

## **Scrutiny Review Terms of Reference Document**

<b>Scrutiny Review</b>	Scrutiny Review of Road Repairs
<b>Responsible Committee</b>	Place Scrutiny Committee
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### **Background**

Many residents do not understand the Council's approach to pot hole repairs, with the public questioning why some pot holes are repaired and others nearby are not. People do not believe this represents value for money and that it would be more economic to repair all the potholes at the same time rather than coming back repeatedly to the same location.

The Chair of Economy, Transport and Environment (ETE) Scrutiny Committee (now the Place Scrutiny Committee) has received a substantial amount of correspondence regarding the quality of road repairs. In some cases sections of road that had been re-surfaced, or surface dressed, have failed and needed to be resurfaced again. This has led to questions over the quality of re-surfacing work, and the possibility that this might undermine the Council's asset management approach.

The Chair has also received questions about how repairs to the highways drainage infrastructure are prioritised and in particular the Council's approach to repairing blocked drains.

In response to this a small group of Councillors from the ETE Scrutiny Committee have undertaken two site visits, in the more rural parts of the County, to look at the issues on the ground.

The main themes that emerged from the initial scoping work are:

- Whether the current approach to pot hole repairs is the right approach and represents value for money;
- The quality of the repair and resurfacing work; and
- The time it takes to repair blocked drainage infrastructures once it is reported, either by a member of public, or following routine inspection or maintenance.

### **Scope of the Review**

Is the approach the Council is taking to highway repairs for pot holes and blocked drainage infrastructure the best approach and does it represent value for money.

The review will investigate how the interface between reactive road maintenance and planned surfacing work is managed, and whether it could be changed or improved.

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In the case of blocked drainage infrastructure, once this is reported for further investigation/action, the review will investigate the process for resolving the problem.

### **Lines of enquiry**

- Are the current intervention criteria and maintenance policies producing the intended outcomes?
- At what point is it more cost effective to resurface a section of road rather than patch repair it and how is this decision made?
- What happens when a Highway Steward reports a section of road that is likely to need repairing/resurfacing in the near future but it is not yet at the intervention standard, and how is this work prioritised?
- Would it be more cost effective to carry out more substantial/extensive pot hole repairs rather than re-surfacing?
- Has the adopted contract model got the right amount of resources to monitor the quality of re-surfacing work and other road repair operations in order to assure the longevity of the road surface and protect the investment the Council is making?
- What steps could be taken to improve the time it takes to resolve cases of blocked drainage infrastructure, once they have been reported for attention?

### **Review methods**

It is anticipated that the Review Board will review documentary evidence, question witnesses and undertake research in order to gather evidence to inform its recommendations.

The following list is not exhaustive and will change and develop as the review progresses. As part of the review the Board members will:

- Investigate the background and supporting evidence for the current policy approach by reviewing policy documents and speaking to key officers such as the Karl Taylor, Assistant Director Operations and Dale Poore, Contract management the Head of Service Contract Management (Highways), as well as key highways contractor staff such as Mike Eggleton, Costain Service Director. The Review Board may also examine Department for Transport (DfT) guidance, data and other surveys/reports.
- Take evidence from Matthew Jasper, Team Manager Asset Management and the Asset Management Team to understand the decision making process regarding the asset management approach to road repairs.
- Investigate how other Highway Authorities manage their repair/resurfacing programmes and in particular the decision point at which re-surfacing rather than repair work is carried out. Speak to other LA's and examine if other scrutiny reviews have been undertaken on this topic.
- Establish whether there are any best practice examples, new technologies or techniques that could be applied by undertaking research and taking evidence from Costain/CH2M, DfT, Dale Poore, Head of Service Contract Management, and others.

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- Review the processes and resources available for monitoring the quality for the contractors work by taking evidence from Karl Taylor, Assistant Director Operations; Dale Poore, Head of Service Contract Management and; Hannah Cawley, Team Manager Contract Performance and Compliance.

### Documents and research:

Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP) and associated policies.

DfT best practice and repair data.

## **Review Organisation and Responsibilities**

### Review Board

The Review Board is comprised of: Councillors xx

The Chair of the Review Board is: Councillor xx

The Review Board is responsible for:

- Making decisions regarding the scope and direction of the review;
- Monitoring and control of the overall progress of the review;
- Agreeing where Board members will undertake evidence gathering activities as required by the review;
- Considering and providing challenge to all evidence presented to it; and
- Developing and agreeing the final report, including the findings and recommendations of the review.

### Scrutiny Review Support

Support for the review will be provided by the Member Services Team:

- Manage the review process
- Undertake research as agreed by the Board
- Drafting the final report

The Lead Officer who will support the review from the Member Services Team is Martin Jenks, Senior Democratic Services Officer. Their role is to manage the review, ensuring its aims and objectives are met and that the final report is delivered to the Place Scrutiny Committee within the agreed timescales.

## **Scrutiny Review Completion**

When the review has been completed the Lead Officer will co-ordinate the production of a final report outlining the findings and recommendations for agreement by the Review Board. Once agreed, the Review Board will present this to the Place Scrutiny Committee for it to agree the recommendations.

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The report will then be presented to Cabinet for comment and County Council for approval. Progress updates on how the recommendations are being implemented by the department will be presented to the Place Scrutiny Committee in due course (usually six and twelve months after the review has been approved by County Council).

### **Review Timetable**

Based on the initial scoping of the review, the Review Board aims to submit the final report to the Place Scrutiny Committee at the meeting to be held in March 2019.

An initial timetable of the meetings and activities required to complete the review is outlined below.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timescale/Date</b>
<b><u>Review Board Meeting</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider initial evidence</li><li>• Review lines of enquiry/terms of reference</li><li>• Agree further evidence gathering/requirements.</li></ul>	
<b><u>Review Board Activity/Meeting</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Examine evidence against key lines of enquiry.</li><li>• Summarise findings from evidence</li><li>• Agree for further evidence gathering if required.</li></ul>	
<b><u>Review Board Activity/Meeting</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Examine evidence against key lines of enquiry.</li><li>• Summarise findings and recommendations from evidence.</li><li>• Discuss draft report.</li></ul>	
Draft scrutiny review report and finalise findings and recommendations of the review.	
<b><u>Final Review Board Meeting to agree Report</u></b> Review Board meeting to agree draft report, findings and recommendations with input from key officers.	
Deadline for Report Dispatch	
<b><u>Report to Place Scrutiny Committee for agreement</u></b>	March 2019
<b>Report to Cabinet</b>	
<b>Report to Council</b>	