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NOTICE OF MEETING

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INFRASTRUCTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

will meet on

WEDNESDAY, 11TH NOVEMBER, 2020

At 6.15 pm

in the

**VIRTUAL MEETING - ONLINE ACCESS,
[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/USER/WINDSORMAIDENHEAD](https://www.youtube.com/user/windsormaidenhead)**

TO: MEMBERS OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

COUNCILLORS JOHN BALDWIN, CHRISTINE BATESON, JON DAVEY (VICE-CHAIRMAN), PHIL HASELER AND JULIAN SHARPE (CHAIRMAN)

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

COUNCILLORS GURPREET BHANGRA, JOHN BOWDEN, NEIL KNOWLES, SHAMSUL SHELMIM AND GURCH SINGH

Karen Shepherd – Head of Governance - Issued: 03/11/20

Members of the Press and Public are welcome to attend Part I of this meeting. The agenda is available on the Council's web site at www.rbwm.gov.uk or contact the Panel Administrator **If you have any questions about this meeting, including any opportunity for public participation, please contact Fatima Rehman (Phone: 01628 796251 fatima.rehman@rbwm.gov.uk)**

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AGENDA

PART I

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MEMBERS' GUIDE TO DECLARING INTERESTS IN MEETINGS

Disclosure at Meetings

If a Member has not disclosed an interest in their Register of Interests, they **must make** the declaration of interest at the beginning of the meeting, or as soon as they are aware that they have a DPI or Prejudicial Interest. If a Member has already disclosed the interest in their Register of Interests they are still required to disclose this in the meeting if it relates to the matter being discussed.

A member with a DPI or Prejudicial Interest **may make representations at the start of the item but must not take part in the discussion or vote at a meeting.** The speaking time allocated for Members to make representations is at the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting. In order to avoid any accusations of taking part in the discussion or vote, after speaking, Members should move away from the panel table to a public area or, if they wish, leave the room. If the interest declared has not been entered on to a Members' Register of Interests, they must notify the Monitoring Officer in writing within the next 28 days following the meeting.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) (relating to the Member or their partner) include:

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit made in respect of any expenses occurred in carrying out member duties or election expenses.
- Any contract under which goods and services are to be provided/works to be executed which has not been fully discharged.
- Any beneficial interest in land within the area of the relevant authority.
- Any licence to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where the landlord is the relevant authority, and the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:
 - a) that body has a piece of business or land in the area of the relevant authority, and
 - b) either (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body **or** (ii) the total nominal value of the shares of any one class belonging to the relevant person exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

Any Member who is unsure if their interest falls within any of the above legal definitions should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

A Member with a DPI should state in the meeting: ***'I declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Or, if making representations on the item: 'I declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will make representations, then I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'

Prejudicial Interests

Any interest which a reasonable, fair minded and informed member of the public would reasonably believe is so significant that it harms or impairs the Member's ability to judge the public interest in the item, i.e. a Member's decision making is influenced by their interest so that they are not able to impartially consider relevant issues.

A Member with a Prejudicial interest should state in the meeting: ***'I declare a Prejudicial Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Or, if making representations in the item: 'I declare a Prejudicial Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will make representations, then I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'

Personal interests

Any other connection or association which a member of the public may reasonably think may influence a Member when making a decision on council matters.

Members with a Personal Interest should state at the meeting: ***'I wish to declare a Personal Interest in item x because xxx'. As this is a Personal Interest only, I will take part in the discussion and vote on the matter.***

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Agenda Item 3

INFRASTRUCTURE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2020

PRESENT: Councillors John Baldwin, Christine Bateson, Jon Davey (Vice-Chairman), Phil Haseler and Julian Sharpe (Chairman)

Also in attendance: Councillor Gurpreet Bhangra, Councillor Mandy Brar, Councillor Gerry Clark, Councillor Ross McWilliams, Councillor Samantha Rayner, Councillor Donna Stimson and Councillor Helen Taylor

Officers: Mark Beeley, Nikki Craig, Chris Joyce, Russell O'Keefe, Fatima Rehman, Adrien Waite and Christopher Wheeler

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

The Vice Chairman said the public was able to submit topics related to infrastructure to the Panel for consideration. The Panel were informed that Councillor Baldwin was now a Panel Member.

Councillor Haseler nominated Councillor Sharpe to be Chairman, which was seconded by Councillor Bateson.

Councillor Baldwin said his interpretation of the Constitution suggested that the Vice Chairman who was elected in the first meeting of the year inherited the Chairman's position for the remainder of the municipal year. After taking advice from the clerk and host of the meeting that there was a requirement of electing a Chairman as per the Constitution, the Panel continued with the nomination.

RESOLVED; That Councillor Sharpe be Chairman of the Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the municipal year 2020/21.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on 20th July 2020 be approved as a true and correct record, subject to the following changes:

- Councillor Sharpe said the Terms of Reference on technology could be discussed in the September 2020 meeting.
- Councillor Carroll said there was a need to be careful about the messaging that was being given to members of public regarding 5G.
- Councillor McWilliams said the Vice Chairman had made several party-political statements that were not part of scrutinising a policy.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the order of business as detailed in the agenda be varied.

FLY TIPPING REVIEW

Christopher Wheeler, Service Improvement Manager - Commissioning and Communities, provided a verbal update. He said fly-tipping was increasing locally and nationally for the last few years and ranged from waste on recycling sites to fly tipping down country lanes. The borough had the authority to investigate and enforce against fly-tipping, particularly on the adopted highway, public rights of way and amenity lands. Fly-tipping on private land was the responsibility of the landowner.

The number of fly tips was measured every quarter as part of the performance monitoring. There were 216 fly tips in the fourth quarter of 2019/2020 and a total of 934 in 2019/2020. This was 79% above target and an increase from 2018/2019, which were also above target. Fly-tipping was bad for the environment and costly to collect and safely dispose waste.

The UK fines for littering Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) ranged from £100 to a maximum of £50,000. There were two mobile cameras in the borough (Ham Lane, Old Windsor and Sutherland Grange, Maidenhead Road) specifically deployed to deter fly-tipping and to collect evidence for enforcement. Other locations for the cameras were trialled, including Wessex Way, Maidenhead.

There was a noticeable increase in fly-tipping during the lockdown period nationally. During the summer period, the borough carried out a campaign to communicate messages on social media and signposted fly-tipping hotspots to encourage the public to report fly-tipping. Waste that contained names and addresses were contacted with warning notices and pointed people at their duty of care for the safe disposal of waste.

The borough was going to enter a contract with District Enforcement in October 2020 with Neil Walter as the lead officer. The contractor would manage day-to-day enforcements such as littering, dog fouling and car littering. This would take up 75% of their time, with the remaining 25% would look at complex enforcement issues such as commercial duty of care. The contract was cost neutral because the contractor retained the FPN for littering and dog fouling. Cost saving would come from the enforcement, which would reduce fly-tipping and other offences, and in turn reduced costs in collection and disposal of waste.

Councillor Baldwin asked if the total of 216 fly tips was reported fly tips or an aggregation of reported and observed fly tips, and the Panel was informed it was the latter. Councillor Baldwin asked if the contractor had the authority to go to National Trust land and car park, and the Panel was informed they did not have the authority.

The Vice Chairman asked how many team members would be on the ground, and the Panel were informed that there would be four officers and a supervisor deployed across the borough issuing FPNs. There was a specialist team of four or five that would support with more complex cases and the duty of care of commercial waste in the back office.

Councillor Haseler asked if the contractor had their own cameras to be used in hotspot areas to detect offenders. The Panel was informed that the contractor did not have their own cameras, but they had their own system to gather intelligence, as well as on-street patrol. The borough was also reliant on residents and members of public to notify any fly-tipping by submitting details online with accompanying registration numbers or photographic evidence, which could be used for enforcement and prosecution. Councillor Haseler asked if there was budget to increase the number of cameras and the Panel was informed that this was not planned but could be suggested. The Panel was informed this was a new pilot contract therefore time was needed to allow it to be imbedded and would be a constantly reviewed service.

Councillor Bateson asked what offence would lead to a £50,000 fine, and the Panel was informed that this cost would be issued by the court for repeated fly-tipping offences and could not be assigned by officers.

The Panel noted the report.

Q1 PERFORMANCE REPORT

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ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT

Nikki Craig, Head of HR, Corporate Projects and IT, introduced the report for April 2019 and March 2020. There was no requirement to publish information on complaints about services other than on adult and children's complaints and compliments, but the council made the decision to include the information in the annual report. 400 contacts made to the Compliments and Complaints team were complaints, of which 228 were for the services covered in Infrastructure. The largest reason for making a complaint was a lack of action. Timeliness in responding to complaints had reduced from 64% to 59% from 2018/2019 and 2019/2020. Timeliness in returning a reply in time in commissioning infrastructure was 61%, 15% in housing services and 37% in planning. 36% of the complaints were upheld or partially upheld. Of the services overlooked in the Infrastructure O&S Panel, 78% complaints were upheld; 53% of which were from the housing services and 10% from the planning services.

If a complainant remained dissatisfied and had exhausted the two stages of the corporate complaints process, they could go to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). In 2019/20, 49 complaints and enquiries were registered with the LGSCO, 6 of which were under the commissioning infrastructure, none of which were upheld. 4 of the complaints were under the housing services, two of which were upheld. 9 complaints were under the planning services, two of which were returned for being premature, 5 were closed after initial enquiries, one was not upheld and one was upheld. Overall, the council had a decrease in compliments, with 440 compliments in 2019/2020. Of these, 68 were covered by the commissioning infrastructure teams, 10 by the housing services and 14 by the planning services.

The Chairman asked how the performance of the council compared to other councils. The Panel was informed that there was no data to work with as there was not a requirement to publish this data. Offline discussions with team members across councils suggested that other councils had similar compliments and complaint levels. The Chairman asked how the council compared to neighbouring boroughs with the data that was legally required, and the Panel was informed that this was difficult to answer as the data was not released yet.

The Chairman asked which of the measures was of most concern, and the Panel was informed that the lack of timeliness in responding was a concern. The council was able to ask for an extension in published timescales, and whilst last year was not as positive, the previous year was, and there was hoped for this year to be positive. The Chairman asked how much lack of timeliness was due to COVID-19, and the Panel was informed that some services improved during COVID-19. The LGSCO recognised that the response to COVID-19 had to take priority and therefore allowed an extension to timescale, though responses to complaints never halted in this time.

The Panel noted the report.

PLACE RECOVERY STRATEGY

Chris Joyce introduced the item to the Panel and said the report was going to Cabinet in September 2020. It covered the unprecedented impact of COVID-19 on the community, economy, health and unemployment. The positives from COVID-19 included the innovation

and collaboration within communities. There was a lack of knowledge about the pandemic, the long-term impacts of COVID-19 on all sectors, and there was a need to have a flexible strategy that could be updated as new information came forth.

The borough had worked in partnership with other local authorities on a regional and countywide level to set up principals to share best practice. The strategic framework was based on three objectives; empowering communities, building lasting relationships with businesses, and building great place to live and work in. Initial actions were set out, but there was a need to be flexible.

The Chairman asked which measure was most important for the Members to focus on in order to generate recovery in the borough. The Panel was informed that working closely with businesses would be helpful, as well as working with partners to create skills and programmes to support the projected rise in unemployment once the furlough scheme was underway. There was a need to re-skill people so they could go back in the workforce in order to reduce the impact on communities and the economy.

The Chairman asked if an assessment was done to evaluate the impact COVID-19 had on the redevelopment of Maidenhead town centre. The Panel was informed there was an economic impact on developers, however there was strong commitment from the developers regarding the housing schemes and Nicholson Town Centre. The Chairman asked if the office space plans were still followed through, or if there were planned to become a housing scheme or smaller flexible office environment. The Panel was informed that it was too soon to know the impact and there was a forecast of a reduced demand for office space.

Councillor Haseler asked how the council encouraged new retail offerings and businesses into the town, as retail spaces may be created but left empty. The Panel was informed that the borough worked with landlord and property owners to identify short-term pop up spaces, and different organisations and events would use to attract people, such as cultural exhibitions. On a longer-term basis, a place marketing strategy was identified which would show how to promote the borough as a place to visit, live and invest in. The area could be sold as a highly connected area with the Great Western railway and the arrival of the Elizabeth line, which would be attractive for businesses looking for satellite office space. Digital campaigns were also rolled out across the social media platforms to attract businesses by working in partnership with current businesses who could help identify the selling points of the borough.

Councillor Haseler asked how the council was going to maintain contact and possibly provide financial support to voluntary community support groups who supported vulnerable residents. The Panel was informed that strategically, the objective was to empower communities. On a short-term basis, Dan Brookman was working closely with group and maintained contact. If there was a need to more back to the response phase, the support groups could step up to help support the response activity. Heads of Services also came together to Asset-Based Community Development, which was about how the services worked closely with community groups and empower them to deliver services.

Councillor Baldwin asked what work needed to be done to build resilience in reserves as part of the Regional Recovery Strategy, with the potentiality of a second wave of COVID-19. The Panel was informed that all councils were reviewing their risk-based assumptions in their medium-term financial plans and make challenging decisions and were not materially affected. Councils were looking radically at the type of operating model for the council in future, the level of resourcing, and the level of income and funding required. The final position of the local authority was unknown until the government funding available for the borough. There was a need to build a significant resource for potential risks moving forward for the uncertain future. The economy had received an unprecedented shock and therefore the projections may not be accurate.

Councillor Baldwin asked if building resources was specific to reserves or other general elements of the plan, and the Panel was informed that it was regarding all the elements. This included the projection for the service levels, costs, key supply chains and what reserve level

was required to have a medium-term financial plan in place. Chris Joyce said the strategy was about using current resources on the priorities of the economy.

Councillor Bateson said the villages in the borough had done well during COVID-19 because they were more local and closer to the community and asked what support the businesses in the village would receive. The Panel was informed that a comprehensive business engagement programme was enrolled with small and large businesses across the borough to ensure they thrive. The impact of COVID-19 on the structure of the economy was unclear, with some sectors thriving whilst others that may struggle.

The Vice Chairman asked if business success and failure was being monitored, particularly if there was a new market space that could be supported by the borough to bring resources to the area. The Panel was informed that there was a focus on business engagement across the borough to collect qualitative data, as well as an economic data hub that collated data so the council could direct the actions based on the evidence from the data. There was an online digital community for businesses as part of digital strategy during the pandemic that was being tested as part of increasing business engagement activity.

The Vice Chairman said the movement of chairs in Windsor high street was a concern for some residents who became out of breath whilst walking along the high street. Councillor Clark, Lead Member Transport and Infrastructure, said the issue was raised and the removal was planned to allow enough seats remaining to ensure the social distancing restrictions were not breached. Councillor Rayner, Deputy Leader of the Council, Resident and Leisure Services, HR, IT, Legal, Performance Management and Windsor; Armed Forces Champion, said there were still seven of the ten benches on Peascod Street, and residents were interacted with over Facebook regarding this. Chris Joyce said Milton Keynes shopping centre had signs on the seating area as reserved for people who require them, which is something he and Councillor Clark were in discussion to implement.

The Chairman asked if information was being shared with other local areas regarding social distancing measures. The Panel was informed that the teams sat on several panels, such as The Berkshire Recovery Group and Strategic Recovery Group for Thames Valley. Town Managers sat on forums such as the Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum and other forums to share best practice.

The Panel noted the report.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the order of business as detailed in the agenda be varied.

SINGULAR USE PLASTICS UPDATE

Chris Joyce updated the Panel that this item came on the agenda from the Communities O&S panel, with a view to provide a full report when appropriate. The council declared a motion around the plastic-free strategy and accepted the principles of plastic free communities in December 2018. The council formed the climate change working and steering group, with plastic-free incorporated as one of the commitments to the climate strategy. The consultation was due to end on 29 September 2020 and community groups, such as Plastic Free Windsor, were working with Councillors to create a draft strategy. The sustainability teams aim was to adopt the plastic free strategy as part of sign-off process for the Climate strategy.

The Vice Chairman asked how many responses there were from the consultation so far, and the Panel was informed there were currently 40 responses, with an increase in responses expected closer to the deadline. A series of engagement activities were also underway, with an attendance to various meetings and panels to raise awareness by Chris Joyce, Councillor Donna Stimson, Lead Member - Climate Change, Sustainability, Parks and Countryside, and

Oliva McGregor, Service Lead - Sustainability and Climate Change. Two webinars were also undertaken to ask questions about the consultation, as well as a business webinar for businesses to present their plans for carbon net zero. Technical difficulties meant the webinar had to be rearranged. The consultation gave an opportunity to engage with the community and collate willing volunteers to remain involved in the climate strategy. The strategy needed to be delivered by empowering the community to become carbon zero.

The Panel noted the report.

5G T&FG SCOPING DOCUMENT

Chris Joyce introduced the item and informed the Panel that various items were identified in the last Work Programme meeting around digital infrastructure. This included 5G, broadband and smart cities. As identified in the climate and place recovery strategy items, there was a need for a digital infrastructure strategy, which was being worked on with the local enterprise partnership. Work was to be commissioned to look at some priorities for Berkshire. The paper set out the process for developing a digital infrastructure strategy with options for the panel to undertake, including a task and finish group or to pick up the item at the panel. This could be at the information stage where the baselines and objective were being set, at a later stage during options, or at the end stages when the strategy had been prepared to scrutinise.

The Chairman said this was a wide agenda topic and felt it would be useful to understand what technologies would be implemented and benefit the borough. Chris Joyce said there was a lot of technology around smart cities, including technology for electric vehicle charging that was connected to the internet and autonomous vehicles, but there was less focus on the technology and more on the infrastructure needed to take advantage of the technology. Whilst Berkshire was well connected with the traditional infrastructure, it was not well connected to broadband and the digital network.

The Chairman asked what technologies were of most benefit to residents that was not currently available to the borough. The Panel was informed that the fundamental base infrastructure that could enable connectivity such as fibre broadband, 5G and mobile connectivity was important. Without this, the borough could not take advantage of the technological developments.

Councillor Haseler said 1.3 and 2.2 of the report highlighted a lot of work that needed to be done and suggested the officers to do the groundwork because of their expertise, before bringing the item to the Panel to scrutinise. The Chairman agreed and said he felt it was too early to set up a Task & Finish Group (T&FG).

The Vice Chairman said there was a concern in the lack of resident input in the process, as officers would be assisted by government policy. He said telecom polls were being deployed by telecom companies and the T&FG would be more inclusive of residents to have their say. The Chairman said the consultation period would allow resident participation and the possibility of a T&FG was not ruled out.

Chris Joyce suggested for officers to speak to Councillor Clark as lead member and the team in order to develop a timeline and strategy, which could then be brought to the panel. The Chairman and Councillors Haseler, Bateson and Baldwin agreed. Councillor Baldwin said there was a need to get a policy which could then be properly scrutinised.

ACTION: Chris Joyce to provide the Panel with a timeline and strategy for digital infrastructure in a future meeting.

The Panel noted the report.

WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman introduced the item and said there were many items to discuss in the November 2020 meeting. The Vice Chairman suggested to keep all the topics and stop the meeting should the Panel decide.

Chris Joyce informed the panel that several the items were highways related, which could be combined by Ben Smith, Head of Commissioning – Infrastructure, and then be brought to the panel meeting. He suggested delaying the Modern Road Infrastructure item, as it was premature.

Councillor Haseler suggested to place a time limit on each item to ensure conversations were focused and was agreed by the Chairman and Councillor Bateson. The Vice Chairman said a time limit could be placed on the presentation of the item by officers, but not on the debate by Members. Councillor Baldwin did not support the time limitation on Members scrutiny of reports. He suggested the Chairman to manage any repetitive or irrelevant discussions as his role. The Vice Chairman suggested scheduling more meetings if there were lots of items undiscussed, and the Chairman said this was an option if it was appropriate.

The Chairman proposed to reschedule the modern road infrastructure and social housing item for January 2021 and officers to agree the items possible to deliver in November 2020. Officers were to propose dates to reschedule any items that could not be discussed in the next meeting.

ACTION: Modern Road Infrastructure and Social Housing item be rescheduled for January 2021. Officers to propose agenda items for November 2020, and meeting dates for any remaining items be proposed.

The Vice Chairman said he liked the interactive map for A308 and encouraged consultation engagement.

The Chairman thanked the officers and Members.

The meeting, which began at 6.15 pm, finished at 8.50 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....

Subject:	VolkerHighways Ltd. – Annual Review
Reason for briefing note:	To update the Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the annual review of the highways maintenance contract delivered by VolkerHighways (in conjunction with their supply chain arrangements with Urbaser and Project Centre Ltd) and to outline the way forward
Responsible officer(s):	Ben Smith - Head of Commissioning Infrastructure Vikki Roberts – Contract Lead
Senior leader sponsor:	Hilary Hall - Director of Adults, Health and Commissioning
Date:	30 th October 2020

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1 BACKGROUND

1.1 Volker Highways Ltd were awarded the contract to provide Highways Management & Maintenance for a period of five years (with the option of an extension for two further years subject to satisfactory performance each year) with effect from 1st April 2017.

1.2 The commissioned service delivers the following core elements:

- Highway and Bridge Inspections
- Highway and Bridge Repairs
- Drainage and gully clearance
- Winter Service
- Street Cleansing
- Project Delivery
- Tree Inspections

The main contractor is VolkerHighways Ltd. who have supply chain arrangements with Urbaser (street cleansing) and Project Centre Ltd. (scheme development and design; specialist professional services activities).

1.3 The service delivery model was approved by Cabinet in June 2016 and the contract awarded by Cabinet in December 2016 followed by a 'Call In' to Overview & Scrutiny in January 2017.

2. PERFORMANCE

2.1 Performance is managed through a suite of performance measures and a performance management approach which includes regular meetings to review operational matters; performance; issues; innovation and future efficiencies.

2.2 An overall commissioning report is considered annually by Cabinet which includes a summary of performance on this contract as part of the overall suite of commissioned services. The report is available at

https://rbwm.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s28141/meetings_191031_Cab_commissioned%20services.pdf (Page 17 refers). The report for 2019/20 is scheduled for consideration shortly and will be based around the information within this paper.

2.3 Appendix A provides details of the key performance indicators together with current performance.

2.4 In addition, to the contract performance indicators, the Royal Borough participates in the Annual National Highways & Transport Benchmarking survey. The is conducted independently and engages directly with Royal Borough residents.

2.5 In 2019, 111 local authorities participated - the survey is an excellent source of data to understand resident satisfaction and enable analysis on our performance compared to others. Appendix B is an executive summary of performance in 2019. Results for 2020 have not yet been published but initial data is available which can inform discussion at the meeting.

3. WAY FORWARD

3.1 The initial contract term of 5-years, concludes in April 2022 and a number of options exists for service delivery beyond this point. A full procurement and mobilisation will take approximately 12 months and officers are currently reviewing options with a target date to report to Cabinet in April 2021 with a recommended approach.

3.2 In December 2019, Cabinet adopted the 'Commissioning Strategy (2019-2024)' (available at https://rbwm.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s28803/meetings_191219_Cab_commissioning%20strategy.pdf). The key role of commissioning is to identify the delivery arrangement that improves outcomes, delivers high quality services which are recognised by residents and externally, and at a cost that represents value for money.

By using the commissioning strategy document, we aim to explore the following to come up with the most advantageous option for the borough's highways service moving forward: -

- Understand and analyse the current and future needs and priorities for Residents in terms of the highway service.
- Focus on outcomes.
- Understand the market and diversity of providers, whilst building capacity and sustainability in the community and voluntary sector.
- Explore commissions in partnership.
- Challenge existing, and review alternative, service delivery models.
- Ensures value for money and sustainable efficiencies.
- Decommissions services where appropriate.

3.3 In addition, Corporate Overview & Scrutiny requested a Task & Finish Group to consider the highways contract. The originally planned date in March 2020 was deferred but the group has now met and will input and inform the report on future options to be considered by Cabinet in April 2021.

Volker Contract Performance

The Volker contract was first commissioned in April 2017 and all services fully transferred by the beginning of June 2017. As at 5th October 2020 the contract has run for just over 3 years. The Contract covers the following areas.

- Highway and Bridge Inspections
- Highway and Bridge Repairs
- Drainage and gully clearance
- Winter Service
- Street Cleansing
- Project Delivery
- Tree Inspections (optional)

15

All Volker contract measures are reported through the council's reporting system (InPhase) to enable routine performance monitoring, analysis and challenge where appropriate. The contractor provides data monthly. Whilst measures are predominantly target-based, some additional measures are non-target based and serve to provide contextual information to performance reviews. All measures are grouped under the following headings:

- (A) Quality Management
- (B) Contract Programme
- (C) Service Provision
- (D) Customer Care
- (E) Added Value

The performance framework is reviewed annually to ensure that targets and tolerance thresholds remain appropriate.

Figure 1 sets out the end of year performance for each target-based measure for 2018/19, 2019/20 and year-to-date performance (as August 2020) for 2020/21. This table captures all the target based indicators which closely monitor the service performance.

Please note that measures currently showing as red for 2020/21 (Vol:3, Vol:9, Vol:10 and Vol:12) are not representative of current performance as they are comparing August 2020 values against the March 2021 target. All other measures' RAG status in Figure 1 for 2020/21 is correct. This is clarified in Figure 2, which sets out the YTD performance for 2020/21 month by month and which therefore gives greater insight into the monthly target profile for Vol:3, Vol:9, Vol:10 and Vol:12.

Contract Area	Ref	Measure	Data series	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
A. Quality Management	Vol:1	Accident Frequency Rate (AFR)	Actual YTD	0.00 🟢	0.80 🟢	0.00 🟢
			Target (YTD)	0.35	0.35	0.35
B. Contract Programme	Vol:10	Winter Service: Percentage precautionary salting treatments completed within time	Actual YTD	97.3% 🟡	100.0% 🟢	0.0% 🔴
			Target (YTD)	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%
	Vol:12	Percentage capital programme schemes delivered	Actual YTD	130.0% 🟢	114.5% 🟢	75.4% 🔴
			Target (YTD)	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%
	Vol:3	Percentage activities delivered to agreed cyclic plan for each activity	Actual YTD	99.9% 🟢	82.0% 🟡	41.3% 🔴
			Target (YTD)	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%
	Vol:5	Percentage emergency 2hr orders responded to on time	Actual YTD	98.8% 🟢	99.4% 🟢	100.0% 🟢
			Target (YTD)	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%
	Vol:6	Percentage 28-day orders completed on time	Actual YTD	73.3% 🔴	87.4% 🟡	96.9% 🟢
			Target (YTD)	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%
Vol:7	Percentage street-cleansing 3hr orders attended on time	Actual YTD	99.6% 🟢	100.0% 🟢	100.0% 🟢	
		Target (YTD)	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	
C. Service Provision	Vol:18	Percentage permits penalised	Actual YTD	0.0% 🟢	0.0% 🟢	0.0% 🟢
			Target (YTD)	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%
D. Customer Care	Vol:21	Percentage enquiries & Overseeing Organisation information requests responded to in time	Actual YTD	78.6% 🔴	79.7% 🔴	86.7% 🟡
			Target (YTD)	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%
E. Added Value	Vol:26	Percentage construction and demolition waste reused and recycled	Actual YTD	100.0% 🟢	91.8% 🟢	98.6% 🟢
			Target (YTD)	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%

Contract Area	Ref	Measure	Data series	Apr 20	May 20	Jun 20	Jul 20	Aug 20	
A. Quality Management	Vol:1	Accident Frequency Rate (AFR)	Actual YTD	0.00 ↗	0.00 ↗	0.00 ↗	0.00 ↗	0.00 ↗	
			Target (YTD)	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	
B. Contract Programme	Vol:10	Winter Service: Percentage precautionary salting treatments completed within time	Actual YTD	0.0% ↗	0.0% ↗	0.0% ↗	0.0% ↗	0.0% ↗	
			Target (YTD)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
	Vol:12	Percentage capital programme schemes delivered	Actual YTD	1.4% ↗	5.8% ▲	23.2% ↗	47.8% ↗	75.4% ↗	
			Target (YTD)	0.0%	15.0%	22.5%	30.0%	42.5%	
	Vol:3	Percentage activities delivered to agreed cyclic plan for each activity	Actual YTD	5.7% ●	18.4% ↗	26.5% ↗	32.8% ↗	41.3% ↗	
			Target (YTD)	7.5%	15.0%	22.5%	30.0%	37.5%	
	Vol:5	Percentage emergency 2hr orders responded to on time	Actual YTD	100.0% ↗	100.0% ↗	100.0% ↗	100.0% ↗	100.0% ↗	
			Target (YTD)	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	
	Vol:6	Percentage 28-day orders completed on time	Actual YTD	99.0% ↗	96.7% ↗	95.9% ↗	96.7% ↗	96.9% ↗	
			Target (YTD)	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	
	Vol:7	Percentage street-cleansing 3hr orders attended on time	Actual YTD	100.0% ↗	100.0% ↗	100.0% ↗	100.0% ↗	100.0% ↗	
			Target (YTD)	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	
	C. Service Provision	Vol:18	Percentage permits penalised	Actual YTD	0.0% ↗	0.0% ↗	0.0% ↗	0.0% ↗	0.0% ↗
				Target (YTD)	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%
D. Customer Care	Vol:21	Percentage enquiries & Overseeing Organisation information requests responded to in time	Actual YTD	70.8% ▲	77.6% ▲	82.6% ●	84.5% ●	86.7% ●	
			Target (YTD)	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	
E. Added Value	Vol:26	Percentage construction and demolition waste reused and recycled	Actual YTD	99.0% ↗	99.0% ↗	99.0% ↗	98.8% ↗	98.6% ↗	
			Target (YTD)	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	

Figure 1: Volker Annual Performance Summary 2018-19 to August 2020

Below provides Commentary and context to the KPI's list above.

Vol :1 **Accident frequency** - To measure the effectiveness of the Contractor's safety processes by monitoring the Accident Frequency Rate per 100,000 hours worked, according to the standard reporting practice of the HSE. The scope of this measure includes all accidents, incidents and injuries incurred by the Contractor's own employees, by sub-contractor employees under the Contractor's control and by third parties, including members of the public, where known. Volkers have demonstrated extremely high standard of health and safety on all their sites.

- Vol :10** **Winter Service** - to assure compliance with the boroughs winter maintenance plan, all routes are to be completed within 3 hours of commencing. The target is high with hardly any margin for error. In 2018/19 there was a slight delay on completing a run due to the adverse weather conditions which has resulted in the indicator showing amber.
- Vol: 12** **Capital Programme** – this measure the number of capital schemes delivered though the highways programme each year. This indicator measures the number of schemes that have been implemented in the financial year. The indicator is over performing this is because the base number is based on the number of schemes in the investment report however, additional funding and this increases the performance above the baseline.
- Vol:3** **Cyclic Maintenance** - Measuring progress against annual programmes for gullies, PI and GI inspections, and street cleansing tasks. The PI dropped in 2019-20 due to the gulley emptying service. This was due to the old vehicles and equipment, leading to more time off the road due to breakdown and repairs. Therefore, a decision was taken in January to outsource this service, which came into play in April 2020. This has provided a saving to the Borough as we no longer pay for the disposal and this is 100% recycled which is included in the rates. This indicator is now back on track.
- Vol:5** **Emergency orders responded to on time** – this is used to measure the Contractor’s response and percentage compliance to Safety Hazards and ensures the safe operation of the highway network and mitigate the potential risk of third-party claims. This relates to all safety hazards and is a key performance measure linking into the number to of claims the council receives due to highway defects. Over the course of the contract Volkors have keep a high standard ensuring the highway is safe for all road users.
- Vol:6** **28-day orders delivered on time.** This performance measure monitors the reactive maintenance and fixing non urgent safety defects within an acceptable timescale. Under the lump sum element of the contract VH are required to deliver 3535 defect repairs annually with a tolerance of plus/minus 15%. In both previous two years the number of defects repaired have been above the 3535 required towards the plus 15% mark, circa 4000 number. Should the number exceed the 15% tolerance additional payments will be made to VH. If the number is 15% less than the target there is a reduction made in the payment to VH. To remain within the required tolerance and deliver the required number of repairs a core level of resource is maintained throughout the year, adjusted to suit demand without detriment to meeting the required budget and annual defect repair numbers. A combination of defect types affects this measure, some larger jobs will take longer so fewer are completed but cost the contractor more (contractor risk) and some are smaller and quicker to repair resulting in greater numbers being completed more quickly. Since the gully emptying delivery method

altered in April the direct gang resources previously employed as gully operatives have been redeployed to lump sum work and has contributed to an improvement in the delivery of 28-day defects.

Vol:7 **Emergency street cleansing orders completed on time** - Safety hazards in this instance include needles, RTA related debris and offensive graffiti on the highway. This Indicator shows a high level of safety for the residents throughout this contract.

Vol:18 **No. of Fixed penalty notices** -number of permits penalised for work carried out on roads that do not comply with the NRSWA regulations or traffic management act.

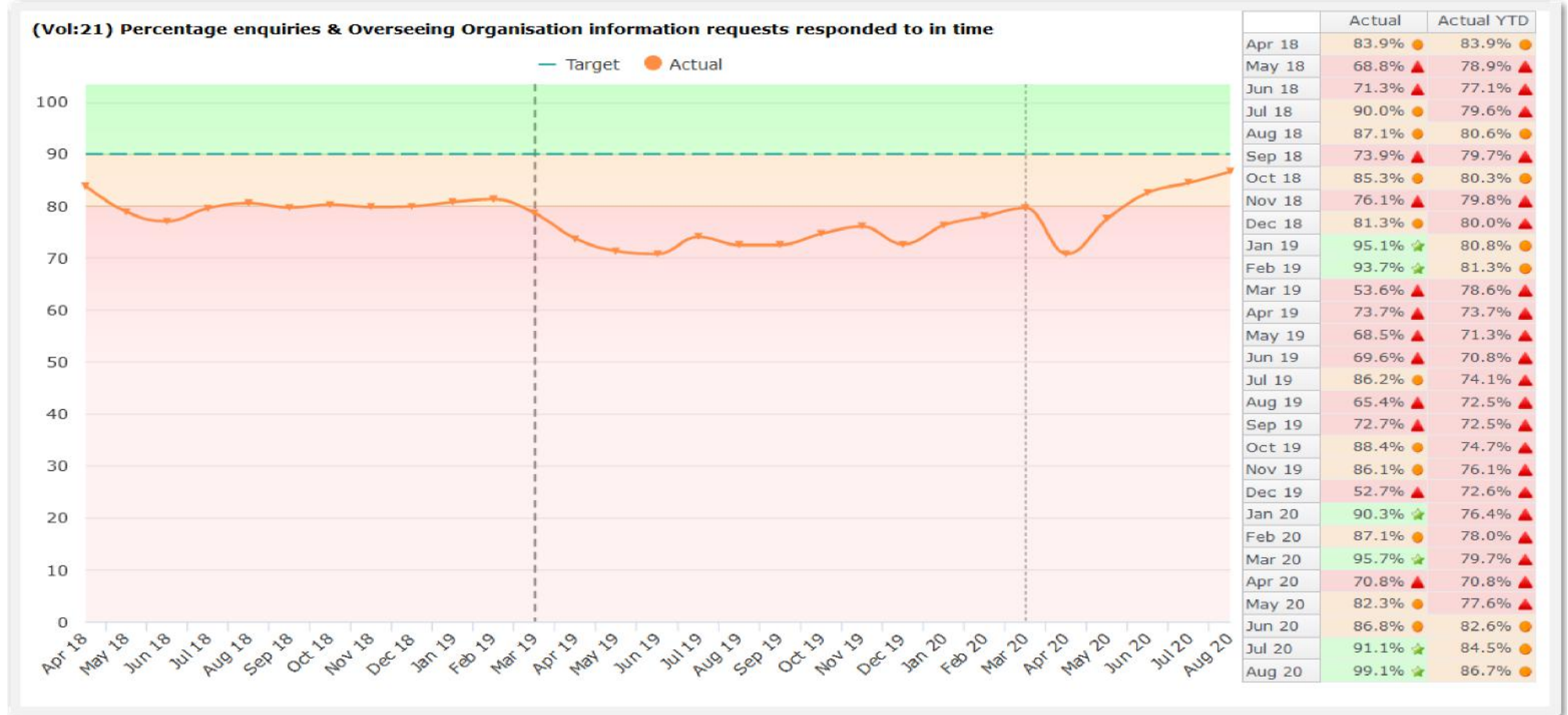
Vol:21 **Number of enquiries responded to within 10 days.** To ensure Customers are provided with a comprehensive response to inform them what actions are to be taken to resolve their enquiries, provide reasons to support decisions. When measuring this performance all enquires have been measured including enquiries not for VH. This was to ensure the overall service performance was captured. The systems VH use to administer the enquiries are provided by RBWM namely Confirm and Jadu (Now Drupal). This measure now excludes non VH highway enquiries and has shown an improvement in the performance figures suggesting that the response times are generally met and are moving towards the required target.

Vol:26 **Added value** – this is based on reducing consumption of resources and minimise waste by using the principles of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle, which has shown to be consistently been above target throughout the contract.

In addition, other examples of added value include; assisting with the royal wedding and sourcing fencing the last minute to help with crowd control. Their ability of tap into their existing contracts to provide sandbags and grit at short notice when required. Volkens have attended School Fayres to engage with students, they as also committed in supporting the local economy in terms of both contract expenditure and employment.

Exceptions report for measures in deviation from target as at August 2020

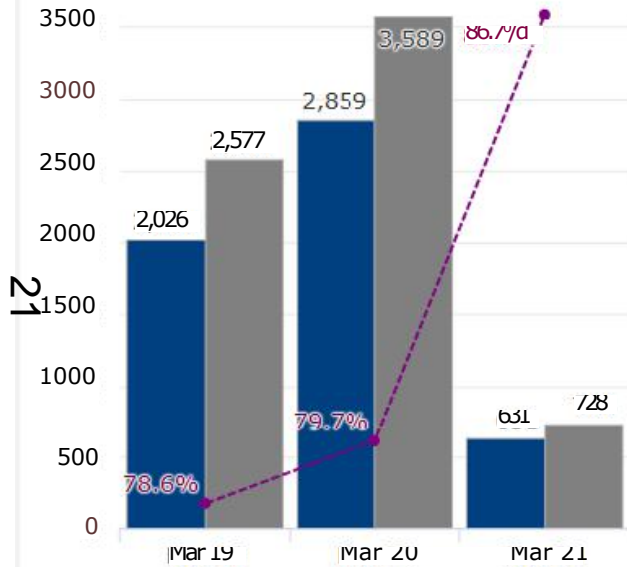
Focus on (Vol:21) “Percentage of enquiries and Overseeing Organisation information requests responded to in time”. Tolerance



20

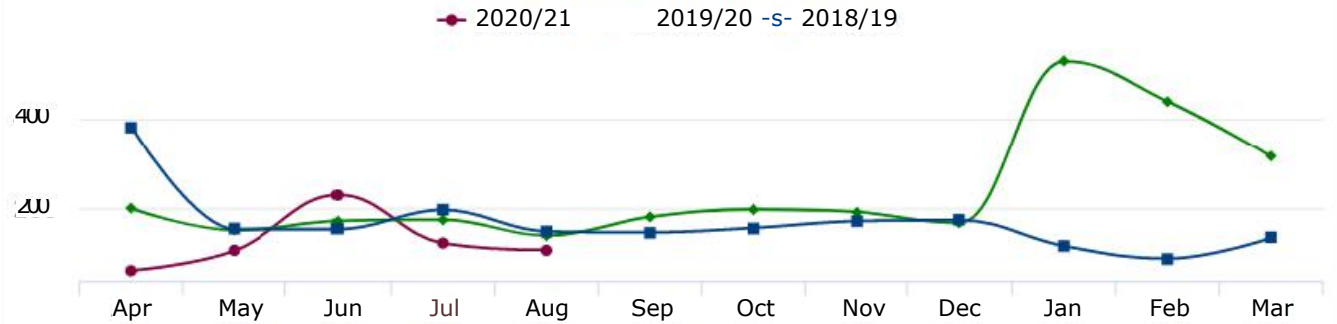
thresholds for this measure are: Green = 90%+ / Amber = 80.1 to 89.9% / Red = 80% and below.

(Vol:21) No. enquiries closed/received (Annual)

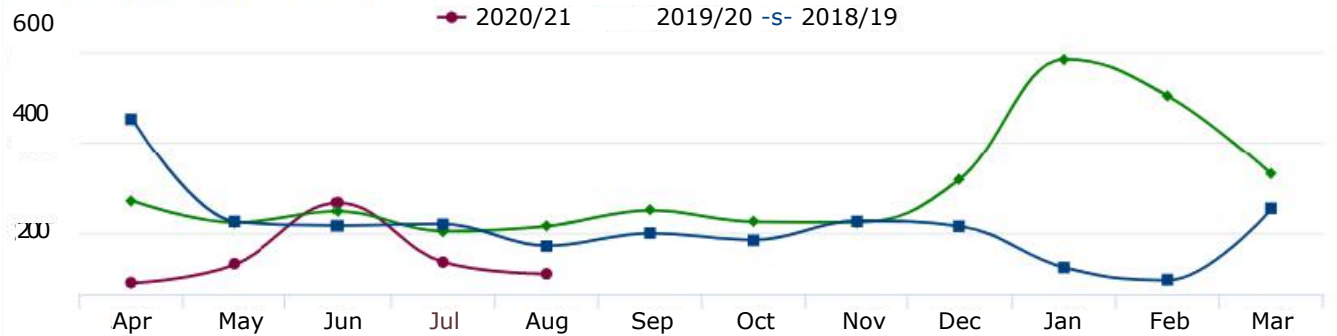


- No. enquiries closed
- No. enquiries received
- Percentage enquiries & Overseeing Organisation information requests responded to in time

(Vol:21a) No. enquiries closed



	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2020/21	63	107	230	123	108							
2019/20	199	152	172	175	140	181	198	192	168	528	439	315
2018/19	381	154	154	197	149	147	157	172	174	117	89	135



	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2020/21	89	130	265	135	109							
2019/20	270	222	247	203	214	249	224	223	319	585	504	329
2018/19	454	224	216	219	171	199	184	226	214	123	95	252

NHT bench marking.

Each year since 2013 RBWM has taken part in the National Highways and Transport (NHT) Benchmarking Survey.

This was set up by a company called Measure2improve to provide detailed resident satisfaction information across highways and transport services on a national scale.

Now 111 local authorities take part from across the country including unitary authorities and county councils.

The survey works in a similar way to the RBWM Resident's Survey but provides a great deal more detail on our services and the ability to compare with peers.

The 2019 survey was carried out in June and the results were made available at the end of October 2019.

As well as overall satisfaction, there are 6 main themes, each containing between 2 and 6 Key Benchmarking Indicators (KBI's). Additionally, there are between 8 and 26 detailed Benchmarking Indicators (BI's) under each theme.

The table attached focusses on the Highway Maintenance theme, and more specifically the benchmarking indicators relating to the Highway Maintenance & Management contract with Volker Highways.

This includes previous year's results, and comparisons for 2019 with the national average and with the other Berkshire authorities.

For the comparisons against the national and Berkshire averages, we have highlighted the difference as red (RBWM lower), green (RBWM higher).

As can be seen, there was no significant change in satisfaction levels before and after the outsourcing of Highway services in 2017/18.

Summary of RBWM 2019 performance for resident satisfaction relating to Highway Maintenance:

Generally, our performance on Highway Maintenance aspects is good and similar to previous years. In some areas we have dropped from last year but are better than average, in others we have improved but still satisfaction levels are lower relative to other authorities.

The positive highlights to take from the 2019 results are:

- 6th highest satisfaction nationally for the cleanliness of our roads.
- In the top 3 in the South East for satisfaction with the cleanliness of our roads, speed of repair to damaged roads and condition of road markings.

- Condition of Highways 4th highest satisfaction in the South East.
- In the top 10% nationally for satisfaction with the condition of road markings.
- Also, in the top quartile nationally for satisfaction with the condition of road surfaces, condition and cleanliness of road signs, speed of repair to damaged roads, dealing with potholes, dealing with mud on the road and cleanliness of pavements.
- In terms of percentages, Cleanliness of roads and of pavements are 7% higher than the national average as is the condition of our roads surfaces. Dealing with potholes and speed of repairs are all 6% higher than the national average.

National Highways & Transport Survey (NHT) - Review of resident satisfaction benchmarking - RBWM - Highway Maintenance													
Year (RBWM joined 2013 - 2020 data not yet available)	Trend							Comparison					
Local Authority	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2019					
	RBWM							RBWM	National Average	RBWM vs National Average	RBWM	Berkshire Average	RBWM vs Berkshire Average
In house functions	contract management, project management, engineering design, highway inspections and reactive maintenance				commissioning/ contract management								
Outsourced functions	Amey - planned highway works Veolia - street cleansing				Volker - Managed Highway Service Urbaser - street cleansing								
	Percentage							Percentage					
Highway Maintenance													
Overall theme	-	51	55	55	55	52	53	53	-	-	53	-	-
Highway Maintenance - Key Benchmarking Indicators													
KBI 23 - Condition of highways	33	36	46	45	44	37	42	42	36	6	42	39	3
KBI 24 - Highway maintenance	53	51	58	57	57	56	55	55	52	3	55	56	-1
Highway Maintenance - Benchmarking Indicators													
HMBI 01-Condition of road surfaces	32	35	47	47	46	40	45	45	38	7	45	42	4
HMBI 02-Cleanliness of roads	64	62	64	65	65	64	63	63	56	7	63	62	1
HMBI 03-Condition of road markings	58	58	65	63	61	62	61	61	56	5	61	60	2
HMBI 04-Condition and cleanliness of road signs	63	60	66	63	63	63	61	61	58	3	61	61	0
HMBI 07-Speed of repair to damaged roads/pavements	26	29	38	39	38	35	37	37	31	6	37	35	2
HMBI 08-Quality of repair to damaged roads/Pavement	31	36	43	45	43	42	42	42	38	4	42	41	2
HMBI 10-Weed killing on pavements and roads	57	52	59	57	58	57	53	53	49	4	53	54	-1
HMBI 11-Provision of Drains	59	52	59	56	58	58	57	57	55	2	57	59	-2
HMBI 12-Keeping drains clear and working	52	45	57	52	56	54	55	55	52	3	55	57	-1
HMBI 13- Deals with Potholes and damaged roads	33	33	46	44	43	40	42	42	36	6	42	40	3
HMBI 17-Undertakes cold weather gritting	55	56	58	63	65	62	62	62	60	2	62	63	-1
HMBI 18-Provides information on Gritting	42	41	46	48	46	48	46	46	46	0	46	47	-1
HMBI 19-Cuts back overgrown hedges	45	41	48	48	48	47	45	45	46	-1	45	48	-3
HMBI 20-Deals with mud on the road	56	54	56	56	56	57	54	54	51	3	54	55	-1
HMBI 22 Deals with flooding on roads and pavements	-	44	51	49	50	52	49	49	49	0	49	51	-2

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Subject:	Highways Investment Programme
Reason for briefing note:	To update the Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the process which supports the annual Cabinet report on highways investment
Responsible officer(s):	Ben Smith - Head of Commissioning Infrastructure Vikki Roberts – Contract Lead
Senior leader sponsor:	Hilary Hall - Director of Adults, Health and Commissioning
Date:	2 nd November 2020

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Royal Borough
of Windsor &
Maidenhead

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Royal Borough is the 'Highway Authority' with responsibility for the maintenance of highway assets. These assets include; carriageways, footways, bridges, public rights of ways, highway verges, ditches and drainage, street lighting, traffic signals, signs and street furniture (Appendix A refers). The carriageway and footway assets are the most valuable asset which are valued at approx. £1.2 billion.
- 1.2 The adopted Highway Asset Management Strategy (HAMS) and the Highway Maintenance Management Plan (HMMP), sets out the highway authorities' approach to asset management and how work is prioritised; in turn, seeking the best value from our financial investment.
- 1.3 The primary reason for adopting an 'asset management' approach is to promote a business focus to highway maintenance. It makes best use of limited resources and delivers efficient and effective highway maintenance. It takes a long-term view of how highways are managed, focusing on outcomes by ensuring that funds are spent on activities that prevent expensive short-term repairs. This makes the best use of public money whilst minimising risk.
- 1.4 The Royal Borough receives Local Transport Plan grant funding each year from central government for highway maintenance and transport schemes. In 2014, the Department for Transport (DfT) separated the annual road maintenance block funding into two elements: (i) a fixed sum and (ii) an incentive fund. The Incentive Fund scheme was introduced to reward councils who demonstrate they are delivering value for money in carrying out cost effective improvements using good asset management practices.
- 1.5 Every year each local highway authorities in England (excluding London) are invited to complete a self-assessment questionnaire, in order to establish the share of the Incentive fund they will be eligible for. There are questions based around, asset management, resilience, customer and operational delivery. Each question is scored from 1 -3 (band 1 being the lowest, band 3 being the highest). Since April 2018 the Royal Borough has been awarded Band 3 status, which has secured the maximum level of funding available. Achievement of band 3 status is largely based on the robust asset management approach which is in place - had

we not achieved band 3 status funding for 2020/21 would have reduced by £110,000.

1.6 In addition to the asset-based approach, the adopted Local Transport Plan (LTP) offers high-level transport policy for the Royal Borough setting out how we will improve transport between 2012 and 2026. The plan aims to:

- *improve access to local services and facilities*
- *improve road safety and personal security*
- *support economic growth*
- *improve quality of life and minimise the negative impacts of transport*
- *tackle climate change*
- *Improve air quality*
- *improve bus journeys and times*
- *improve the quality of our road networks*

2. CAPITAL INVESTMENT

2.1 As part of the budget process each year, Cabinet and Council consider and adopt a capital investment programme which spans the breadth of services delivered across the Royal Borough. Levels of investment are driven by strategic aims, objectives and targets; business cases; adopted policy and affordability.

2.2 Following approval of the headline capital investment programme, a report is considered by Cabinet which recommends endorsement of the individual works programmes which have been objectively developed underpinned by technical assessment which drives prioritisation and funding allocation.

3. WORKS PROGRAMME PRIORTISATION

3.1 A summary of key factors in developing detailed works programmes for each headline budget is set out below:

Roads resurfacing

The annual resurfacing programme is developed based on technical assessment data collected through annual* SCRIM and SCANNER surveys. SCRIM surveys assess skid resistance while SCANNER data relates to surface condition (including profile, rutting and cracking).

(*Note: annual surveys are carried out on all A, B and C roads)

In addition, all streets are subject to a visual inspection on a set frequency dependent on road category. If any safety defects are recorded, a works order is raised and actioned. If the street regularly needs attention from core revenue, maintenance budgets, the Inspector may request that it is considered for more significant patching or resurfacing.

These assessments inform the annual programme of roads and the type of treatment that is required, either to try to prolong their life or where the road is beyond preventative measures, reconstruction or resurfacing.

Footway Programme

Footways form a vital link for pedestrian access, and it is essential that they are maintained in a safe condition. There are number of footways beyond their design life and require refurbishment to maintain the highway asset in an acceptable condition; protect residents; remove barriers to access and minimise financial risk through insurance claims. The programme also makes provision for providing disabled crossing points where appropriate and will help to enhance the visual appearance of the environment benefiting residents, pedestrian, and people with disabilities.

The works programme is prioritised based on visual walked inspections. Similarly, to roads, if the street regularly needs attention from core revenue, maintenance budgets, the Inspector may request that it is considered for more significant works.

Traffic Management schemes

On-going programme of measures to deliver the objectives of the Local Transport Plan. Schemes include areas identified as local concerns through petitions; priorities identified through ward members and from residents which are objectively assessed by our specialist traffic and road safety team. Schemes include the review of speed limits, speed management measures, new pedestrian crossings, junction capacity and operational improvements.

Local Safety schemes

This programme seeks to improve road safety and reduce the number of personal injuries as a result of road crashes. Road crash data is analysed by road safety specialists to identify prioritised sites which will deliver the highest impact.

Drainage Schemes

As Highway Authority we have a statutory duty to prevent flooding to property and the highway network such that it will not cause injury or loss of life or damage to adjacent properties. The programme target schemes that have been prioritised in order of their severity, impact and risk to the Council and users of the highway network. It also tackles minor improvement schemes that benefit communities.

Reduction in congestion and air quality

The programme incorporates several different initiatives to help reduce congestion and improve air quality. Measures include improvements to traffic signal-controlled junction to increase traffic flows; junction redesign which may remove traffic signals and upgrades to reduce energy consumption (for example: LED traffic signal heads) to help towards energy and carbon reduction. Schemes are prioritised by our specialist team.

Cycle schemes.

Cabinet adopted a 'Cycle Action Plan' (2018 – 2028) which includes: Guiding Principles; Vision, Aims and Objectives and an Action Plan which drives priorities for this programme.

Bridge Strengthening and parapet improvements.

A technical inspection regime is in place in line with adopted codes of practice for all bridges; highway structures and parapets. The programme tackles minor strengthening repairs and improvements which have been highlighted from general, principal and special inspections. A risk-based approach is adopted, and schemes are selected in priority order.

For schemes which exceed general levels of capital investment, (for example: repairs to Elizabeth Bridge (Royal Windsor Way) and Cookham Bridge) individual capital bids and supporting business cases are developed and considered.

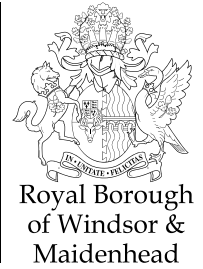
APPENDIX A: ASSET SUMMARY

Asset	Approximate Volumes
Roads	658km
Footways	800km
Bridges / Structures	300
Street Lighting and electrical	17,000
Traffic Signals	57
Road drains	26,000
Public rights of way	300km
Highway trees	40,000

Agenda Item 7

Subject:	River Thames Scheme – Partnership Funding
Reason for briefing note:	To update the Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel on partnership funding for the River Thames Scheme
Responsible officer(s):	Ben Smith - Head of Commissioning Infrastructure
Senior leader sponsor:	Hilary Hall - Director of Adults, Health and Commissioning
Date:	30 th October 2020

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1 SCHEME OVERVIEW

1.1 The Environment Agency maintain a dedicated website for this project which is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-thames-scheme-reducing-flood-risk-from-datchet-to-teddington/river-thames-scheme-reducing-flood-risk-from-datchet-to-teddington>

1.2 The following extract provides a high-level outline of the scheme:
'... The River Thames Scheme will reduce flood risk to people living and working near the Thames. It will enhance the resilience of nationally important infrastructure, contribute to a vibrant local economy and create many recreational opportunities.

The Environment Agency will build a new flood channel alongside the River Thames to reduce flood risk to properties in communities in Datchet, Wraysbury, Egham, Staines, Chertsey, Shepperton, Weybridge, Sunbury, Moseley, Thames Ditton, Kingston and Teddington.

The channel will be built in 3 sections and includes widening of the Desborough Cut and increasing the capacity of weirs at Sunbury, Moseley and Teddington by installing additional weir gates.

15,000 homes and 2,400 business will be better protected from flooding. Road, rail, power and water networks will be more resilient. 106 hectares of new public open space and 23km of new pathways will be created, as well as improving biodiversity for wildlife through the creation of 250 hectares of new habitat.

Construction of the new channel gives the opportunity to create habitats for wildlife and recreation activities including walking, cycling, boating and angling...'

1.3 In a local context, Channel 1 protects properties and infrastructure in the Royal Borough and is based on building a new channel with starts with an offtake from the River Thames at Datchet and continues southwards through Datchet; Wraysbury and Hythe End reconnecting with the River Thames at Runnymede (opposite the Runnymede Hotel). Scheme details are available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/780519/INTERNAL_Channel_section_1_drawing_reduced.pdf?_ga=2.184087461.2071541728.1566555648-1965234452.1542033634

- 1.4 The channel effectively creates a new river with associated footways; cycleways; landscaping and habitat with the construction of new bridges and culverts to cross existing roads and the Windsor & Eton to London Waterloo rail line. The channel also flows through existing lakes in Wraysbury and Hythe End and creates a new country park.

2. CABINET / COUNCIL DECISIONS

- 2.1 Council considered the 2020/21 capital programme on 25th February 2020 and approved a capital programme which includes £10m over four financial years commencing 2020/21.
- 2.2 Council considered a report on 26th September 2017 and resolved:
- (i) £10m, split over four years, is added to the capital programme commencing 2020/21 (subject to delivery of the full scheme).
 - (ii) There is an agreement in principle of paying a flood levy of up to £500,000 per annum to the Environment Agency as a contribution to the operating and maintenance costs (subject to new legislation being enacted to make provision for this)
 - (iii) A delegation to the Head of Finance in conjunction with the Lead Member for Finance to develop and introduce a flood levy be approved

3. FINANCE

- 3.1 In the period from September 2017 to date, scheme development has continued, and costs / funding sources have altered. The project is a multi-agency project led by the Environment Agency who are responsible for commissioning the design, development, construction, maintenance and management of the project. There are a range of funding sources, including financial contributions from Central Government; Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee; Thames Water and partner Local Authorities.
- 3.2 The base cash cost for the full River Thames Scheme is £635 million (including the first ten years of operation and maintenance). The contribution required from the Royal Borough is £52.7m. Contributions have been paid since 2015/16 and a further contribution of £10m approved from 2020/21 onwards - the balance to be funded is £41.275m.
- 3.3 The financial position of many Local Authorities (including the Royal Borough) has altered significantly since 2017. However, the Council decision was made openly and transparently in September 2017 with due consideration of the prevailing financial situation at that point in time.
- 3.4 The current position is that borrowing a further £41.275m is unaffordable and the borrowing costs are considered unacceptable. This position may be reconsidered if a secure mechanism was in place to increase income.
- 3.5 Council agreed in 2017 to the principle of applying a flood levy. However, this requires a change in legislation. Verbal commitments have been secured and lobbying of government continues to secure this change, which has not been enacted. Therefore, the option of applying a flood levy is not feasible.

3.6 Whilst other mechanisms may be considered, reliance on the change in legislation to apply a flood levy over and above core Council Tax is considered the only viable route to provide confidence that income can be secured. Therefore, whilst the Royal Borough remains fully committed to the project the scheme is currently unaffordable.

4. PROJECT DELIVERY

4.1 The project is being developed and delivered on a partnership basis, led by the Environment Agency, with the following partners:

- Elmbridge Borough Council
- Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
- London Borough of Richmond upon Thames
- Runnymede Borough Council
- Spelthorne Borough Council
- Surrey County Council
- Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
- Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)
- Thames Water
- Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC)

4.2 In order for the scheme to be delivered in its entirety, the River Thames Scheme Sponsoring Board required a binding commitment from each partner by the end of July 2020. As the scheme is unaffordable and the mechanism to raise funding is not available, the Royal Brough was unable to provide this binding commitment.

4.3 Commitment was secured from other partners and a decision made by the Sponsoring Board (having considered representation from the Royal Borough) to remove channel 1 from the scheme and deliver channel 2, channel 3 and associated works only.

5. FLOOD RISK MITIGATION

5.1 The River Thames Scheme is the optimum solution to reduce flood risk and deliver broader benefits in this area of the Royal Borough. However, the scheme is unaffordable and alternative options to mitigate the risk are being considered.

5.2 The capacity improvements to the downstream weirs (delivered through channels 2 and 3 of the residual River Thames Scheme) future proofs the length of the River Thames from Datchet to Runnymede should channel 1 be taken forward at a future date.

5.3 The Surrey channels (constructed as part of the residual scheme) will provide a benefit to the Hythe End area as the drawing down of the water from channel 2 provides a reduction in flood levels in this area.

5.4 In addition, alternative local flood defences to protect Datchet, Wraysbury and Old Windsor are being considered in conjunction with the Environment Agency. No timescale is available at present as options and being developed.

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Agenda Item 8

Subject:	Update on Safety of Highway Trees
Reason for briefing note:	To provide an update to the Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the progress and status of the Highways Trees safety inspection arrangements.
Responsible officer(s):	David Scott – Head of Communities
Senior leader sponsor:	Russell O’Keefe – Executive Director Place
Date:	11 November 2020

www.rbwm.gov.uk



Update Summary

1. Following a period when highways trees were not being surveyed routinely, a revised audit and condition survey of highway trees was commenced in April 2017. This survey work was outsourced to Volker Highways, who used two external arboricultural consultants, for the three-year period up to end of March 2020.
2. All trees on the public highway have been inspected and those individual trees with a stem diameter of 75mm (when measured at 1.5m above ground level) have been recorded. Groups of trees and woodlands have also been recorded.
3. Highway ‘Routes’ were prioritised based on their road hierarchy, with A roads inspected first and Unclassified roads last. The audit and condition survey inspection of trees on Highway amenity land (not designated as adopted highway but is the responsibility of the Highway Authority to manage) is due to be completed this year.
4. Where essential health and safety works were identified by the inspections, these works have been commissioned and let through the term contracts the Borough has, so that dangerous trees (or branches) are removed, and the necessary works to reduce the risk of trees falling on the highway has been mitigated.
5. Trees on the public highway need to be inspected at least once every 5 years as a default, and this recent audit and survey works has enabled this inspection frequency to be achieved. It is impossible to eliminate the risk altogether due to the nature of trees and weather, however the inspection regime has provided the Council with an up to date condition survey record which was not previously available, and will provide a basis upon which ongoing work can be identified and actioned.
6. There is some shift in thinking towards whether a shorter than five-year frequency of inspection may be required, say three years. This is in the light of global warming, and changing weather patterns, with more frequent and more powerful storms, and increased periods of flooding and higher temperatures, all of which can have an impact on the health and resilience of trees. There is also an increase in pest and diseases, mainly due to global heating and importation of tree stock which can carry disease, or fauna that can invade existing tree stock and have an adverse impact on condition and resilience. Some diseases are catastrophic such as Ash die-back. Ideally, trees could to be inspected on a shorter cycle to deal more effectively with pests and diseases and their associated implications. This would however be an increased pressure on resources, which at the current time cannot be achieved.

7. A second round of inspections has been started this year, based upon one inspector rather than two inspectors, used to undertake the catch-up inspections in the 3-year period 2017/18 – 2019/20. This has reduced the resource requirement in 2020/21, in line with the need to undertake re-inspections and ongoing inspections alone, rather than the catch-up activity following a period of non-routine inspection prior to 2017/18.
8. Re-inspections are scheduled where trees were identified as needing a condition check sooner than five years, where the condition was not so significant to require works at the time of the original inspection, but it was felt the next inspection should not be left for a full five years.
9. Progress is targeted at trees in urban areas, as this is where impacts on tree health are the most frequent and significant. In addition, the completion of inspections of trees on highway amenity land is taking up a considerable proportion of the ongoing Volker Highways inspection capacity, however this activity is important to complete the inspection process of the tree stock on or near the adopted highway.
10. Tree works are carried out in line with the policy in the Council's Tree and Woodland Strategy. Works are mainly carried out for health and safety reasons, to abate an actionable nuisance (in the legal sense of the term where damage is being caused) or to comply with a statutory obligation such as under the Highways Act 1980.
11. The inspection regime has seen a total of 30,991 tree being inspected up until 16 October 2020. The number of roads inspected is 1735. Of the 30,991 trees inspected, 476 were identified as needing further inspection on a shortened re-inspection cycle. The exact frequency varies to reflect the nature of the weakness or defect which was identified, and triggered the re-inspection requirement.

WORK PROGRAMME - INFRASTRUCTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

To include consideration of items scheduled on the [Cabinet Forward Plan](#).

DIRECTORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duncan Sharkey (Managing Director) • Russell O’Keefe (Director of Place)
LINK OFFICERS & HEADS OF SERVICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracy Hendren (Head of Housing and Environmental Health Service) • Chris Joyce (Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability & Economic Growth) • Ben Smith (Head of Commissioning - Infrastructure) • Adrien Waite (Head of Planning)

MEETING: 19TH JANUARY 2021

ITEM	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
Budget 2021/22 Report	Lead Officers & Finance
Q2 Performance Report	Rachel Kinniburgh, <i>Strategy and Performance Manager</i>
Annual Monitoring Report	Adrien Waite, <i>Head of Planning</i>
Social Infrastructure Review	Chris Joyce, <i>Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability & Economic Growth</i>
Modern Road Infrastructure	Chris Joyce, <i>Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability & Economic Growth</i>
Social Housing	Tracy Hendren, <i>Head of Housing and Environmental Health Service</i>
Annual Scrutiny Report - Draft	Chairman & Lead Officers
Work Programme	Panel clerk
TASK AND FINISH	
TBC	

MEETING: 6TH APRIL 2021

ITEM	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
Q3 Performance Update Report	Rachel Kinniburgh, <i>Strategy and Performance Manager</i>
Lead Local Flood Authority	Chris Joyce, <i>Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability & Economic Growth</i> Ben Smith, <i>Head of Commissioning - Infrastructure</i>
CCTV System Review	David Scott, <i>Head of Communities</i>

Annual Scrutiny Report (Final version for approval and submission to Full Council)	Chairman & Lead Officers
Work Programme	Panel clerk
TASK AND FINISH	
TBC	

ITEMS SUGGESTED BUT NOT YET PROGRAMMED

ITEM	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
Homelessness Strategy and Homelessness Forum Update	Tracy Hendren, <i>Head of Housing and Environmental Health Service</i>
Street Lighting Review	Ben Smith, <i>Head of Commissioning - Infrastructure</i>
Bus Routes	Ben Smith, <i>Head of Commissioning - Infrastructure</i>
Junction Improvements	Ben Smith, <i>Head of Commissioning - Infrastructure</i>
Maidenhead Town Centre CIL	Chris Joyce, <i>Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability & Economic Growth</i>
New Schools Infrastructure Plans	Chris Joyce, <i>Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability & Economic Growth</i> Kevin McDaniel, <i>Director of Children's Services</i> Ben Wright,
Ascot Redevelopment	Chris Joyce, <i>Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability & Economic Growth</i>
Public Transport Requirements	Ben Smith, <i>Head of Commissioning - Infrastructure</i> Chris Joyce, <i>Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability & Economic Growth</i>
Carbon-free Power Infrastructure	Chris Joyce, <i>Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability & Economic Growth</i>
Draft Parking Permit Scheme Policy	Ben Smith, <i>Head of Commissioning - Infrastructure</i> Louise Freeth, <i>Head of Revenues, Benefits, Library and Residents Services</i>

TASK AND FINISH GROUP SUGGESTIONS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
CIL	Chris Joyce, <i>Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability & Economic Growth</i>
Homelessness and housing solutions	Tracy Hendren, <i>Head of Housing and Environmental Health Service</i>
Digital Infrastructure	Chris Joyce, <i>Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability & Economic Growth</i>

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