

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of People & Places	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	1 October 2012

UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIONS AGREED FOLLOWING THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK GROUP'S INQUIRY INTO HIGHWAY ISSUES

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To provide an update on implementation of the actions agreed following the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group's inquiry into highway issues.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- To note the update provided in section 7, 8 and 9 of the report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

- The report provides the second six monthly update on the outstanding actions following the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group's inquiry into highway issues.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Strong Family Support		Education and Jobs	
Being Healthy		Pride in Quality Homes and Clean Neighbourhoods	√
Safe Respectful Communities	√	Quality Community Services and Spaces	√
Vibrant Local Economy		Thriving Town Centre, Local Attractions and Villages	√
A Council that is a consistently Top Performing Organisation and Delivers Excellent Value for Money			√

BACKGROUND

- An Overview and Scrutiny Committee Task Group undertook an inquiry into highway issues and produced a report with recommendations.
- On 18th August 2011, the Executive Cabinet agreed a response and actions for each of the recommendations in the report.
- On 12th March 2012, the first six monthly update reported that all of the agreed recommendations had been actioned.

UPDATE

6. The table below provides further update.
7. This section includes an update on the implementation of the recommendations agreed.

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation		Update
Objective	Recommendation	
Provision of information	To make available to Members current street cleaning schedules and the maintenance schedule for the car parks.	The street cleaning schedules appeared in 'In the Know' on two occasions and the plan is to provide this information on an annual basis. There is an opportunity to discuss street cleaning issues in the six monthly Neighbourhood meetings. The car parks are formally inspected on a quarterly basis. In addition, the Civil Enforcement Officers report defects on car parks as and when the defect arises.
Provision of information	To utilise 'In The Know' to cascade highways and neighbourhoods information to Members	Information is now provided through 'In The Know'
Consulting and influencing	To include performance monitoring information on enforcement activities on the quarterly report presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee and forwarded to LCC as the Highway Authority.	Enforcement activity is included in Neighbourhood reports. This allows discussion and action to be taken on specific areas. Highways enforcement sits with Lancashire County Council and there are currently no plans to transfer this to Chorley Council.
Consulting and influencing	To enter into negotiations with Lancashire County Council to provide certain enforcement services such as advertising boards, highway encroachment and overhanging vegetation and seek a level of devolved budget to support this function.	As of February 2012, the initial stages for enforcement of overhanging vegetation onto the highway are now undertaken by the council. The issues around advertising boards / highway encroachment have been discussed through three tier forum and Chorley Council will continue to manage any issues concerning the markets as appropriate.
Consulting and influencing	To further develop Chorley's pavement Cafe Policy to ensure it is fit for purpose and serves the needs of the traders and other town centre users and has an element of clear regulation built into to prevent abuse.	The Cafe Policy is being reviewed and will be developed to make it more appropriate and proportionate.

Anomalies	To enter into an agreement whereby the County has responsibility for maintaining roads and pavements and Chorley Council has responsibility for grass verges, weed control, tree and shrub maintenance, leaf sweeping and enforcing overhanging vegetation.	<p>During 2012-13 the Council has undertaken the highway verge cutting, previously done by LCC, in the outer Chorley area. Discussions regarding a longer term five year arrangement are currently taking place.</p> <p>Arrangements for the Council to undertake the initial stages of overhanging vegetation onto the highway are now in place.</p>
Anomalies	The Service Manager – Streetscene Services to set in motion the gritting of Chorley’s car parks on receipt of notification from Lancashire County Council that they are gritting the roads.	<p>This has now been incorporated into a Severe Winter Weather Action Plan (SWWAP) that has been produced to outline the operational arrangements during the winter period.</p> <p>Lancashire County Council’s gritting information and other local intelligence, is used in order to inform the gritting of car parks.</p>
Anomalies	To formalise arrangements and resources to enable Chorley Council to deliver gritting services in an agreed town centre area on behalf of Lancashire County Council.	<p>Formal arrangements were introduced for 2010/11 which resulted in Chorley Council providing gritting and clearing services in Chorley Town Centre. Lancashire County Council provided the grit.</p> <p>The arrangements have been reviewed during 2011/12 and incorporated into a Severe Winter Weather Action Plan (SWWAP)</p>

8. This section includes an update on recommendations to Lancashire County Council.

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation		Update
Objective	Recommendation	
Provision of information	To set in place a formal information sharing system between Councillors and officers on a strategic level, for example, changes to gritting routes and policy changes, utilising email and other communication tools.	Members have been invited to information sessions regarding highway issues including a presentation on arrangements for the winter. In addition, Lancashire County Council’s Public Realm Manager provides a regular Environment Directorate bulletin which appears in ‘In the Know’
Provision of information	To use ‘In the Know’ to notify Members of practical information, such as, roadworks,	Lancashire County Council’s Public Realm Manager provides regular bulletins and monthly neighbourhood reports are in place. In addition to this, there have also

	highways and neighbourhoods information.	been other articles in 'In the Know' covering road works and transport issues, for example, changes to bus routes.
Provision of information	To identify and introduce meaningful performance indicators to enable both County and District officers and members to scrutinise the performance of the Streetscene Services Agreement. This is subject to the development of the Public Realm Strategy that could supersede the Streetscene Services Agreement.	Performance is measured by existing litter and detritus indicators, customer contact and inspections. There are no plans to increase performance management.
Provision of information	To present an update report to the relevant County Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee every six months on the inquiry recommendations to ensure robust performance monitoring.	Recommendations are being followed up as part of the ongoing public realm discussions.
Provision of information	That key information relating to inspections frequencies, highway intervention levels and key performance indicators are extracted from the Highway Maintenance Plan and provided in a simpler format to Members and Key Officers.	<p>Inspection frequencies and performance information, once reviewed, will feature in future Environment Directorate bulletins to include details of the highway maintenance programme.</p> <p>The intervention levels detailed in Section 8 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban footways and cycle tracks >20mm • Rural footways and cycle tracks > 25mm • Carriageways >40mm or >20mm at designated crossing points
Provision of information	To provide a separate reporting mechanism for officers and Councillors rather than the current single telephone number.	<p>In Chorley, technology allows calls from Councillors' recognised numbers to be dealt with more speedily via the Contact Centre. This avoids the need to provide basic information at the beginning of the call and it also ensures that Members do not receive customer response surveys based on each individual contact.</p> <p>No system is currently in place to allow for this at LCC but this recommendation has been fed back to the LCC Contact Centre for future development.</p>

Provision of information	To communicate with the public more, for example, by improving information on the Lancashire County Council website with the detail of the highways maintenance plan.	Lancashire County Council are always looking for ways to improve the provision of information for customers. This work is ongoing. An example of an improvement made has been the use of social media to keep people informed e.g. the use of Twitter during the winter.
Provision of information	To reduce avoidable contact with the Contact Centre (NI14) by keeping customers updated, with text messaging, email alerts or use of postcards for "work in progress" or "work completed".	This is being addressed by better communication between the service areas and the Contact Centre so that the Contact Centre staff are able to give realistic timescales for the work that has been requested. In addition, customers are asked whether they would like to receive an update electronically, via text or email.
Provision of information	To implement an information sticker to be used on grit bins, street lights and generally which displays contact telephone numbers and location information to enable easier fault reporting.	Lancashire County Council have placed information stickers on a number of bins. The effectiveness of this will be reviewed before any decisions to roll out further are taken
Consulting and influencing	To introduce meetings between the county (Environment) and district (Neighbourhoods) portfolio holders at appropriate times, perhaps April and October, and to report back relevant information to Members via intheknow.	Chorley Council's Executive Member for Places and Lancashire County Council's Executive Member for Highways and Transport have met to discuss joint working. Future meetings will take place, when appropriate, rather than at a prescribed date. Improvements and changes to services, arising from such meetings, will be brought to Member's attention, via 'In the Know', or when they require an Executive decision, via the existing procedures.
Consulting and influencing	To introduce regular meetings between Lancashire County Council (Environment Directorate) and Chorley Council (People and Places Directorate) officers.	Operational meetings take place monthly and strategic meetings on a quarterly basis or as required.
Consulting and influencing	To streamline existing meeting arrangements (including co-ordination meetings with utility companies and highways schemes) to make them more effective and ensure the correct people are in attendance and the	A representative from the Chorley Council now attends a separate network coordination activity meeting for the Chorley area that covers all activities on the highway and include representations from the various agencies and utility companies. This also forms part of the regular monthly meetings with the LCC Public Realm

	information from meetings is cascaded down	Manager.
Consulting and influencing	Officers to enter into negotiations with respect to Chorley delivering some enforcement functions, such as advertising boards, highway encroachment and overhanging vegetation.	<p>Arrangements for the Council to undertake the initial stages of overhanging vegetation onto the highway are now in place.</p> <p>The issues around advertising boards / highway encroachment have been discussed through three tier forum and Chorley Council will continue to manage any issues concerning the markets as appropriate.</p>
Anomalies	To enter into an agreement whereby the County has responsibility for maintaining roads and pavements and Chorley Council has responsibility for grass verges, weed control, tree and shrub maintenance, leaf sweeping and enforcing overhanging vegetation.	<p>During 2012-13 the Council has undertaken the highway verge cutting, previously done by LCC, in the outer Chorley area. Discussions regarding a longer term five year arrangement are currently taking place.</p> <p>Arrangements for the Council to undertake the initial stages of overhanging vegetation onto the highway are now in place.</p>
Anomalies	The Lancashire County Council call out officer to notify, by the most appropriate means, Members and the Service Manager – Streetscene Services when gritting wagons are dispatched.	Information about gritting is provided to Chorley Council on a daily basis, during appropriate times of the year. During recent winters Lancashire County Council have provided information on their website and via social media, for example twitter to notify people of gritting arrangements in their area.
Anomalies	To formalise arrangements and resources to enable Chorley Council to deliver gritting services in an agreed town centre area on behalf of Lancashire County Council.	<p>New arrangements were introduced for 2010/11 which resulted in Chorley Council providing gritting, and clearing services in Chorley Town Centre. Lancashire County Council provided the grit.</p> <p>The arrangements have been reviewed during 2011/12 and incorporated into a Severe Winter Weather Action Plan (SWWAP)</p>
Anomalies	To investigate and resolve the anomaly of gully cleaning just one side of the road rather than both sides.	This has been resolved.

9. This section includes an update on the recommendation to United Utilities.

Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation		Update
Objective	Recommendation	
Communication cycles	To reduce avoidable contact (NI14) by keeping customers updated, with text messaging, email alerts or use of postcards for “work in progress” or “work completed”.	<p>United Utilities have confirmed that for all capital projects a letter drop is undertaken; highlighting the project details, work to be undertaken, if diversions or road restrictions are planned and a contact number for enquiries. If a capital project is delayed, customers will receive an additional letter</p> <p>They have trailed a registration system where customers can sign up for updates.</p> <p>The UU website provides details of all major projects http://www.unitedutilities.com/ and there is an online system that allows customers to ask questions http://ask.unitedutilities.co.uk/</p> <p>Customers can also use Twitter to make enquiries http://mobile.twitter.com/unitedutilities</p>

SUMMARY

8. All of the actions have been implemented and will continue to be managed and developed through the on-going public realm meetings.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

9. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal		No significant implications in this area	√

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

10. No comments to add to the report.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

11. No comments to add to the report.

JAMIE CARSON
DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE AND PLACES

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Jamie Dixon	5250	19 September 2012	O&S Highways Update 01-10-2012