

**Drainage Policy and Budget Provision in Exeter
Update Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure,
Development and Waste**

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Committee notes the position regarding the drainage policy, budget provision, and drainage and flooding issues identified by Members.

1. Background

At the January meeting of this Committee it was Resolved that a Report be submitted to the next meeting on the drainage policy, budget provision, and drainage and flooding issues identified by Members.

This is first opportunity to bring a report back to this Committee as virtual meetings of this Committee since January have been restricted to priority issues requiring a decision.

A paper was taken to the Cabinet meeting of 13 May 2020 setting out the revenue funding by maintenance function for highway reactive repairs, routine and cyclic maintenance for 2020/21.

Revenue funded works essentially consist of three types of maintenance:

- (a) Reactive: repairs to safety defects such as filling of potholes, emergency response, dealing with flooding, replacing mandatory signs and markings, clearing overhanging vegetation and the like, which, if neglected, would pose a potential danger to road users. During winter periods undertaking precautionary salting and snow clearance.
- (b) Routine maintenance: this includes drainage repairs, broken kerbs, replacing damaged warning signs and markings, wall repairs and maintenance.
- (c) Cyclic maintenance: such as gully emptying, grass cutting, cleaning and clearing of drainage pipes, ducts and channels, ditch cleaning and siding and water tabling, most of which is carried out to a defined frequency.

The Devon County Council approved policy and procedures for emptying roadside gullies states the following:

Statement of Objectives:

The objectives of gully emptying are as follows:

- to remove detritus from the gully;

- to ensure continued efficient functioning of the gully and its connection.

Policy to Achieve Objectives

The Priority Network consists of winter service priority one salting routes.

- (i) Urban gullies with sumps on the Priority Network shall be emptied and recharged to flush the system a minimum of once per year.
- (ii) Urban gullies without sumps on the Priority Network be flushed through to check they are functioning correctly a minimum of once per year.
- (iii) Urban gullies with sumps on other roads shall be emptied and recharged to flush the system a minimum of once every three years.
- (iv) Urban gullies without sumps on other roads shall be flushed through to check they are functioning correctly a minimum of once every three years.
- (v) Rural gullies with sumps shall be emptied and recharged to flush the system a minimum of once per year.
- (vi) Rural gullies without sumps shall be flushed through to check they are functioning correctly a minimum of once per year.
- (vii) Where it has been assessed that a gully requires more frequent cleansing the frequency shall be increased. Examples of this are gullies in areas where flooding would affect buildings or known to fill up more quickly

Procedures

- (i) Gullies shall be emptied and flushed by mechanical means.
- (ii) Gullies may be emptied by hand where inaccessible by machine.
- (iii) The area surrounding the gully cover/grating shall be cleared as part of the cleaning operation.
- (iv) Defective gullies shall be reported so that remedial works may be programmed.
- (v) All work shall be undertaken with due regard for any hypodermic needles that may be present in gully sumps. Needles shall be removed in accordance with the contractor's agreed safety procedures.

2. Cyclic Gully Cleaning in Exeter

In line with the policy set out in the Background the Exeter electoral divisions have approximately 20,870 gullies. Of these, approximately 9,400 are cleaned on an annual, six monthly or quarterly basis. Approximately 11,970 are cleaned on a three yearly basis. The gullies on the 3 yearly programme are cleaned over a period of 2 years.

During the current financial year, 2020/21 18,262 gullies are programmed to be cleaned with 11,915 programmed for 2021/22.

The cleaning history of individual gullies is publicly accessible on an interactive map which can be viewed at the following link:

<https://apps1.wdm.co.uk/Live/Devon/PBLC/PIP/map.aspx?cg=kaarb>

3. Drainage related safety interventions

There are 2 defects relating to water on the highway requiring intervention identified in the County Council's Highway Safety Policy.

1.5 Obstructions

Carriageway

Standing water is a defect if after 24 hours from when rain has ceased, the road is impassable, or it is forcing vehicles, cyclists or pedestrians away from the nearside of the carriageway by more than 1m, or if vehicles have to cross the centreline marking.

Footway & Cycleway

Standing water is a defect if after 24 hours from when rain has ceased, the footway/cycleway is impassable or forcing pedestrians/cyclists into the carriageway or the width of a pedestrian crossing is reduced to 500mm by water.

1.2 Standing/Running Water

Standing or running water on carriageways is applied where a speed limit of 40mph or above is in force and where highway users can reasonably travel at 40mph or above to minimise the risk of aquaplaning

Carriageway only

if after 24 hours from when rain has ceased, the road is impassable, or it is forcing vehicles, cyclists or pedestrians away from the nearside of the carriageway by more than 1m, or if vehicles have to cross the centreline marking

4. Drainage revenue budget

An annual revenue budget is allocated for drainage in addition to funding for cyclic gully cleaning and safety reaction. This drainage budget funds local reaction to identified problems including jetting, camera surveys and minor repairs.

During the current financial year additional funding has been made available to follow up issues recorded by operatives undertaking the cyclic gully cleaning works. The significant volume of this work is jetting. To date in excess of 1,000 sites have been jetted county wide as a part of this operation.

Jetting operations are delivered using plant supplied by Skanska, as our service provider, and the wider outside market supply chain. A number of the supply chain companies are based within the county and, having been commissioned for a number of years to undertake these works, are familiar with the highway drainage network, processes and procedures.

5. Drainage and Flooding Issues identified by Members

Following the January meeting of this Committee Members were invited to advise of any long standing or significant drainage problems in their Division they wished to be included in this report. A table setting out responses to issues highlighted by elected members is attached as Appendix A.

6. Financial Considerations

The budget of this work is set out within the paper was taken to the Cabinet meeting of 13 May 2020 setting out the revenue funding by maintenance function for highway reactive repairs, routine and cyclic maintenance for 2020/21.

A county wide allocation of £2,000,000 is committed to delivery of the gully cleaning programme. Within this allocation, a separate allocation of £39,600 is made available to the Exeter Neighbourhood Team for reactive cleaning and investigation works.

An allocation of £54,450 is committed to the Exeter Neighbourhood Team to undertake revenue drainage works.

Safety interventions identified in line with the Highway Safety Policy will be addressed through the £5,600,000 county wide safety defect budget.

7. Sustainability Considerations

When maintenance work is undertaken it is managed to ensure that the effect on the surrounding environment is kept to a minimum. In order to minimise the volume of wet waste being taken to tip, Devon Highways are working closely with the Environment Agency to introduce wet waste filters at a number of depots across the county.

8. Carbon Impact Considerations

This proposal will have a carbon neutral impact.

9. Equality Considerations

The Equality of the recommendations have been considered in the preparation of this report.

10. Legal Considerations

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

11. Risk Management Considerations

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

12. Summary/Conclusions/Reasons for Recommendations

The proposed programme is designed to make best use of the available financial resources using the Cabinet endorsed Asset Management approach.

Meg Booth

Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure, Development and Waste

Electoral Divisions: All Exeter Divisions

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sc/cr/Drainage Policy and Budget Provision in Exeter

**Appendix A
To HIW/20/32**

Significant and long standing issues raised by Members

Councillor	Location	Comments
Asvachin & Foggin	Wonford Street o/s 91	Gully cleaned. This has been monitored and no further problems have been observed.
Aves	Clifton Road near Clifton Inn	This area is identified as a flood risk area. Gullies within the vicinity of the Clifton Inn are now cleaned every six months.
Aves	Polsloe Road near the Isca Medical practice	The gullies in this area were cleaned earlier in the year. All gullies were operational on completion.
Foggin	Honiton Road at Sweetbrier Lane	Surveys undertaken. Improvement scheme being designed.
Prowse	Pennsylvania Road between Beech Avenue and Rosebarn Lane	This site is on a hill and water unable to flow into one gully will flow to the next not causing a safety issue. Low priority for further work.
Prowse	Denmark Road o/s Maynard School	Identified for cleaning using the mini jetter.
Prowse	Streatham Drive and New North Road	On a hill but potential capacity issues in the system to be investigated
Prowse	A377 o/s Johnsons	Potential capacity issues in the system to be investigated.
Prowse	Upper Wrefords Lane	This site is on a hill and water unable to flow into one gully will flow to the next not causing a safety issue. The location has been identified for more frequent cleans.
Prowse	Pooling in Michigan Way	Works to resolve the problem have been identified for design.
Prowse	Pooling in front of 10 Plassey Close	This relates to ponding on the footway that is not a safety defect. No further action at the present time.
Prowse	Pooling o/s 23 Elizabeth Avenue	A scheme has been identified for footway works to relieve footway ponding. Awaiting design.
Whitton	Bonhay Road o/s 90	Gully has been cleaned and the situation is being monitored.
Whitton	Red Cow Village near junction with Station Road	Investigated and no blocked gullies have been identified. The gullies have been cleaned and recorded as 'cleaned and operational'.

