

Highways Performance Dashboard

Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste

1. Introduction

In response to the recommendations of the Planned & Reactive Maintenance: Potholes & Drainage Task Group presented to the Corporate, Infrastructure and Regulatory Services (CIRS) Scrutiny Committee in March 2019 an updated Performance Dashboard Report has been produced. The intention of this report is to provide Members with an overview of the performance of Devon Highways on key seasonal aspects of delivery;

- Winter preparations;
- Cyclical Works;
- Carriageway safety defects;

Additionally, progress on the Doing What Matters work has now been included as requested by the Committee.

2. Winter Preparations

Following the works carried out during the summer the final salt deliveries have been made ensuring our salt barns are full and ready to deliver this year's winter service. We are still waiting for the new saturators for Tiverton and Rydon, these are expected to be delivered and installed by mid-November with alternative arrangements in place should the gritters need to be used before then.

An extensive programme of winter service awareness and refresher training has been completed to ensure the highway teams are ready for another winter. Grit Bins are being filled on request using the 'report it' pages on the Council's website.

We have utilised the recent Parish Conferences around the county to promote the Snow Warden scheme and to support the Parish councils with the self-help options available to them. A new Facebook group has been created which will be used to improve communication and promote the scheme. We continue to develop other communication channels including Twitter and One.Network which has recently replaced Roadworks.org.

3. Cyclical Works

3.1. Gully Emptying

An update on the progress of the gully emptying programme can be seen in Appendix A. The works are currently on programme.

Progress against programme continues to align with our annual calendar. However, in order to strengthen resilience and mitigate the impact of winter maintenance Skanska intend to add a further 2 gully emptiers into the service for the next two months to get us ahead of programme, we will re-evaluate the position in December to decide whether we will extend this arrangement in to 2020. This financial year to date we have disposed of 1316 tonnes of gully waste.

3.2. Drainage Cleaning

Delivery is currently behind where we would like to be. To improve this situation we have commenced a trial using mechanical attachments with the tractors to increase output over the winter months. We continue to face the challenge of identifying and cleaning new assets, so far this financial year we have added a further 5228 assets to the inventory. This impacts on efficiency and the ability to monitor progress due to the reactive response this creates.

3.3. Jetting

Following the successful trial last year we have employed a dedicated jetting team for 6 months to work on sites identified by our gully cleaning teams prioritising the salting network. All information obtained onsite directly updates the asset inventory.

3.4. Rural and Urban Grass

Urban and rural grass is now complete but was delivered to programme and to budget this year. Additionally, for the urban grass we carried out a successful trial this year that improved digital asset and data capture.

4. Carriageway Safety Defects

Analysis of the number of recorded potholes can be found on the previously published electronic dashboard. The headline figures are provided in Appendix B.

We experienced a spike in public reports following the prolonged period of rain throughout Autumn. The increase in demand has been a challenge to manage resulting in the difficult decision to turn off 'serviceability' defects in the north and south of the county. We are investigating options for sources of funding to enable additional inspectors to provide better resilience across the seasons.

5. Doing What Matters

Over the last 12 months the Service has been reviewing methods of delivery in light of the corporate approach to 'Doing What Matters'. We have been working in three key areas;

- Publicly reported potholes;
- Development of work programmes;
- Management of defects.

5.1. Publicly reported potholes

In 2018 the Service trialled the approach of an inspector being used to verify public enquires. Since June this approach has been carried out across the whole of the county. In addition to verifying enquiries the inspector provides all necessary information for the repair gang to carry out the repair at the first visit. The inspector also has the ability to order repairs to defects that do not meet our safety intervention levels – these are considered as 'serviceability defects'.

In 2018 we received 68,000 pothole reports. Up to the end of October 2019 we received just under 39,000. It is felt that the new approach of dealing with publicly reported defects has had a significant, positive impact on this improvement.

5.2. Development of work programmes

Feedback from various sources had indicated to the Service that the identification of capital improvement works including resurfacing, patching, surface dressing and other surface treatments had lost sight of the opinion of the local communities and was being driven by trying to maintain the value of the asset rather than considering the needs of communities.

To address these concerns a project team was established to initially understand the current system and design a new approach to capital delivery. This team is based in our Okehampton Depot and is in the process of developing an approach that considers not only the data available from machine survey but also the view of the local Neighbourhood Team and the view of the community via consultation with the Parish or Town Council. The feedback from early trials is very positive and the team are looking at a programme to expand this work countywide.

This new approach will have a significant, fundamental impact on the day to day operation of the service and is hoped to have a positive impact on the relationship between the service and the local community.

5.3. Management of defects

Following on from the rebuild of the publicly reported pothole process a team has been established to review our approach to managing defects identified by Highway Safety Inspectors. This work remains in its infancy but has identified a high level of 'clustering' of potholes and is trialling a different approach through the reactive deployment of Skanska's 'Dragon Patcher' to deal with both safety and serviceability defects.

It may be too early in the project to see a tangible difference over winter 2019/20 however it is hoped that this work will be well developed by next summer and will stand us in good stead for the following winter season.

Meg Booth
Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste

Electoral Divisions: All

Cabinet Member for Highway Management: Councillor Stuart Hughes

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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Background Paper	Date	File Reference
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Nil

Drainage Cleaning

Gully emptying

As at 1/11/2019			58% Through the year		
	% Complete Overall	Total Programmed	Attended	Cleaned	Remaining
Honiton	73%	23,630	17,150	16,915	6,480
Exeter and Mid	48%	33,662	16,135	15,224	17,527
Rydon	66%	23,394	15,354	14,942	8,040
Ivybridge	46%	19,030	8,840	8,169	10,190
Okehampton	57%	15,207	8,637	8,202	6,570
Torrington	52%	11,640	6,030	5,346	5,610
South Molton	50%	21,149	10,489	9,579	10,660
Summary	56%	147,712	82,635	78,377	65,077

Grips, Easements and Buddleholes

As at 1/11/2019		58% Through the year		
	Total Assets Programmed	New Asset Added	Total Assets Cleaned	Left to Attend
Exeter/Mid machine gang	12165	402	10476	2091
South hand clean gang	2436	612	2126	922
North/West hand clean gang	6433	452	4251	2634
Honiton machine gang	29688	1550	12069	19169
West machine gang	18293	1608	9810	10091
North machine gang	9621	467	5502	4586
South machine gang	10056	1973	8974	3055
Exeter/Mid machine gang	3688	7	541	3154
Summary	92,380	7,071	53,749	45,702

	Programmed (m)	Cleaned (m)	Additional Cleaned (m)	% Complete
Exeter/Mid machine gang	35,229	26,544	3,951	86%
South hand clean gang	13,603	5,668	683	87%
North/West hand clean gang	13,663	11,480	2,604	66%
Honiton machine gang	110,017	32,561	1,423	41%
West machine gang	38,469	29,659	7,967	54%
North machine gang	51,764	22,521	3,956	57%
South machine gang	26,106	24,791	5,525	89%
Exeter/Mid machine gang	6,025	1,243	2	15%
Summary	294,877	154,470	26,114	58%

Carriageway Safety Defects

