

<b>EXECUTIVE MEMBER RESPONSE TO THE INVESTIGATION INTO RINGWAY HIGHWAYS SERVICE TERM CONTRACT</b>	
<b>NAME OF INVESTIGATION: RINGWAY HIGHWAYS SERVICE TERM CONTRACT</b>  <b>CHAIRMAN: MALCOLM COWAN</b>  <b>SCRUTINY OFFICER: CHARLES WEIR</b>  <b>EXECUTIVE MEMBER: TERRY DOURIS</b>	<b>DATE OF SCRUTINY: 2 OCTOBER 2015</b>
	<b>DATE REPORT PUBLISHED: 22 OCTOBER 2015</b>
	<b>DATE RESPONSE RETURNED: 21 DECEMBER 2015</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Recommendations:</b> e.g. To undertake a customer survey in the Autumn of 2015</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Outcomes/further action:</b> e.g. To carry out the survey in September 2015</p>
<p>2.1 That customers and members should be kept informed while medium &amp; low priority CAT 2 items do not receive immediate action and so remain in the pool, and whether a defect/fault meets requirements or not. (Conclusion 4.1)</p>	<p>Details of medium and low priority CAT 2 defects are retained within the council's management system in order that they can be considered when works are being planned in the area.</p> <p>There are insufficient resources available to keep customers updated on individual defects. However, as part of the ongoing fault reporting review it is proposed to update the initial acknowledgment email to make it clearer to customers how their reported defect will be dealt with.</p>
<p>2.2. To be kept informed of the progress of implementing the triage service of CAT 1 jobs and</p>	

<p>its effectiveness and to examine the possibility of extending this to other work categories. (Conclusion 4.2)</p>	<p>An update on the initial implementation and effectiveness of the triage service will be provided as an information note to the Highways Panel after the first 6 months of operation.</p> <p>This evolution of the CAT 1 service will be kept under review in order to determine if there are any benefits in extending it further subject to resource implications.</p>
<p>2.3. That the budgets for the next financial year take into consideration the high volume and high estimated cost of CAT 2 high priority jobs, which are currently estimated to exceed the total budget for all CAT 2 work, and for quarterly reporting of the estimated cost of outstanding jobs of this type against the budget spent to that point to be shared with members. (Conclusion 4.3)</p>	<p>The CAT 2 budget is determined as part of the overall budget setting process for highways and takes account of the need to keep the highway safe and operational. Where opportunities for additional funding or moving funding between works categories are available, these will be investigated.</p> <p>I am concerned with the suggestion that the costs for outstanding jobs should be revisited on a regular basis. It seems to me that this would involve a level of time and resource which could be better expended on actually completing works and that the nature of outstanding works is such that the costs of these works is a constantly changing figure to make the delivery of such information transient.</p>
<p>2.4 To be kept informed of the development of new communications with customers on reported faults. (Conclusion 4.4)</p>	<p>An information note will be taken to the Highways Panel approximately every 6 months as required with an update on significant developments within the fault reporting process and customer communications.</p> <p>These new communication developments will be highlighted in future editions of 'Highways on the Move'.</p>
<p>2.5 That Ringway enforces and follows up on the</p>	<p>Ringway are not the enforcement agency in this context. They do the informal initial notification but subsequent actions where required are</p>

<p>statutory process of giving the owner of private hedges 14 days to cut them back before the highway service takes action and claims the cost back. (Conclusion 4.5)</p>	<p>the responsibility of the County Council. Hertfordshire County Council and Ringway are reviewing the enforcement process which will include the introduction of a robust process for managing reports of third party vegetation overgrowing the public highway. As part of this Ringway will continue to carry-out the initial notification to the appropriate land owner where the hedge is over grown and if this is not then actioned HCC officers will initiate enforcement action which includes the recovery of reasonable costs but we are not allowed by law to impose any additional penalties.</p>
<p>2.6 To be kept informed of the progress by Ringway in introducing service improvement and developments that were agreed at the start of the contract. (Conclusion 4.6)</p>	<p>The service provided by Ringway continues to evolve as priorities change and new technology, systems and materials are introduced. As a result some improvements/developments agreed at the start of the contract may no longer be appropriate in the best interests of the service going forward.</p> <p>An information note will be provided to the Highways Panel on the progress by Ringway in introducing those service improvements and developments that are still relevant.</p>
<p>2.7 That HCC review this area of the contract to see if it is possible to give Ringway more flexibility when undertaking multiple repairs. (Conclusion 4.7)</p>	<p>This is a new and evolving initiative in which the role of the triage inspectors includes reviewing the reported carriageway and footway defect on site and looking for other defects within a defined vicinity that also need repair.</p> <p>If there are other defects; where appropriate these will be included in the work order sent to the repair teams.</p>
<p>2.8 That consideration is given to introducing a speedy process for members who may wish to use some of</p>	<p>There is a review of the Highways Locality Budget process being undertaken to look at options with the intention to provide a more rapid</p>

<p>their Highways Locality Budget (HLB) spend on getting CAT 2 items fixed. (Conclusion 4.3)</p>	<p>turnaround in providing members with estimates to enable quicker decision making and delivery in getting HLB works carried out which may include the use of District and Borough council work teams.</p>
<p><b>Do you have any other comments on the report or scrutiny?</b></p>	<p>The Highway Service Term contract is an integral part of keeping our highways safe and operational and I appreciate the work of the Topic Group in their interest in what is a complex and important service and one which is subject to the vagaries of weather and other circumstances.</p>