

# Temporary Road Closures – Process and Engagement

Date: 6 April 2022

Report of: Chief Officer – Highways and Transportation

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth)

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

## What is this report about?

### Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- In September 2021 the Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth) considered a Referral to Scrutiny from Cllr Matthew Robinson, which raised concerns about the processes associated with the implementation of temporary road closures. This followed the temporary closure of Leeds Road in Scholes for a six-week period as part of the East Leeds Orbital Road programme of works.
- The Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth) resolved that further consideration should be given to the general consultation and engagement processes associated with temporary road closures in Leeds, with a particular focus on major projects.
- In response to the issues raised in September 2021 the appended report details the current process for temporary road closures required in connection with works across the district. The report summarises the engagement and consultation procedures linked to temporary road closures including the enhanced engagement processes for major projects. It also provides more detailed narrative about the regulations the Council must adhere to where a road closure needs to be made.
- A summary of current procedures and practices relating to consultation and engagement associated with temporary road closures is attached at **Appendix 2**.

## Recommendations

Members of Scrutiny Board are asked to note the contents of this report and to note and endorse the actions that have been taken as set out below and in the appendices attached to this report:

- The offer to provide training to the emergency services on the use of One.network;
- Specific action to liaise with West Yorkshire Ambulance Service on the use of One.network for journey route planning;
- An additional offer of One.network supplier training for all Members of the Council
- The commitment to a dedicated resource to assist in communication and engagement on major schemes;

- The Integration of the Connecting Leeds communications project into major transportation schemes being promoted by the service
- Creation of a highway disruption web site content at [www.leeds.gov.uk/Planahead](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Planahead);
- A commitment to continue to review practices and implement change in line with best practice; and
- A commitment to work with colleagues in Communities to engage with local councils and communities to enhance locality communication and engagement.

### Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 Following Scrutiny Board of 16 September 2021 Members requested further information on the temporary road closure process and wider engagement undertaken for major schemes.
- 2 This is provided in the appended reports to enable the board to consider in more detail in the general approach to consultation and engagement for temporary road closures.

### What impact will this proposal have?

#### Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?       Yes       No

- 3 The purpose of the report is to advise Members of current processes relating to temporary road closures and wider consultation and engagement, with a view to enabling more detailed scrutiny of this area of activity.

### What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 4 This is an information report and as such no consultation and engagement has been undertaken.

### What are the resource implications?

- 5 The report and attached appendix relate to existing practices, accordingly there are no direct resource implications from this paper.

### What are the legal implications?

- 6 As detailed in the appendices to this report, temporary road closures follow a legal process. However, there are no direct legal implications from this paper.

### What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 7 The report and attached appendices are provided for information and relate to existing processes and legislation.

### Does this proposal support the council's three Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth       Health and Wellbeing       Climate Emergency

- 8 No specific proposals are put forward. However, the types of temporary road closures detailed in the Appendices to the report are necessary for the safe and proper implementation of highway management and improvement works, in connection with the

management, maintenance and improvement of essential services, and when necessary to facilitate development.

### **Options, timescales and measuring success**

**a) What other options were considered?**

9 N/A

**b) How will success be measured?**

10 N/A

**c) What is the timetable for implementation?**

11 N/A

### **Appendices**

12 The following appendix is attached to this report:

- Appendix 1 – Temporary Road Closures – Process, Consultation and Engagement
- Appendix 2 – Summary of current consultation and engagement procedures and practices.
- Appendix 3: Original Referral from Cllr Robinson
- Appendix 4: September 2021 Officer Report Leeds Road Closure
- Appendix 4 A: September 2021 ELOR Planned Road Closures
- Appendix 4 B: September 2021 Progress Photographs
- Appendix 5: Extract of the Minutes from the [Scrutiny Meeting on 16 September](#)

### **Background papers**

13 None

### **Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive Growth)**

**Date: 6 April 2022**

**Subject: Temporary Road Closures – Process, Consultation & Engagement**

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### **REFERRAL TO SCRUTINY – SEPTEMBER 2021**

#### **1. Original Referral to Scrutiny**

1.1 On [16 September 2021](#) the Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth) considered a referral from Cllr Matthew Robinson, which raised concerns about the processes associated with the closure of Leeds Road in Scholes between 28 July and 3 September 2021. The closure was required as part of the progression of the East Leeds Orbital Road (ELOR).

1.2 The original concerns are set out in a letter from Cllr Robinson, which is appended to this report along with supporting material provided by Scholes Community Forum. In the September meeting Cllr Robinson also asked members of the Board to consider more generally whether:

- The approach to the implementation of the temporary road closure in Scholes had been “citizen focussed”
- Communication with local stakeholders had been sufficient

1.3 Following consideration of the Referral, the Board agreed to consider whether lessons could be learned from the experience of Cllr Robinson’s constituents with a view to strengthening existing practice in future.

1.4 It was resolved that the Board would consider the general approach to engagement and consultation in relation to temporary road closures, with a particular focus on major projects.

1.5 Members requested that time be set aside within the 2021/22 work programme to facilitate that detailed consideration. The issue is to be discussed at the Scrutiny Board’s meeting on [6 April 2022](#).

## **2. Communication and Engagement - as discussed in September 2021**

- 2.1 Communication with local stakeholders was agreed to be an integral part of the processes associated with supporting all temporary road closures. This has developed over many years, although previous arrangements with the local Parish and Town Council Charter have been superseded by the area-based work of the Communities team.
- 2.2 The communication work of the Highways and Transportation service has developed in recent years in relation to major schemes works and goes beyond previous arrangements in relation to the broad level of notification and engagement for day-to-day road closures associated with local works, which in itself was beyond the legal minimum required.
- 2.3 Communication with local stakeholders was agreed to be an integral part of the processes associated with supporting all temporary road closures. The principle of taking a proactive approach to engagement and notification was agreed and has continued in practice and is evident in the processes around road closures.
- 2.4 In their discussion, members highlighted the importance of ensuring communities understand the practical implications of road closures, the mitigating steps that have been taken by the Council to minimise potential disruption and the timescales within which work will be completed.
- 2.5 It was suggested that the experience in Scholes also reinforced the importance of 'live' communication with stakeholders during the programme of works for which the road closure is required. Although various accessibility challenges were encountered during the closure of Leeds Road in Scholes, officers were able to demonstrate that monitoring of communication from residents and businesses enabled them to respond quickly to those issues to seek a resolution.
- 2.6 The Scrutiny Board acknowledged the need to balance the requirement to complete works associated with major projects as safely and efficiently as possible, while also minimising disruption to local communities affected by temporary road closures.
- 2.7 With this in mind officers outlined the steps taken to reduce local disruption during the Leeds Road closure in Scholes – for example, implementing the closure during school holidays when traffic flows would be reduced and restricting construction activity outside of normal working hours. Board members reflected upon how consideration of these mitigating factors is communicated to residents.
- 2.8 It was noted that there is currently no additional resource available to specifically deliver enhanced engagement activities. As a result, any changes to the current approach to communication would have to be managed within the existing team.

2.9A significant area of discussion for the Board was the distinction between the statutory requirements associated with road closures and additional 'discretionary' local practices that aim to strengthen and expand stakeholder engagement.

2.10 It was agreed that the local approach of delivering 'enhanced' stakeholder engagement should be continued and developed. It was the view of members that learning from individual projects within major schemes should be captured to further improve the approach to consultation in future.

2.11 In the case of Scholes additional engagement had taken place with a range of stakeholders including the Ambulance Service, refuse service, bus operators, and Parish Council, as well as local businesses and residents. A timetable of engagement activity is set out in section four of the officer report that was considered in September and which is also included in this agenda pack.

2.12 Board members were keen to ensure that good practice was captured as part of learning from the experience of the temporary road closure in Scholes.

Examples included:

A	Extending stakeholder engagement significantly beyond statutory requirements.
B	Providing advance notification of the closure to known community groups and via broader mechanisms such as the ELOR newsletter and project websites.
C	Monitoring communication during the road closure to ensure concerns about accessibility – for example, in relation to farm and refuse service access – could be swiftly resolved.
D	Responding to 'live' feedback to reduce disruption to residents – for example, by providing additional signage during the closure.
E	Notifying local ward members in advance of the work.

2.13 Members also recommended that officers consider challenges associated with the experience in Scholes to assess whether the Council's approach could be improved further. It was suggested these matters might include:

F	Extending the distribution of information through other routes to reach more recipients in localities that will be affected by temporary closures.
G	Working more closely with the relevant ward councillors to determine how best to target information about significant closures within specific communities.
H	Following up on the offer to the support the ambulance service in accessing up-to-date information about road closures via the <a href="#">One.network</a> .
I	Identifying how the learning from the local approach to engagement in Scholes could be captured and shared internally to inform future projects.

## PROCEDURES AND ACTIONS

### 3. Understanding Current Procedures

- 3.1 As noted above there is a distinction between the engagement required by national regulations and the additional work that is carried out locally in practice.
- 3.2 The detailed narrative below provides clarity for members with regards to both required and discretionary engagement relating to temporary road closures associated with street works, road works and development related activity.
- 3.3 A summary of current procedures and practices for engagement and consultation in relation to temporary road closures is provided at **Appendix 2**.
- 3.4 It should be noted that there are various ways in which local road networks can be disrupted and the Council does not always have responsibility for the associated stakeholder communication and engagement – for example, in the case of utilities work.
- 3.5 This paper sets out the processes related to works where the Council is the ‘work promoter’ and therefore has direct control over engagement and consultation.
- 3.6 There is also a huge range of work undertaken on our streets. At its meeting in September the Board asked officers to focus specifically on communication and engagement relating to major highway works. In response to this request specific procedures that enhance communication on major projects are also set out in the table in **Appendix 2** and the narrative below.

### 4. Responsibility for Facilitating Road Closures

- 4.1 The Highways and Transportation service deals with around 25,000 to 30,000 separate works on our streets each year, many of these have unavoidable traffic management implications including around 900 road closures. Where a road closure is necessary, in addition to any consultation and engagement, a Temporary Traffic Regulation Notice or Order (TTRN or TTRO) will be required to legally close the road.
- 4.2 The service has an established Network Management section whose primary function is to facilitate and co-ordinate these works and other activities that take place on the Leeds highway network. This ensures that the Council meets the statutory Network Management Duty placed on it under the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA) and other responsibilities under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA).
- 4.3 The TMA and NRSWA provide several controls that allows the Network Management section to make directions on how works are to be undertaken. These relate to directing the dates, times, and duration of works, to assist in co-

ordination of activities and reducing disruption. Network Management also act as the streetworks Permit Authority for the Council.

4.4 Where required, the Network Management section is also responsible for approving, authorising and processing any TTRNs and TTROs required for temporary road closures. It is important to highlight that the closure of a road is not necessarily the most disruptive type of traffic management; a decision to temporarily close a road can be less disruptive than other traffic management options (for example multiway temporary traffic lights at certain junctions), which do not require a TTRN or TTRO.

4.5 All works and closures appear on [One.network](#), the Council's web-based portal at the earliest opportunity, providing up to date road works, road closure, diversion and events information.

## **5. Assessment Process: Responsibility for Communication and Engagement**

5.1 The processing of a TTRN or TTRO is only a small, but significant, part of the overall process of co-ordinating and managing activity on the highway network.

5.2 Most works and associated closures are associated with statutory undertakers and utility companies. Where these proposals impact on a community, it is the responsibility of the utility company (as works promoter) to carry out appropriate consultations and to provide information on the works.

5.3 Similarly, LCC works (which range from minor highway asset management works to major projects such as ELOR) carry out appropriate consultation and engagement with residents and other stakeholders in relation to any road closures that may be required. In contrast to utility work, the Council as work promoter has direct control over engagement and consultation.

5.4 On major schemes, which typically have a greater impact and duration, the Highway Authority now ensures dedicated resource to assist in communication and engagement as set out later in this paper. This is in addition to assessment and legal process set out below.

5.5 In addition, the Connecting Leeds communications project has provided much increased coverage and interaction with communities from the Highway Authority, and will be integrated as the means of communication of all major council schemes going forward. Since the [16 September 2021](#) scrutiny meeting Connecting Leeds has launched a new campaign [A new route, a new Leeds: plan ahead](#) to raise awareness of works to be carried out in the city, with the web page signposting users to further information on schemes, roadworks and journey planning.

5.6 As stated above it is the responsibility of works promoters to provide information on the temporary traffic management requirements for their schemes. Where a proposal has the potential to cause disruption, promoters will generally consult officers in Network Management for advice. Taking into account health and safety considerations for operatives and the travelling public, our officers, in conjunction with project sponsors, then endeavour to ensure schemes are carried out with minimum disruption and are co-ordinated to avoid unnecessary clashes with other works/road closures. This often involves experienced officers in the Network Management team requiring changes to methods of working and traffic management to limit disruption.

5.7 Further mitigation can include use of extended working hours, challenging the method of working and duration of works, use of overnight and weekend working to avoid peak traffic, and preventing or rescheduling work from taking place where the impact is considered unacceptable (for example taking advantage of reduced traffic in school holidays). A number of these mitigation measures were adopted in the case of the Leeds Road closure in Scholes discussed in September.

5.8 On occasions, road closures will be necessary due to the nature of work that needs to be undertaken either to protect the public or workforce. A road closure can be less disruptive option than, for example, multiway temporary traffic lights provided a suitable diversion is possible. Accordingly, Network Management may require a promoter to use a road closure for both safety reasons and to minimise disruption for the travelling public.

5.9 Given the large number of works that are necessary on our streets each year, the processing of which involves technical assessments, health and safety considerations and co-ordinating checks to avoid clashes with other works, scope for protracted consultation on traffic management options is not practical in most cases.

5.10 For most smaller scale works, traffic management solutions will often be limited due to the nature of work to be undertaken and other constraints leaving little scope for debate. However, Network Management, when satisfied with proposals, will direct the promoters to carry out engagement and publicity with stakeholders typically including residents, Ward Members and senior councillors, Town and Parish Councils and other community groups, WYCA and bus operators and, where relevant, adjacent districts. This will include details of any closures.

5.11 Placement of advance information signs on the network, social media, and Variable Message Signs can often be used to reach a wider audience.

5.12 In addition, on higher-profile cases where major disruption is anticipated from works (irrespective of whether a road closure is planned), Network Management

(in addition to any work promoter consultation and engagement) will pro-actively advise key stakeholders in advance of works. The only exception being urgent and emergency utility works which happen unexpectedly and are needed to restore services to residents and/or ensure safety. While such works by necessity are unplanned, close working between officers and utilities takes place to manage the situation.

5.13 Following the 16 September 2021 scrutiny meeting Network Management officers have reconsidered when the above mentioned advise is issued in relation to known local concerns, for example as has been the case in relation to emergency utility work along Leeds Road in the general proximity of ELOR works. While these utility works in isolation have not been particularly disruptive officers have recognised the need to provide further information to ward members given the amount of other work in the area.

5.14 In addition, training on One.network has been offered to all emergency services and WYCA following the 16 September 2021 Scrutiny meeting. Given the issue that was reported for the ambulance routing in relation to the Leeds Road closure, officers have pro-actively engaged with West Yorkshire Ambulance Service in relation to road closures and the use of One.network. In addition, all 99 councillors have been offered training on One.network including how to set up alerts for a given area of interest.

5.15 Officers are committed to engaging and communicating with a range of stakeholders including local councils and will work with colleagues in Communities team to engage with local councils and communities to enhance locality communication and engagement.

5.16

## **6 The Road Closure Legal Process**

6.1 Regarding planned works, where a TTRO is required to close a road to vehicular traffic to enable a scheme to progress, this is subject to a formal legal process. Unlike a permanent TRO, there is no objection period. However, Legal Services are required to provide a copy of the notice or order to various statutory consultees. The legal process is detailed below.

6.2 As set out above the Network Management team facilitate around 900 TTRNs or TTROs associated with works each year.

6.3 In the case of planned works engagement and consultation should have already been carried out by the work promoter prior to the legal process that formally enables a road to be temporarily closed.

6.4 Provisions governing temporary road closures and traffic restrictions for works or other activities in the street are found in Sections 14 to 16 of the Road Traffic

Regulation Act 1984, as amended by the Road Traffic (Temporary Restrictions) Act 1991, and regulations made under the 1984 Act. These regulations are set out in The Road Traffic (Temporary Restrictions) Procedure Regulations 1992 (the Regulations).

6.5 A temporary restriction can be introduced if the authority is satisfied that it is necessary:

- to allow works to be carried out on or near the road;
- because of the danger to the public or to prevent serious damage to the road; or
- to allow cleaning duties imposed by the Environmental Protection Act to be discharged.

6.6 As regards the procedure to be followed before a TTRO is made, for planned works, and in accordance with the Regulations, the legal requirements and procedure followed are as follows:

- Not less than 7 days before making a TTRO, the traffic authority must publish notice of their intention to make the TTRO in one or more newspapers circulating in the area in which any road to which the order relates is situated.

Current practice conforms with this requirement, in that following receipt of instructions, Legal Services draft an intention notice and arrange for its publication in the Yorkshire Post;

- On or before the date on which the TTRO is made, the traffic authority must give notice of it to the chief officer of police, the chief officer of the fire authority, the traffic authority for any other road which is likely to be directly affected by the closure, and the operator of any concession to which the road is subject.

In practice, Legal Services circulate a copy of the intention notice to these parties as soon as it has been drafted, enabling advance notification to be provided at an earlier date than required by the regulations. In addition, the circulation list used also includes non-statutory consultees, being West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Royal Mail, WY Fire & Rescue, Yorkshire Ambulance Service and the Road Haulage Association, together with relevant ward members, town and parish councils and LCC officers.

- Within 14 days after making the TTRO the traffic authority must publish a notice of its making in one or more newspapers circulating in the area in which any road to which the order relates is situated.

In practice, Legal Services exceed this requirement, by arranging for the making notice to be published in the Yorkshire Post on the date of making of the TTRO

- Throughout the period during which the order is in force, the traffic authority must also display a notice in a prominent position at each end of the length of

road to which the TTRO relates and at the points at which it will be necessary for vehicles or pedestrians to diverge from the road, stating the effect of the TTRO and, where applicable, the alternative route or routes available for traffic.

In practice, Network Management arrange for the intention notice drafted by Legal Services to be posted on site as soon as possible, so as to provide additional advance warning than strictly required by the regulations.

- 6.7 Despite the Regulations only requiring the Council to give seven days' notice of the intention to make a TTRO, Leeds City Council asks promoters for a minimum of six weeks' notice to ensure that we have the time and resources to check and assess the application, then draft and process the TTRO. The TTRO is published on [One.network](#) (the Council's web-based portal used by most local authorities in England and Wales providing up to date road works, road closure, diversion and events information) along with all other streetworks permits and licences. This lead in period also allows Network Management to direct the promoters to carry out engagement and publicity as detailed above.
- 6.8A TTRO may be in force for up to 18 months. This is limited to six months for footpaths, bridleways, cycle tracks and byways open to all traffic, though on application, the National Casework Team may approve the extension of the initial 6-month closure period prior to its expiry.
- 6.9 For urgent/emergency works or works of a short duration the authority may issue a TTRN imposing a short-term closure or restriction.
- 6.10 Under the regulations, the duration of a TTRN is limited to 21 days if there is a danger to the public or risk of serious damage to the road (independent of street works – for example a leaking gas main), though it can be extended by one further 21-day notice. Otherwise, a TTRN is limited to 5 days if there is no risk of danger or damage.
- 6.11 Where the duration of the notice period is not sufficient to cover the full closure required, it may be followed up by the making of a TTRO. The same order making process described above is applicable, except that it is not necessary to publish an intention notice, given the notification already provided by the TTRN. As with a TTRO, the regulations require that throughout the period during which the closure is in force, the traffic authority must also display a notice in a prominent position at each end of the length of road to which the TTRO relates and at the points at which it will be necessary for vehicles or pedestrians to diverge from the road, stating the effect of the TTRO and, where applicable, the alternative route or routes available for traffic. In practice, Network Management both draft the notice and arrange for it be posted on site.
- 6.12 Prior notice is not necessary in such circumstances although for short duration works Network Management ask for four weeks' notice and publish the

closure on [One.network](#) as for a TTRO. A TTRN notice is distributed to stakeholders in the same way as a TTRO.

- 6.13 Notwithstanding the unforeseen nature of urgent and emergency works, Network Management endeavour to notify the emergency services of the restrictions as soon as we are able at our discretion based on the duration, nature and potential disruption of the works.
- 6.14 A TTRO or TTRN may deal with a length of road along which the works promoter is working in sections. The restrictions will only apply as physically signed on site, within the limits of the TTRO/N. This helps limit traffic disruption where activities progress along a length of road.
- 6.15 Given the number of road closures which the Network Management team have to facilitate, in conjunction with the Council's Legal Officers, and the need to coordinate these activities with around 30,000 other activities on the highway, it is essential that the legal process continues to operate efficiently supported by prior engagement and publicity undertaken works promoters.
- 6.16 As detailed above, all works and closures appear on [One.network](#) the Council's web-based portal at the earliest opportunity, providing up to date road works, road closure, diversion and events information.

## **7. Major Scheme Engagement**

- 7.1 Contractor procurements of what may be defined as major schemes such as Armley Gyratory, East Leeds Orbital Route (ELOR) and River Aire Flood Alleviation Scheme (FAS) etc., are undertaken at an early stage of defined detail design. Such early contractor involvement (ECI) enables the Highway Authority benefits of construction expertise in the efficient planning, programming and coordination of all proposed workstreams, both within site boundaries and across the live highway network.
- 7.2 Road closures and other network coordination requirements such as temporary traffic signals, contraflows etc., arise through this construction-design phase and discussions with Network Managers to ensure safe and effective construction works for all stakeholders.
- 7.3 On significant schemes once it is clear to the contract manager of the project that specific road closures will be required for the safe operation of construction processes engagement with stakeholders is undertaken. For major works this will initially be with the Senior Responsible Owner (Director, Chief Officer, Head of Service) and subsequently with the Portfolio Holder via the formal fortnightly briefing process, then afterward with Ward Members and Parish Councillors.

7.4 On major schemes the Highway Authority ensures dedicated resource to assist in the outward facing communication process. In the case of major schemes, a live register is collated of stakeholders and correspondents throughout the early development, detailed design and construction phases of those who need or just wish to be kept informed of scheme development and milestones.

7.5 This register of interested parties for major works such as the FAS and ELOR typically has over a two thousand people or interest groups, with the intention that these participants are informed of upcoming news including traffic management changes in as timely a manner as is practicable after the senior officer and member engagement has concluded.

7.6 An aspect of ECI that presents a challenge is the potential for initial assumptions around buildability and associated traffic management to change as the design of a scheme evolves and/or constraints emerge. In the case of ELOR and the Leeds Road closure, initial assumptions around traffic management did not identify the need for a lengthy road closure and this only became apparent as the design of the scheme progressed. Once the change and the need were confirmed, this was communicated to key stakeholders at the earliest opportunity. The dedicated resource for such schemes helps the service communicate and explain changes as they become apparent throughout the course of a project. Members concerns around this change at ELOR have been noted so that lessons can be learnt to try and avoid similar situations arising on other projects. The issue at Leeds Road related to a changed vertical alignment combined with constrained construction boundary meant that without acquiring further third party land traffic management options were restricted.

7.7 For members of the public with a general interest, but who are not signed up for regular published information, major schemes provide dedicated websites or webpages which update of any information alerts.

7.8 The Connecting Leeds communications project has provided much increased coverage and interaction with communities from the Highway Authority, and will be integrated as the means of communication of all major transportation (and potentially flood defence) schemes being promoted by the service in future. By way of example the Connecting Leeds team are a key part of the upcoming Armley Gyratory project. In addition to launching the [A new route, a new Leeds: plan ahead](#) campaign to raise awareness of works to be carried out in the city generally, the team are involved aspects of communication of information about the project including:

- Creation of a highway disruption web site content [www.leeds.gov.uk/Planahead](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Planahead);
- Announcement of closures via a pro-active press release with local media and a reminder planned before the initial closures on 8 April;

- Using Connecting Leeds regular email newsletter to circa 18,000 subscribers;
- Organic social media channels across the council and using Connecting Leeds;
- Briefing notes, along with suggested social media posts for all councillors;
- Highways black/yellow signage at key points across the city highlighting works, plan ahead and search plan ahead Leeds;
- Use of vehicle messaging signs on the roads across the city from a week before closure including the Strategic Road Network;
- Printing and distribution of 5,500 letters to all households & businesses within 1km of Armley Gyratory;
- Paid bus back advertising for four weeks;
- Paid radio advertising across Heart FM area for four weeks;
- Paid outdoor digital advertising over four sites for two weeks;
- Paid social media advertising targeting both the Armley area and wider Leeds council area;
- Paid online media advertising campaign targeting the Leeds area; and
- A promoted tile on Insite for internal staff and posts to the Leeds council colleagues Facebook group.

7.9 We will continue to enhance our processes as lessons are learned from such events. Despite best efforts and all the above actions, however, it is almost inevitable there will be some adverse comment because of a fundamental objection to the approach adopted and/or because of the impossibility of being able to reach everyone that might possibly be impacted.

7.10 Beyond the statutory planning process across all major schemes numerous forums, drop-in sessions and specific meetings are hosted in communities throughout the development and construction, where up-to-date information is regularly presented to residents and wider stakeholders. This also allows evolving designs and unplanned changes to be effectively communicated.

7.11 In recognising the critical importance of early engagement around road closures the service will ensure that processes are always robustly followed to give members confidence in consistently achieving appropriate communication to all stakeholders and interest groups. This approach goes significantly beyond that of the Highway Authority's statutory duty, and that applied to road closures that are associated with statutory undertakers works across the city.

## **8. Summary**

8.1 The Highways and Transportation service deals with around 25,000 to 30,000 separate works on our streets each year including around 900 road closures.

- 8.2 Assessing this scale of works is a major undertaking and officers need to make decisions daily to ensure works can be planned and co-ordinated.
- 8.3 Officers are committed to engaging and communicating with a range of stakeholders including members of the public on activities on our streets and commit to work with colleagues in Communities to engage with local councils and communities to enhance locality communication and engagement.
- 8.4 All works and closures appear on [One.network](#), the Council's web-based portal providing up to date road works, road closure, diversion and events information.
- 8.5 In response to Members concerns training on One.network has been offered to all emergency services and specifically West Yorkshire Ambulance Service.
- 8.6 One.network supplier training has been offered and arranged for all Councillors of Leeds.
- 8.7 Works promoters are responsible for carrying out appropriate consultation and engagement on their works. However, for the most disruptive works Network Management additionally will pro-actively advise key stakeholders in advance of works, and going forward review when these updates are issued taking into account other factors such as other works in the area.
- 8.8 Temporary road closures are not always the most disruptive form of traffic management. For example, multiway temporary traffic lights could cause more disruption but not require a TTRO/N. Engagement and communication will be related to impact and not limited to road closures.
- 8.9 In the case of planned works consultation and engagement should have already been carried out prior to the TTRO/N legal process.
- 8.10 In practice the Legal Services circulate a copy of the closure notices to all statutory parties as soon as it has been drafted, enabling advance notification to be provided at an earlier date than required by the regulations.
- 8.11 In addition, the circulation list used also includes non-statutory consultees, being West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Royal Mail, WY Fire & Rescue, Yorkshire Ambulance Service and the Road Haulage Association, together with relevant ward members, town and parish councils and LCC officers, exceeding the legal requirement.
- 8.12 Given the number of road closures which the Network Management team have to facilitate, in conjunction with the Council's Legal Officers, and the need to coordinate these activities with around 30,000 other activities on the highway, it is essential that the legal process continues to operate efficiently supported by prior engagement and publicity undertaken works promoters.

8.13 On major schemes the Highway Authority now ensures dedicated resource to assist in the outward facing communication process in addition to that outlined above. This may include a register of stakeholders and correspondents to whom regular published information is shared, dedicated websites or webpages which update of any information alerts. In addition, numerous forums, drop-in sessions and specific meetings are hosted in communities throughout development and construction, where up-to-date information is regularly presented to residents and wider stakeholders.

8.14 Integration of the Connecting Leeds communications project into major transportation schemes is being promoted by the service, and since the September 2021 Scrutiny meeting a highway disruption web site content at [www.leeds.gov.uk/Planahead](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Planahead) has been created.

8.15 Officers are committed to continue to review practices and implement change in line with best practice.

8.16 Additionally, Officers are committed to engaging and communicating with a range of stakeholders including members of the public on activities on our streets and to work with colleagues in Communities to engage with local councils and communities to enhance locality communication and engagement.

## **9. Next Steps**

9.1 Given the scale of major works coming forward officers are committed to working to improve the quality of stakeholder engagement. Lessons learned from the experience of individual closures, including the specific issues at Leeds Road, will continue to inform future working and strengthen internal processes.

9.2 The Connecting Leeds communications project has provided much increased coverage and interaction with communities from the Highway Authority and will be integrated as the means of communication of all major transportation (and potentially flood defence) schemes being promoted by the service in future. This has the potential to increase the ease of access to information for members of the public under the banner of an increasingly familiar 'brand.' The current [A new route, a new Leeds: plan ahead](#) campaign launched since the [16 September 2021](#) scrutiny meeting will further support the publicising of major works across the district.

9.3 The scale of work on our streets is likely to continue, and possibly increase with continued investment in infrastructure, the roll out of superfast broadband and upgrade of electricity infrastructure to facilitate the move towards electric

vehicles. Officers will remain committed to public engagement and will continue to communicate and notify beyond the legal requirement.

- 9.4 Existing processes are considered to be robust but it is, of course, anticipated that our approach to consultation and engagement will evolve to reflect the changing demands on the service over time, and in response to Members and other stakeholders concerns.
- 9.5 Member feedback on current processes would be welcomed, particularly in the context of sharing the experience of constituents who have experienced road closures within their communities.
- 9.6 Any specific recommendations for ways in which we can further improve our processes will be assessed in conjunction with the Executive Member and taking into account current capacity, demand on the service and ambitions for the development of engagement procedures given the increasing number of major schemes being delivered in the city.