Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Communities and Place Review and Development Committee

23 September 2020

Agenda Item: 6

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, PLACE

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM HIGHWAY DRAINAGE REVIEW

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval to take forward the recommendations contained in the report to Communities and Place Committee.

Information

2. The recommendations set out below arise from the deliberations of the Communities and Place Review and Development Committee which took place at its meeting on 30th January 2020.

Mud on the Highway

3. Officers in Via EM Ltd. have adopted a zero tolerance approach towards mud on the highway. In the past Via EM Ltd.'s ability to respond to mud on the highway was limited by the availability of its staff however, a number of compliance officers have recently been recruited which will allow a greater degree of monitoring and enforcement activity to take place.

4. County Council officers now produce more robust planning comments which relate to housing developer's responsibilities to manage surface water run off from their sites during construction and any mud on the highway which may be deposited as a result of their activities.

Appointments within Via EM Ltd.

5. Via EM Ltd. has recently appointed four 'Drainage Champions' who are responsible for co-ordinating the response to highway drainage enquiries and undertaking liaison with the County Council's Flood Risk Management Team. The four 'Drainage Champions' will be shortly be supplemented by the appointment of a an experienced drainage engineer (*this post currently being advertised*) who will support the highways District Managers and act as their intermediary with Via EM Ltd.'s highway design teams.

Gully Cleansing

6. ACL – the subcontractor which provides the County Council's cyclic gully cleansing works – has recently cleansed their 24,000th gully (*correct on the 25th August 2020*) in the County this financial year. ACL's works are subject to a contractual KPI that compares their completed works with their annual programme which is agreed with Via EM Ltd at the beginning of each financial year. In 2019/20 ACL achieved their KPI (*i.e. they attempted to clean 100% of the programmed gullies and actually cleaned 96% of these gullies, the missed gullies were either inaccessible because of parked vehicles or subject to a defect of some kind*).

Procurement of Telemetry and CCTV Equipment

7. Nottinghamshire County Council officers are currently exploring a range of telemetry and CCTV options which will enable Risk Management Authorities – (i.e. the County Council, the Environment Agency, Internal Drainage Boards and District & Borough Councils) to inspect key high-risk drainage assets such as trash screens, culverts, weirs, grills and other structures remotely. The equipment will enable Risk Management Authorities to decide whether maintenance is required and allow them to monitor the condition of their drainage assets during storm events.

8. Via EM Ltd. have recently procured CCTV equipment to undertake highway drainage investigations. This equipment will allow operatives to swiftly identify defects and arrange for the appropriate remedial actions to be taken. The proposed CCTV equipment will also allow Via EM Ltd. to generate an income by offering a drainage investigation service to other parties and eliminate the costs of hiring equipment when it is required.

Recommendations

9. The following recommendations relate to gully cleansing:

- Officers in Via EM Ltd. shall provide Members - *and parishes where applicable* - with advanced notification of the cyclical gulley emptying activities which are programmed to take place within their Divisions.

- Officers in Via EM Ltd. shall provide Members - *and parishes where applicable* – with lists of the gulleys which have been emptied within their Divisions and details of any problems encountered such as parked vehicles or drainage defects that require further investigation.

- Officers in Via EM Ltd. shall review the County Council's current cyclical gulley cleansing arrangements to ensure that concerns about areas prone to flooding and repeat reactive visits are included in the decision making process about gully emptying frequencies.

- Officers in Via EM Ltd. shall ensure that any information relating to the County Council's drainage assets obtained during their works is recorded and made available for future use.

Communications with other Authorities

10. The following recommendation relates to communications with other Authorities:

- Officers in both Via EM Ltd. and the County Council shall continue to build upon their partnership working arrangements with other agencies such as Seven Trent Water and the Environment Agency.

- Officers in Via EM Ltd shall produce - *and keep updated* - a list of locations which are prone to flooding because of issues associated with Seven Trent Water apparatus. Officers from Via EM Ltd. shall also regularly meet with representatives from Seven Trent Water to discuss potential remedial actions.

Communications with the Public

11. The following recommendations relate to communications with members of the public:

- Via EM Ltd. will seek to improve the public's perceptions of its drainage works, this shall include the production of a number of short videos that will be available on-line. These videos shall explain how highway drainage systems work, the difference between cyclic &

reactive drainage works and address common misconceptions associated with highway drainage.

- Officers in both Via EM Ltd. and the County Council will improve their communication arrangements with riparian owners to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities, this shall include the proactive identification of watercourses where maintenance is required.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

12. The recommendations set out above have been arrived at following due consideration of the available options by the Committee and in response to the exceptionally wet winter conditions which took place in 2019.

Statutory and Policy Implications

13. 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.

Financial Implications

14. The recommendations contained in this report will be accommodated from within existing budgets.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) To seek approval to take forward the recommendations contained in the report to Communities and Place Committee.

Adrian Smith
Corporate Director, Place

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Martin Carnaffin – Contract Manager Tel: 0115 9774229

Constitutional Comments (SG 27/08/2020)

15. I confirm that the recommendation falls within the remit of the Communities and Place Committee by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (SES 29/07/2020)

16. 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.

- Nottinghamshire County Council's Highway Network Management Plan
  https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/media/110443/highwaynetworkmanagementplan.pdf

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All