

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 10 November 2020

By: Assistant Chief Executive

Title: Scrutiny Review of Road Markings

Purpose: To provide an opportunity for the Cabinet to consider the report of the Place Scrutiny Committee.

RECOMMENDATION: To consider any comments the Cabinet wishes to make to the County Council on the report of the Place Scrutiny Committee.

1. Background

1.1 The poor condition of some road markings on the County's roads has come to the attention of the Place Scrutiny Committee. Of particular concern is the condition of road markings that are important for road safety such as pedestrian crossings, and the implications this may have for road safety. The Place Scrutiny Committee established a Scrutiny Review at its meeting on 18 September 2019 to examine this issue. The scope of the review included:

- The types of road markings and how frequently they are renewed;
- the specifications for road markings and how they are applied;
- whether utility company reinstatement works are replacing road markings adequately;
- the road markings the Parking Team is responsible for (e.g. double yellow lines, parking bays etc.); and
- the role of the Road Safety Team regarding road markings.

1.2 The lines of enquiry which have been explored in this review are:

- Could the current system of prioritisation for routine maintenance work to refresh/renew road markings be improved?
- Why do some road markings appear to wear out more rapidly than expected?
- How frequently are parking enforcement road markings renewed and are there additional road markings that could be paid for from the parking budget?
- What do other local authorities spend on road markings and is the ESCC level of expenditure adequate?

1.4 The Review has examined evidence from key officers involved in the maintenance and provision of road markings. The challenge for the Review has been to develop recommendations that will bring about improvements, whilst taking into account the Council's current financial position.

1.5 The Review Board originally planned to submit its report to the Place Scrutiny Committee in March this year. However, this was delayed by the impact of the Coronavirus and the cancellation of meetings.

2. Summary

2.1 The Place Scrutiny Committee has completed its Scrutiny Review of Road Markings. The Review makes six recommendations which address the maintenance and renewal of road markings on the County's roads. A copy of the report is attached at appendix 1.

2.2 The Review heard evidence that road markings are one of the most cost effective ways of promoting road safety and are also important for the efficient flow of traffic on the County's roads. Overall, the Review finds that the Council's arrangements for the maintenance of road markings are able to deal with safety defects and the renewal of some road markings. However, under the current arrangements it has not been possible to keep up with the rate at which road markings are wearing out. The Board has made a number of recommendations which it believes will help improve the maintenance of road markings.

2.3 The Place Scrutiny Committee welcomed the allocation of an additional £1million of one-off funding for Highways infrastructure programmes in the 2021/22 budget. Around £160,000 of this funding has been used to provide an additional road marking gang. This has had a material impact and the Committee noted that it has made a noticeable improvement in the condition of road markings around the County.

2.3 The Committee's report will be submitted to the County Council on 1 December 2020. The Cabinet has the opportunity to comment to the County Council on the recommendations in the Scrutiny Committee's report, although it cannot alter the report.

3. Recommendations and conclusion

3.1 Cabinet is invited to consider any comments it wishes to make to the County Council on the report of the Place Scrutiny Committee.

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