

SPEED INDICATOR DEVICE – EXTENDED MAINTENANCE WARRANTY PROTOCOL

Report of the Director of Environment and Infrastructure

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek the Panel's views on the future maintenance of Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) and to request it to recommend that Cabinet amends the Highways Locality Budget (HLB) scheme to fund the proposed extended warranty.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 To date, 290 SIDs have been installed or ordered across Hertfordshire since 2015/16. Their installation included a warranty sum to ensure that they would be maintained, repaired or replaced if required within the first 5 years of operation.
- 2.2 During 2020/21 the first batch of SIDs installed will have been in operation for a 5-year period. At this stage there will no longer be a maintenance regime in place going forward for these signs. This will also be the case for signs installed in subsequent years as time progresses.
- 2.3 This paper discusses the options available to ensure the future maintenance and operation of all SIDs on the highway network however they are funded. Two options are put forward: to either extend the maintenance warranty by 5 years or a 'do not extend' scenario.
- 2.4 Officers at the Police & Crime Commissioners (PCC) office will be presenting a paper to the PCC Decision Making Meeting in early February. It will be recommending that the PCC's office provide funding for extending the maintenance warranty by five years for the signs they have purchased. This will be on the basis that the County Council agrees to fund the extension of the warranty on the other SIDS in the county.
- 2.5 A consistent approach across all SIDs, however they are funded, is proposed and officers' view is that the maintenance warranty should be extended by a further five years (Option 1).

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the Panel endorses the recommendation for an extended 5-year warranty to cover maintenance is put in place. This is detailed in Option 1 and would start from April 2020.
- 3.2 That the Panel recommends to Cabinet that Cabinet agrees to the extended five-year warranty for all SIDs in the county that are not funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner’s office and amends the Highways Locality Budget scheme (HLB) so that the cost of this is met from the HLB of the member in whose division each SID is situated.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In 2015/16 the County Council started the introduction of SIDs across Hertfordshire. A majority of these have been funded by members through Councillors’ HLB and the Locality Budget. In addition, some have been funded through the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) Road Safety Fund (RSF), and a smaller number by third parties such as Parish Councils with support of the local member.
- 4.2 It was important to ensure that the SIDs would be repaired or replaced if faulty or damaged. A warranty cost of £850 to repair or replace a new SID for a 5-year period was included in the purchase price. This being the equivalent of £170 per year. A similar arrangement is in place for those SIDs funded by the PCC Road Safety Fund and 3rd parties.
- 4.3 It was confirmed to members who allocated HLB and to other applicants that after the 5-year period expires there is no arrangement for repair or replacement. The only exception will be for a damaged sign to be removed and disposed of if it causes a danger and is a safety issue.

Year Installed	Year existing warranty will expire	Member funded	PCC RSF funded	3rd party funded	TOTALS
2015/16	2020/21	28	0	0	28
2016/17	2021/22	80	9	0	89
2017/18	2022/23	53	21	2	76
2018/19	2023/24	44	0	7	51
2019/20	2024/25	28	14	4	46
TOTALS		233	44	13	290

Table 1: Number of SIDs installed by financial year

- 4.4 As indicated in Table 1 the first batch of installations will have been in operation for five years during 2020/21. At this point the maintenance arrangement period will lapse. This paper considers the maintenance requirements and options from this time onwards.

5 PERFORMANCE TO DATE

- 5.1 The overall performance of the SIDs has been good. Table 2 summarises faults reported to Ringway between 2015/16 and 2018/19.

Fault Type	Number of faults
Found operational upon arrival by operative	15
Device fault	11

Installation error	9
Vandalism	8
TOTAL	43

Table 2: Summary of SID faults reported 2015/16 to 2018/19

- 5.2 There are occasions in poor lighting conditions on heavily trafficked roads, when the SID will switch off waiting to charge once sufficient light is received to the battery. This is the most likely cause of the 15 times a fault report was received and then seen to be operational again.
- 5.3 Of the 11 device faults, 5 required new batteries to bring the device back into operation and 2 new signs were required with the existing being beyond economical repair.
- 5.4 There have been a small number of installation errors which have caused the signs to not be operational, which have subsequently been corrected.

6 OPTIONS

6.1 Considering that from 2020/21 onwards the SIDs will have been in operation for 5 years and their performance to date the following two options are put forward for consideration:

6.2 Option 1: Five-year extended warranty:

6.2.1 This will cost **£1,000** per SID due on 1 April of the sixth year of operation. It is proposed that for member and third party funded signs the amount will be taken from the revenue allocation of the HLB and will include:

- Battery replacement in year 6 and 9 of operation to ensure longevity;
- Inspection on an annual basis by the Highway Service contractor to ensure they are in good working order;
- Repair or replacement if a device is damaged or has a fault.

6.2.2 The £1,000 cost quoted is a 2020/21 rate. There maybe an inflation uplift in subsequent years.

6.2.3 The costs of the annual site visits and battery changes amount to £550 of £1,000 extended warranty.

6.2.4 It should be noted that as there are County Council elections in May 2021, the incumbent member will be responsible to fund the extended warranty on 1 April 2021 if SIDs in their division enter their sixth year of operation during 2021/22.

6.2.5 The County Council will ensure that all extended warranties commenced under the existing Highways Service Team (HST) contract will continue for their full 5-year term under the new HST contract.

6.2.6 Officers at the Police & Crime Commissioners (PCC) office will be presenting a paper to the PCC Decision Making Meeting in early February. It will be recommending that the PCC's office provide funding for extending the maintenance warranty by five years for the signs they have purchased. This will be on the basis that the County Council agrees to fund the extension of the warranty on the

other SIDS in the county. This will allow for a consistent maintenance regime to be in place across all assets.

6.2.7 Officers recommend Option 1, and Panel is requested to recommend to Cabinet that it agrees to the extended warranty, and to amend the HLB so that the local member would be responsible for funding the extended maintenance warranty on SIDs purchased through member funding in their division. The local member would also be responsible to fund the warranty extension for 3rd party funded SIDs. Alternatively, the local member could discuss funding arrangements with the 3rd party in advance of the sixth year of operation.

6.2.8 Appendix 1 shows the number of SIDs in each division, how they were funded and when the extended warranty is due.

6.3 Option 2: Do not extend warranty beyond initial 5 years:

6.3.1 This option will cost £ 0 whilst the sign is operational. Costs associated with removal and replacement as and when required are shown in Table 3.

6.3.2 If a SID is damaged or is faulty it will need to be removed from the highway network.

1. If it is causing a danger or safety hazard its removal will be funded through the Cat 1 budget.
2. If it is not a safety hazard it is proposed that the local member in whose division the sign is located will be responsible for funding its removal, replacement, or repair via their HLB. Associated costs are shown in Table 3. As these are unbudgeted costs the PCC will not be able to mirror these arrangements. Therefore, the HLB scheme would need to be amended so that all such occurrences would be funded from the relevant member’s HLB.

Item	Cost
Investigative site visit **	£ 50
Battery cable	£ 75
Remove & dispose non-working SID	£ 100
Backplate	£ 150
Solar charger	£ 150
Batteries (2 No.)	£ 150
Battery case	£ 250
Solar panel	£ 650
Front SID Panel	£ 2,100
New SID in existing socket with 5-year warranty **	£ 4,510
New SID in new socket with 5-year warranty **	£ 5,100

Table 3: ‘Do not extend’ warranty costings

** - All costings above would be capital, apart from site visits and the 5-year warranty which are revenue.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 If the HLB scheme is amended as proposed each member will be required to pay £ 1,000 (2020/21 rate) per SID for signs funded from HLB or 3rd party funding. This would be funded from the revenue portion of their HLB on 1 April of the sixth year of operation.

7.2 The costs for removing and replacing SID's on an ad-hoc basis are shown in table 3.

8 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 When considering proposals placed before members it is important that they are fully aware of and have themselves rigorously considered the equalities implications of the decision that they are taking.

8.2 Rigorous consideration will ensure that proper appreciation of any potential impact of that decision on the County Council's statutory obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. As a minimum this requires decision makers to read and carefully consider the content of any Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) produced by officers.

8.3 The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council when exercising its functions to have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

8.4 There are no equalities implications relating to this report.

Background Information

Police and Crime Commissioners Road Safety Fund:

<https://www.hertscommissioner.org/road-safety-fund>

Locality Budget:

https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/search/search-results.aspx?profile=_default&query=Locality Budget

Highways Locality Budget:

https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/search/search-results.aspx?profile=_default&query=Highways Locality Budget