

Late Report – Agenda Item 9 refers

Contribution To Scrutiny Board Report – 24th July 2007

Highways Services

In recent years Highways Services has been part of City Services. In the change programme it moves into City Development under the Chief Highways Officer post. It provides very public facing services and Members are likely to have day to day contact with any number of officers.

What we aim to do

- Deliver a rolling programme of highway maintenance to improve the condition of the network
- Provide a safe, modern and reliable street lighting and road sign installation which helps address issues of community safety
- Provide a highway traffic management system which gives road users good information and allows them to travel in maximum safety.
- Manage the road space to minimise inconvenience, congestion and disruption
- Reduce the risk of accidents occurring and minimise the financial risk from claims

Highway Maintenance

- Highway Registry → keep the list of all the adopted streets which the council maintains.
- Safety inspections → urgent repairs to keep roads and paths safe
- Condition inspections → identify priorities for planned work
→ Government highway condition performance indicators
- Technical team → put together programmes and consult with members
- Design team → prepare schemes and also comment on maintenance implications of other highway proposals
- Contracts Team → procure maintenance work from external contractors and monitor the work on site. They also inspect s38 development sites to ensure the road are constructed to specification.
- Depots (Seacroft, Pottery Fields and Henshaw) → deliver maintenance work in house including all reactive and routine repairs, plus some larger schemes. They also deliver the winter maintenance service.

Street Lighting

All street lighting and illuminated sign services are now delivered through the Leeds street lighting PFI by SEC. This is a 25 year contract and involved replacing most of the existing lighting columns. Some 80,000 will be replaced in the first five years. SEC are responsible for maintenance for the whole 25 years of the contract including repairing accident and vandal damage and all liaison with the electricity company to secure supplies.

A small client team represents the interests of the council, ensuring that SEC deliver the service in accordance with requirements and liaising with stakeholders.

Traffic Engineering

This is the section charged with providing a highway traffic management system which gives road users good information and allows them to travel in maximum safety!

Areas covered include:-

- Investigating parking issues and introducing new parking restrictions;
- Introducing new speed limits;
- Providing new direction signs and new road markings;
- Dealing with initial requests for traffic calming, residents parking schemes;
- minor safety schemes etc;
- Assessment and design of pedestrian crossings;
- Street Name Plates.

The section has very little direct funding but works closely with transportation policy to support the implementation of LTP funded schemes.

The traffic section are also involved with any traffic orders necessary to facilitate special events on the highway (eg Jane Tomlinson race) and in the traffic arrangements for off highway events (eg Party in the Park)

While there are a lot of issues which are not within the remit of this section, (eg traffic signals, safety cameras or parking enforcement) it does tend to be the first point of contact for all traffic related enquiries.

Network Management

The council's statutory appointment of a Traffic Manager heads up Network Management. He is charged with ensuring the council fulfils its duty to manage congestion and disruption. The role which requires a lot of co-ordination with colleagues in transportation and highways as working with other stakeholders.

Utilities are a significant stakeholder. Their activities are governed by legislation which requires that they notify us of their work. Highways maintain register of all works, seek to resolve location clashes, carry out sample inspections to check safety and quality of work, follow up defects, monitor work durations, ensure defective utility ironwork is repaired and seek to restrict utility work following substantial road works.

Once a developer has planning consent and work commences on site, there will often be an impact on the use of the highway. Highways advise on traffic management and arrange any necessary traffic and parking restrictions. Permits and consents are issued for such things as placing skips, scaffolding and hoardings on the highway, with checks built in to ensure proposals are not unnecessarily disruptive to road users and that safety (eg sight lines) are maintained.

Public Liability Claims

A small team provides all the information needed to assess liability for highway slips and trips and damaged tyres. Where the council does not have legal liability the claims are defended, including in court where necessary.