

Transport and Environment Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 10 August 2017

Roads Services Improvement Plan

Item number	7.1
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	All

Executive summary

This report presents for approval a Roads Services Improvement Plan. The plan identifies the different issues that impact on road asset management performance and the actions that the service will take to address them. Progress on implementing the plan and the impact it is having on performance, complaints and road condition will be reported to this committee on a regular basis.

Links

[Coalition pledges](#)
[Council outcomes](#)
[Single Outcome Agreement](#)

Roads Services Improvement Plan

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Transport and Environment Committee:
 - 1.1.1 approves the roads services improvement plan; and
 - 1.1.2 notes the intention to provide progress reports to future meetings of this Committee.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council needs to maintain a high-quality road network to ensure the safety of road users, to ensure road users can freely travel around our network and to protect the overall appearance of Edinburgh as a city.
- 2.2 A recent internal audit report on the operation of Edinburgh Road Services was reported to [Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee](#) on 9 March 2017.
- 2.3 The current organisational structure places responsibility for our roads across seven third tier managers. These are:

Edinburgh Road Services

- 2.4 This is the operational arm of the internal service. ERS undertake nearly all revenue work and a small amount of capital work on the city's roads. They are responsible for a wide range of functions including defect repairs, street lighting repairs, gully emptying and line marking. In addition, the service delivers some larger scale revenue works such as surface patching as well as a small number of re-surfacing capital projects.

Transport Infrastructure

- 2.5 This is responsible for the design and asset management element of the service. They lead on designing and procuring capital works and the coordination of our Roads Asset Management Plan (RAMP). The service is responsible for the inspection and maintenance of bridges and structures as well as managing flooding and drainage issues. Finally, the service acts as the 'client' function for street lighting and gullies i.e. they issue works orders to ERS to undertake this work.

Locality Teams

- 2.6 The four Locality Transport functions sit under a Local Transport and Environment Manager (LTEM). These teams are responsible for conducting roads safety inspections, coordinating roads permits and roadworks locally (through joint working with the Transport Network function) and managing customer enquiries (which often then need signposting to services such as ERS or Transport Infrastructure for resolution). The Locality Transport function is also responsible for gathering local priorities and using these to inform the allocation of local capital funds to design roads projects that have a more specific community benefit. It is this element that needs to be protected and strengthened if possible.

Transport Networks

- 2.7 This service is responsible for the management of how people use our road network. This includes coordinating large scale roadworks and events, managing parking enforcement and leading on active travel and road safety initiatives. In addition, the service leads on the coordination of public transport, including links with Lothian Buses, Edinburgh Tram and the management of the Edinburgh Bus Station.
- 2.8 Whilst our Road Condition Index (RCI) demonstrates that the standard of our roads is better than the Scottish average, it is recognised that the current performance within the service is not fit for purpose. This is confirmed by several measures:
- 2.8.1 The percentage of outstanding roads inspections - 45%;
 - 2.8.2 The number of outstanding defects at a given time – c. 2,400 to date in 2017; and
 - 2.8.3 Public satisfaction with Edinburgh's roads and pavements – currently 52%.

3. Main report

- 3.1 The Roads Services Improvement Plan is attached in Appendix 1. The Improvement Plan contains a summary of actions as well as giving timescales for implementation and the expected impact that actions will deliver.
- 3.2 The following sections outline the main issues that the Road Services Improvement Plan needs to address:

Organisational Structure

- 3.3 To deliver a more effective service rationalising areas of responsibility is required. The current operating model does not designate clear accountability nor does it allow for simple interactions for members of the public and elected members.

- 3.4 The role of Locality Teams in delivering local priorities needs to be protected and enhanced where possible. However, it needs to be recognised that some functions that have been devolved to Localities offer little in the way of flexibility but carry heavy risks if not fulfilled properly. Splitting these functions four ways has shackled Locality Teams and not allowed them to work proactively with the community.
- 3.5 There needs to be a combined operational arm of Roads Services for the city to manage and maintain all elements of the design and maintenance, from inspection all the way through to repair – be that a repair of one pothole or a major surface enhancement. This will allow more effective asset investment decisions to be made.
- 3.6 There needs to be a single service to focus on coordinating activity on our road network. This should cover everything from a permit request for a scaffold or skip and Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTRO) requests through to major traffic diversions. The current model does not allow for a joined-up approach across the city and is inefficient.

Customer Service

- 3.7 Alongside colleagues from Customer Services and Business Support, there is a need to realign resources to be able to provide more timely updates to members of the public.
- 3.8 The current structure has placed too much responsibility on Locality Teams to deal with members of the public and has led to frustrations when responses are not able to be provided.
- 3.9 Ensuring accountability for certain functions is clearer and by providing appropriate support resource and ICT systems, there will be significant improvements in the level of customer service as customers will receive accurate and up to date information at the point of contact.

Road Safety Inspections and Defect Repairs

- 3.10 Having Roads Inspectors based in the four Locality teams rather than with the repairs service has led to a disconnect between the two service areas.
- 3.11 As a result Edinburgh has a disproportionately high number of defects classified as category 1 (danger to life and limb) which must be made safe within 24 hours. In all cases this leads to a temporary repair being carried out however sampling suggests that many of these defects could have been classified in other categories and therefore could have been repaired permanently with a little more time to plan and prepare.
- 3.12 Creating a link between the Roads Inspectors and the wider RAMP will ensure that the right repair decisions can be made on identification. This will also achieve greater consistency and increased confidence in the integrity of our roads assets.

- 3.13 Investment in training for our Roads Inspectors will be made to ensure that everyone has the same level of knowledge and understanding to aid consistency of service.
- 3.14 Repair squads need to be equipped to carry out a permanent repair on the first visit. This not only prolongs the life of the asset, but also results in improved customer satisfaction as residents and business owners a 'right first time' solution.
- 3.15 In order for this to happen, adequate support is required to ensure that the appropriate preparation is done and that repair squads are equipped with the right information and materials to do the job.

Workforce Management

- 3.16 Staff are our most important asset. In order to maximise their effectiveness we need to ensure that they are properly equipped, trained and engaged. Through the Roads Services Improvement Plan significant investment in time and resources will be made to ensure that all staff have the core skills, equipment, management leadership and support to carry out their duties effectively and that they have access to the information they need and want. We will work with individual staff, managers and Trade Unions to ensure that the working environment is as safe and effective as it can be.

Fleet and Depots

- 3.17 The current fleet is ageing and ineffective.
- 3.18 The fleet needs to be flexible enough to support the regular service needs throughout the year, while being able to adapt to the demands of the winter maintenance service during inclement weather.
- 3.19 By refreshing the fleet to support a year-round service, the service will also be able to maximise productivity.
- 3.20 In addition, a review is planned of the current Edinburgh Road Services operations across the three existing depots to ensure that resources can be deployed as efficiently and effectively as possible across the service.

Improved Business Processes

- 3.21 The current business processes are cumbersome and ineffective. This principally relates to legacy arrangements where there were 'client' and 'contractor' functions. This arrangement was typical of the Compulsory Competitive Tendering approach in the early 1990's. However, the requirement to operate in such a manner ceased around 2003 when the Best Value duty was introduced.
- 3.22 Moving to a fit for purpose in-house repairs function will reduce the current arrangement of internal trading and will eliminate unnecessary administrative tasks, allowing the service to be much more integrated and effective.

3.23 'Confirm' is currently used in some areas of the Council for tracking activities and complaints. It has also been recognised that other local authorities are also using this for road maintenance functions. Rolling out this function in City of Edinburgh Council will allow the service to maximise opportunities for mobile working, provide meaningful management information and to adjust services accordingly and to deliver the best customer experience by building processes around the needs of the customer in the first instance.

Improved Asset Management

3.24 Over the past few years, Transport and Environment Committee has seen an increased focus on asset management through the RAMP. Current performance in this area shows the Council performing better than the Scottish average. However, this is still short of the standard the city should be aspiring to.

3.25 By improving our inspections and making better use of the Confirm system, we can begin to develop a more detailed picture of where investment is needed.

3.26 Moving forward, the service will be responsible for owning the full 'journey' from inspection, through design to carrying out the repair/treatment. This will lead to improvements on the city's roads and should increase resident satisfaction. This will be measured through the Edinburgh People's Survey.

Capital Delivery and Contract Management

3.27 The current approach to Capital expenditure on roads means contracting with engineering contractors to undertake major works. This is generally done through a mini-competition procurement exercise via an OJEU procured framework.

3.28 This approach creates two major issues:

- Time delay from designing a repair/replacement project to commencement of up to three months. This means that the service is not always able to take advantage of the better weather in spring and summer to progress improvements; and
- The Council may not be securing the most competitive price for works due to a lack of certainty over the amount of future work being allocated to individual organisations.

3.29 It is proposed to formalise the existing relationships with private sector partners by moving to a 'prime contractor' arrangement. This would effectively guarantee an amount of work to that contractor over a period of time. The benefits would be:

- Reducing delays in the process by avoiding the need for mini-competitions;
- Securing competitive pricing as the contractor can properly plan for and resource work accordingly; and
- Creating the opportunity for community benefit clauses to be incorporated into contracts with Edinburgh sub-contractors.

- 3.30 This will demonstrate a clear commitment to meaningful and long term investment in our road network, whilst also delivering best value.
- 3.31 A strong and effective internal client team will be created to undertake the roles of design, project management and site supervision.

4. Measures of success

- 4.1 Moving forward, there are several key performance and management indicators that need to be created or refreshed to ensure that our Roads Services are fit for purpose. However, the two key overarching measures of success should be that:
- Customer satisfaction with roads and pavements, as measured by the Edinburgh Peoples' Survey, will increase; and
 - The condition of Edinburgh's roads will improve as addressed in the Roads Asset Management Plan.

5. Financial impact

- 5.1 It is expected that the actions within the Road Services Improvement Plan can be met from existing resources. However, if further investment is required, this will be quantified and presented to the appropriate committee in due course.
- 5.2 The current three year rolling plan for Capital works will need to be reviewed if the recommendation to procure a prime contractor is approved. The prime contractor model would require the Council to commit to a specific amount of Capital investment over the period of the contract. Approval for this will be sought at the appropriate time.

6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 The Council has a duty to manage and maintain roads as prescribed in the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984. Failure to fulfil these duties effectively could result in legal action been taken against the Council.
- 6.2 There are significant reputational risks if the road network in the city does not begin to improve.
- 6.3 The specification of the contract documentation for a prime contractor, and the contract management arrangements will need to be well planned and robust enough to ensure that the aims of the contract are delivered and value for money is achieved. However, this is also true of existing arrangements for framework contracts.

7. Equalities impact

- 7.1 The improvement plan aims to improve the condition of Edinburgh's road and pavement assets, improving mobility opportunities for all users and all modes of road and pavement transport. It ensures safer routes, free from potential hazards.

8. Sustainability impact

- 8.1 A permanent first time fix approach will reduce works vehicle travel, reduce disruption to road, pavement users and the community, reduce the use of new material and reduce the amount of waste material that is disposed of.
- 8.2 Renewal of our road maintenance fleet will allow more efficient engines and reduced emissions.

9. Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 Consultation with staff and trade unions will need to take place where changes to organisational structures or working patterns have an impact on staff.
- 9.2 As part of the wider improvement plan it is proposed to involve trade union colleagues and employee representatives to ensure that everyone's views are taken into account.
- 9.3 Consultation and engagement has taken place between Transport Design and Delivery, Localities and Edinburgh Roads Service in the preparation of this plan.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 [Roads Contract Management - Follow Up](#) at Governance Risk and Best Value Committee on 9 March 2017. This report was referred to [Transport and Environment Committee](#) on 21 March 2017.
- 10.2 [Roads Service Improvement Plan](#) at Governance Risk and Best Value Committee on 20 April 2017.

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11. Links

Coalition pledges

Council outcomes

**Single Outcome
Agreement**

Appendices 1 – Roads Services Improvement Plan

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Appendix 1 - Roads Services Improvement Plan

Theme	Action	Target Date	Lead	Expected Impact	
Organisational Structure					
1	Road Service Operations	Create a single service to manage and maintain all elements of the road asset maintenance/renewal cycle	Mar-18	Head of Place Management	Improved ownership of all road maintenance issues and more efficient investment decisions (i.e. revenue/capital funded)
2	ERS Operating Model	Re-align the ERS service to respond to visible defects on the road network	Dec-17	Head of Place Management	Improved responsiveness to customers and a reduction in the number of visible defects on the road network
3	ERS Budget Structure	Move the ERS budget from being a trading account to a general fund revenue account	Apr-18	Corporate Finance/Commercial Manager	Removal of the 'client' and 'contractor' culture with more scope to empower frontline staff in ERS to make the right decisions
4	Network Management	Create a single service to coordinate all activity on the road network (permits, TTROs, diversions etc)	Mar-18	Head of Place Management	Better clarity for customers and utility companies and improved consistency of the management of disruption to the road network
5	Locality Teams	Ensure sufficient resource remains in our Locality Teams to allow them to deliver road enhancements in consultation with Elected Members and local communities	Mar-18	Head of Place Management	Locality Teams are empowered and equipped to make improvements to the road network whilst not being restricted by statutory functions
Customer Service					
6	Enquiry Owners	Review all enquiry types and designate responsible officers/teams for each type of enquiry	Oct-17	ICT Systems/Roads Services	Improved clarity on responsible officers and reduced duplication of effort or double handling
7	Customer Enquiries	Work with Customer Services colleagues to improve enquiry handling/resolution	Oct-17	Customer Services/Roads Services	Improved customer feedback, particularly in relation to those enquiries that may take longer to resolve (e.g. where a capital scheme is required)

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Theme	Action		Target Date	Lead	Expected Impact
8	Enquiry Tracking	Investigate the potential to create a control room operation involving staff from the service, Customer Services and Business Support to ensure appropriate action on issues	Dec-17	Head of Place Management	More agile allocation of enquiries and an increased understanding of all day-to-day operations across the city, ensuring that urgent issues are resolved more quickly and efficiently
Road Safety Inspections					
9	Roads Inspector Team	Re-align the Roads Inspector function to work alongside the Roads Asset Management Plan	Nov-17	Head of Place Management	Improved consistency and assurance that Road Safety Inspections are being properly carried out
10	Inspection Recording	Improve the process for recording inspections and defects	Dec-17	RAMP Manager/Process Analyst	Improved recording of inspections and defects will provide a more effective repair service and identify areas in need of more substantive repairs/replacement
11	Training	Deliver refresher training for all Roads Inspectors	Oct-17	RAMP Manager	Confident and well-informed inspectors that are trained and empowered to make the right decision when categorising defects
12	Inspection Compliance	Focus on carriageway and footway inspections to ensure they are kept up to date	Oct-17	RAMP Manager	Assurance that risk management is being addressed by having comprehensive inspection data available
Defect Repairs					
13	Aim for Right First Time	Ensure all squads are properly equipped to carry out permanent first-time repairs wherever possible	Sep-17	Commercial Manager	Increased permanent repairs and reduced number of failed temporary repairs
14	Follow Up Repairs	Develop a process to follow up with permanent repairs when temporary repairs are required in the first instance	Sep-17	Commercial Manager/Contracts & Logistics Managers	Increased resident satisfaction as temporary repairs are replaced with more permanent repairs within a reasonable timescale

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Theme					
Theme	Action	Target Date	Lead	Expected Impact	
15	Programming and Scheduling	Schedule defect repairs in the most efficient manner and provide key health and safety documentation to squads	Oct-17	BSS Manager/ERS Manager	Improved productivity within ERS
16	Guardrail Repair and Replacement	Allocate resources to repair the large number of defective guardrails across the city	Dec-17	ERS Manager	Reduced number of damaged guardrails visible and improved aesthetics across the city
17	Setted Street Repairs	Ensure adequate internal capability to properly repair defects on setted streets.	Mar-18	ERS Manager	Enhancement and protection of our setted street assets
Workforce Management					
18	Nightshift	Evaluate effectiveness of the nightshift service and consider improvements	Aug-17	Commercial Manager / Contracts & Logistics Managers	An effective night shift operation delivering value for money
19	Increased Investment in resources	Invest in training and engagement for all staff, in addition to providing equipment and leadership to support people in their role.	Sep-17	OD & Learning/ERS Manager	A well trained workforce with enhanced capability
20	Working Patterns	Review current working patterns ensure the service delivery is aligned to demand	Oct-17	ERS Manager	Services are deployed linked to demand
21	Apprenticeships	Rollout a full apprenticeship programme within Roads Services to develop young people in our workforce and ensure that we have the right skill sets in the future	Apr-18	OD & Learning	Succession planning within our workforce and assurance that we are developing young people with the skills we require
Fleet and Depots					
22	Fleet Maintenance	Consider current use of maintenance bay at Bankhead to avoid the downtime of vehicles travelling to Russell Road Depot	Oct-17	Commercial Manager/ Fleet Manager	Reduced mileage and non-productive time as a result of not having to transport vehicles for servicing

DRAFT

Theme		Action	Target Date	Lead	Expected Impact
23	Depot Review	Review the requirement for three depots for roads and develop a rationalisation/improvement strategy	Dec-17	ERS Manager/ Asset Strategy Manager	A fit for purpose and effective depot estate to support service delivery
24	Salt Storage	Ensure that adequate arrangements are in place to provide core and contingency salt stocks to support our winter maintenance activity	Sep-17	Commercial Manager/Asset Strategy Manager	Assurance that we have appropriate salt levels in the right places to provide our winter weather service
Improved Business Processes					
25	Confirm Training	Extend training to staff and ensure Confirm is fully utilised	Oct-17	Confirm Board	Improved utilisation of the Confirm system and an enhanced single view of all road maintenance activity
26	Schedule of Rates	Develop a suite of schedule of rates for the newly established Road Service operations	Dec-17	Commercial Manager	Improved quality of management information that will allow the service to better allocate and complete work
27	Winter Weather Treatment	Review the winter maintenance operation and ensure that the service achieves value for money	Aug-17	ERS Manager/Locality Managers	A robust winter weather service that is financially sustainable
Improved Asset Management					
28	Asset responsibility	Create a joint RAMP and Roads Inspection function	Dec-17	Head of Place Management	Improved ownership over the whole life cycle of our roads asset

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Theme	Action		Target Date	Lead	Expected Impact
29	Inspection and RAMP data	Develop a system to integrate road inspection data with RAMP data to inform optimal investment in our road asset	Mar-18	RAMP Manager	Increased opportunity to identify those defects that should be addressed through capital investment
Capital Delivery and Contract Management					
30	Prime contractor	Undertake market testing to assess the potential for the procurement of a single prime contractor to deliver all capital works	Dec-17	Infrastructure Manager	Knowledge of existing market conditions and appetite of the industry to undertake a prime contract with the Council
31	Contract Management	Benchmark other Councils with prime contractors to determine the optimal contract management structure and roles	Feb-18	Infrastructure Manager/Commercial and Procurement	An improved understanding of any 'lessons learnt' and best practice
32	Contract Management	Following market testing and benchmarking, if appropriate, seek Committee approval, develop a contract specification, advertise and procure a prime contract before implementation.	Apr-19	Infrastructure Manager/Commercial and Procurement	A fit for purpose contract specification which demonstrated investment in the city's road network leading to better value for investment and increased productivity.