

Weed Treatment in Exeter

Report of the Head of Highways, Capital Development and Waste

Please note that the following recommendation is subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Committee welcomes the progress with addressing weed growth in the City, within the available budgets.

1. Introduction

A report was taken to the Exeter Board on 28 April 2014 to inform Members of the Weed Spraying Programme for 2014/15 in Exeter and the outcome of the Community Payback trial in 2013/14. This report updates members on the weed treatment programme and planned works for the remainder of this financial year and proposals for 2015/16.

2. Background

Cabinet approved the report of the Head of Highways, Capital Development and Waste to Cabinet on 12 March 2014 setting out the County Road Highway Maintenance Revenue Budget for the financial year 2014/15. The report included an allocation of £343,916, for the treatment of Weeds across the Devon. Of this, £37,923 was for Harmful & Invasive Weeds, £20,400 for the Community Payback Scheme and the remainder for targeted weed spraying across Devon.

Approximately £25,500 of the weed spraying budget was allocated to Exeter.

An order was placed with Exeter City Council at the start of the 2014/15 financial year once the DCC budget was agreed, to undertake weed spraying in the city in line with the treatment undertaken the previous year. The advice received from the City Council was that due to the delayed start of the 2014/15 spraying programme, it would not be cost effective to belatedly spray weeds because of the level of growth already sustained.

The advice was accepted and the budget was reallocated to undertake a programme of targeted weed spraying and pulling on strategic routes and key areas of the city. It also funded a mechanical sweeper to clear weeds from kerb edges. These works were in addition to the deployment of the Community Payback team as detailed below.

The allocation of a budget to fund Community Payback work followed a successful trial undertaken in the Exeter and Newton Abbot areas in 2013/14. The work proved to be very cost effective in terms of productivity and social value as reported to this committee on 27 January 2014.

The £20,400 allocated across Devon for the Community Payback scheme was to fund approximately 15-20 days of weed treatment work to be undertaken in Exeter. This commenced in mid November, concentrating on a list of known problem areas identified by Neighbourhood Highways Officers in liaison with local members.

On completion of the originally planned Community Payback days of weed treatment, due to the extent of weed growth at a number of locations, an extension to the programme was agreed utilising funding originally allocated for weed treatment elsewhere in the County. The outstanding programme was reviewed in light of comments from local Members and complaints from residents,

The Strategic Routes sprayed by the City Council during the autumn and subsequently cleaned by the Community Payback team are listed in Appendix I.

The original list, together with details of the sites attended to by the Community Payback team is included as Appendix II to this report.

3. Future Arrangement for 2015

There is funding remaining in the County Council's 2014/15 revenue budget allocation for the treatment of weeds for further work in March 2015. In addition the Exeter Board at its meeting in September 2014 resolved that "...the use of £20,000 from the Exeter Board's budget for early weed spraying in 2015 be supported"

With this combined funding the following programme of weed treatment is planned for 2015:

- a) the spraying of weeds growing in areas inaccessible to the Community Payback team during March. The areas are predominantly central reservations on sections of dual carriageway, focusing on Rydon Lane due to its proximity to Sandy Park and the imminent attraction of visitors to the Rugby World Cup in October.
- b) a weed spray of footways throughout the city during March.
- c) an additional spray of footways where needed and subject to the availability of funding, during June and July.

4. Financial Considerations

The cost of this work will be met from the County Council's Revenue Budget and, pending confirmation, the Exeter Board.

5. Sustainability Considerations

Contingency budget pressures have presented the highways service with a real challenge in maintaining the level of service for weed control. Increasing safety related activities dominate the budget setting considerations. However by introducing new, cost effective ways of delivery and by being flexible in managing the budget, the service has managed to sustain a reasonable level of service.

6. Carbon Impact Considerations

This proposal will have a neutral carbon impact.

7. Equality Considerations

An Impact Assessment has been carried out for the savings to the Highways Revenue budget compared to 2012/13, a copy of which was circulated to Cabinet Members, and is available alongside this report on the Council's website at: http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/councildemocracy/decision_making/cma/index_exc.htm

8. Legal Considerations

The lawful consequences of the recommendation have been considered in the preparation of this report.

9. Risk Management Considerations

The proposals contained in this report have been assessed and all reasonable actions are taken to safeguard the Council's position.

10. Summary/Conclusions/Reasons for Recommendations

The proposed programme is designed to make best use of the financial resources agreed by Cabinet and following the Cabinet endorsed approach to Asset Management.

David Whitton
Head of Highways, Capital Development and Waste

Electoral Divisions: All Exeter Divisions

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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Background Paper	Date	File Ref.
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Nil

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**Appendix I
To HCW/15/4**

List of Strategic Routes throughout Exeter City which have received weedspray and weed pulling – Autumn 2014.

1. B3181 / B3212 Pinhoe Road (Church Hill - St. Anne's Roundabout).
2. B3212 Western Way (St. Anne's Roundabout - Paris Street Roundabout).
3. B3183 Heavitree Road – Fore Street, Heavitree – Honiton Road (Moor Lane Roundabout).
4. Pinhoe (mini roundabouts) – Harrington Lane – Beacon Heath – Calthorpe Road – Prince Charles Road – Union Road – Prince of Wales Road – Streatham Drive – New North Road.
5. A377 Cowley Bridge Road – Bonhay Road (Wrefords Drive – Exe Bridges).
6. A377 / B3123 – Alphington Street – Alphington Road – Church Road – Chudleigh Road – Shillingford Road.
7. A379 Bridge Road – A3015 Topsham Road – Holloway Street - Magdalen Road.
8. A377 Alphington Cross – Cowick Lane – Buddle Lane – Exwick Road – St. Andrews Road to Kinnerton Way.
9. A377 Alphington Cross to A30 Interchange.

**Appendix II
To HCW/15/4**

List of locations originally identified for attention by the The Dorset, Devon and Cornwall Community Rehabilitation Company Limited, Community Payback Team

Park & Ride sites (3) Ambassador Drive Bampfylde Street Barnardos Road Barton Road Beacon Heath Bettysmead Footways Bramley Avenue Briar Crescent Butts Road Chancel Lane Chestnut Avenue Clifford Close Courtney Road Culverland Road De La Rue Way East Grove Road / West Grove Road Harrington Lane Hazel Road Hollow Lane Hoopern Street Isca Road Kennerley Avenue	Larch Road Lower North Street Lower Wear Road Mincinglake Road Monks Road area Mount Pleasant area Newcourt Road, Topsham Penleonard Close Percy Road Phillip Road Ribston Avenue Roundhill Close Salters Road Sheridan Road St. Leonards Road Summer Way Sweetbrier Lane Tuckfield Close Whipton Lane Widgery Road Woodleigh Close Woolserly Avenue
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List of locations attended to by Community Payback Team (includes additional, requested sites)

Ambassador Way Woolserly Avenue Kennerley Avenue Westbrook Close Woolserly Close / Grove Exwick Hill / Exwick Lane Kingsway Meadow Way Digby Park & Ride Kingsway Meadow Way Hensleigh Drive Penleonard Close Sidmouth Road Park & Ride Venny Bridges Coronation Road Mincinglake Road Phillip Road Hill Barton Close Triston Close Elaine Close	Ringswell Avenue Charnley Avenue High Meadows Lower Wear Road Matford Avenue Matford Road Fortescue Road Courtney Road Ashwood Road Percy Road Ebrington Road Coverdale Road Chestnut Avenue Chancel Lane Hazel Road Briar Crescent Gareth Crescent Pendragon Road Percival Road Hoker Road
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