrangements. This identified work types undertaken by Via where temporary traffic management could be delivered using Via's own resources rather than subcontracting the work. A challenge process has been implemented within the business to consider each traffic management requirement against internal capability and external cost. Training continues to be provided within Via to grow competence and capacity to deliver in-house traffic management. During 2019/20, this activity has been further challenged as part of a leadership development project, the conclusion of which is expected in June 2020.

Artemis, claims recovery service

12. Since January 2018 Via EM Ltd. has employed Artemis Recoveries to recover the costs of making good damage to the highway from third party insurance companies. Artemis Recoveries has a team of specialists with backgrounds in civil engineering, loss adjusting and highways legislation.
13. Initial actions to make the highway safe and subsequent permanent repairs are now documented more robustly, this includes keeping photographic records of before and after the works are undertaken. For each incident a detailed pack is produced to recover Via EM Ltd.'s costs, this pack is built around a comprehensive list of priced up items which covers the activities undertaken. These items are costed on standard labour, material and plant content plus an allocation towards the Emergency Action overhead but does not include any profit element.

14. Artemis Recoveries pursue the third party's insurance companies for the recovery of Via EM Ltd. costs and have demonstrated that they can successfully negotiate with the loss adjusters employed by insurance companies.
15. Prior to the use of Artemis Recoveries, from July 2016 to December 2017, Via had recovered £60,000 of damage costs. Since January 2018 this figure has increased to a cumulative amount of £1,200,000.
16. Since October 2019, Artemis Recoveries has been trading under the name of Osha Recoveries.

Recycling of highway waste and arisings

17. The County Council's additional allocation of twenty million pounds for highway maintenance over four years has resulted many roads being identified for resurfacing works which contain tar bound material. Rather disposing of these materials at a cost of approximately £100 per tonne the decision was made that it would be more cost effective to re-use this material on suitable parts of the highway network. To achieve this tar-bound road planings were transported to a facility in Warsop and subsequently processed using mobile plant to produce a material called 'Foamix' (a Tarmac Ltd. product) which is suitable to overlay some rural routes. Foamix is not suitable for the final road surface because the tar it contains can potentially leech out so in 2018/19 it was overlaid with a bituminous surface course to encapsulate it.
18. During 2019 a similar process was been undertaken however, to reduce costs, the bituminous surface course was replaced by the application of a surface dressing or micro-asphalt. The roads where these techniques have been utilised are still being monitored however, costs have been significantly reduced.
19. Via EM Ltd and the County Council continue to explore other methods to manage tar-bound waste, one of which is in-situ recycling. In-situ recycling has the potential to be even more advantageous because the tar-bound material does not leave the site where it was generated, this greatly reduces the amount of vehicle movements required. Several trial sites have been identified for in-situ recycling which – *if successful* – could result in the wider adoption of this process.

Salix bid for replacing street light lanterns with LEDs units

20. Salix Finance Ltd. provides interest-free Government loans to the public sector to improve its energy efficiency, lower its carbon emissions and reduce its energy bills. The savings generated by reduced energy consumption are then used to pay back the loan.
21. In 2019 the County Council successfully secured an additional £2,470,000 of funding from Salix Finance Ltd. The additional funding will be split equally over 2019/20 and 2020/21 and brings the total amount secured since 2014 to £11,600,000.
22. The County Council has used of this funding to replace over 62,000 traditional sodium lamps which had become expensive to illuminate and repair with LED alternatives. Thus far the replacement lanterns have reduced the County Council's energy costs by approximately £7,500,000 and reduced carbon dioxide emissions by 55,000 tonnes. An additional 8,000 lanterns will be replaced by 2021.

23. The LED replacement programme targeted the oldest low-pressure sodium lanterns first because they were the least energy efficient and replacing them generated the greatest savings however, the additional funding secured this year will allow the remaining the high-pressure sodium lanterns in Ashfield and Broxtowe to be replaced. The lantern replacement works currently taking place in Ashfield will be completed by the beginning of April 2020 after which similar works will begin in Broxtowe. The works in Broxtowe are programmed to be completed by the beginning of April 2021.

Additional and improved road repair techniques

24. The additional and improved road repair techniques (*Spray Injection Patching and Mechanised Patching*) were introduced in the late summer of 2019. Spray Injection Patching works began on the 7th of August 2019 and Mechanised Patching began on the 12th of August 2019. It should be noted that Spray Injection Patching is a seasonal operation which is unsuitable for cold weather.

25. Thus far a total of 36,656m² patching has been identified as being suitable for Spray Injection Patching repairs of which 11,313m² has already been completed. In November, the vehicle was effectively placed in 'hibernation' until the spring, when warmer temperatures will allow operations to resume.

26. The Mechanical Patching team consists of three to four operatives who are equipped with a Bobcat planer, compaction equipment and a hotbox vehicle. A second Mechanised Patching team will be deployed when additional vehicles are delivered in the new year. It is intended to replace the Bobcat planer with a modified JCB 3X fitted with a planning head and road sweeping equipment. It is intended that both teams will make use of JCB 3Xs which will further reduce manual handling and increase productivity.

27. Thus far a total of 16,349.5m² of patching has been identified as being suitable for mechanised patching of which 7,725m² has already been completed. Mechanised patching is not susceptible to cold weather therefore it is anticipated these works will continue throughout the winter.

Road Safety

28. A review of 'red routes' was requested at the 18 July 2019 Committee meeting. The initial research undertaken to date has investigated the legislation that allows for the introduction of 'red routes', as well as where these have been used to date, and for what purposes. The DfT approved the use of the red routes regulations to authorities beyond London to help meet their duties set out in the Traffic Management Act 2004. The recent revision of The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016 has now brought 'red routes' into line with yellow line restrictions as an effective parking management tool without the need for special approval. Research has identified at least ten highway authorities which have introduced red routes to improve congestion and reduce illegal and inconsiderate parking along key arterial routes.

29. The next phase of the research will be to identify what the benefits/disbenefits would be for residents and businesses if 'red routes' were introduced in the county; and should it be considered that they would offer value for money how and where such routes should be introduced. If necessary, any recommendations from the study will be presented to a future Communities & Place Committee for consideration.

Integrated Transport Measures

30. The review of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) Evidence Base, approved at the 26 September 2019 Committee meeting, has started and will take approximately 12 months to complete. It is planned that the LTP Evidence Base will be completed in time to inform the next LTP Implementation Plan which will cover the period from 2021/22.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

31. The recommendations contained in this report arise from the instructions previously made by the Committee.

Statutory and Policy Implications

32. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That the Committee approves the service improvements described in this report, and that the report be submitted to a future meeting of Communities and Place Committee for its consideration.

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For any enquiries about this report please contact: Martin Carnaffin - Contract Manager

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Constitutional Comments (SDS 23/12/2019)

33. The Committee is the appropriate body to consider the contents of this report.

Financial Comments (MM 24/12/19)

34. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All