

CAMBRIDGESHIRE HIGHWAYS ANNUAL REPORT

To: **Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee**

Meeting Date: **19th August 2014**

From: **Executive Director: Economy, Transport & Environment**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Forward Plan ref: **N/A** *Key decision:* **No**

Purpose: **The attached report looks back at the last twelve months (13/14) of the highways services contract and provides a summary of how the contract has performed.**

Recommendation: **That the performance of the highways contract is noted.**

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** Cambridgeshire Highways is a partnership between Cambridgeshire County Council and Skanska. The work covered by the contract includes design and operational services for a variety of highway maintenance and major infrastructure work.

2. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE DURING 2013/14

- 2.1** Throughout 2013/14, we have continued to design and deliver major projects. Examples include the £5 million link road to the west of Huntingdon town centre, the Freedom Bridge flood defence scheme in Wisbech and the refurbishment of some of the footbridges in Cambridge city centre. Design work is underway on several other projects, including the Ely crossing and arterial cycleways in Cambridge.
- 2.2** We continue to find ways of providing a better quality and more efficient service. Key improvements that we have implemented over the course of the last year include developing a more holistic and collaborative approach to programming works, making more efficient use of the street works function that issues licences for activities on the network, improving the effectiveness of the team that manages congestion and events and implementing cost reduction measures to the cyclic maintenance programme.
- 2.3** In addition, a new Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy has been approved which promotes a preventive rather than reactive approach. This will maximise the life of highways assets and deliver financial efficiency savings. It will also allow a more structured approach to programming works through the introduction of a Transport Delivery Plan covering the next two years.
- 2.4** By continuously re-examining the way we work, we have realised just under £1.4 million of efficiency savings during 2013/14. Savings have been made in a variety of ways, including considering the use of different materials, plant and equipment.
- 2.5** We are constantly striving to look for innovative practices. Innovations have been introduced in several areas and include implementing initiatives to improve surfacing works, carrying out a structured trial of a new approach to filling potholes and installing safety cameras on our vehicles to improve the visibility of cyclists to drivers.
- 2.6** The health and safety of our employees, supply chain and the general public remains a key area of focus for us. Investment in fostering a proactive safety culture at our sites, depots and offices has been made through the rollout of an alternative approach to conventional health and safety training. The interactive sessions have been delivered to our supply chain partners as well as Cambridgeshire Highways employees

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

The Highway Services contract is a key vehicle for delivering many of the objectives of the Local Transport Plan, implementing road, footway, cycleway and public transport improvement projects to ensure that our communities can function efficiently and effectively.

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

Through the delivery of footway, cycleway and Rights of Way projects, this contract contributes to our communities being able to live healthy independent lives.

3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

Through the delivery of road safety improvements, this contract contributes to supporting and protecting vulnerable people.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

On average, we spend £5.5 million per year maintaining our highway network. This includes all repairs and maintenance from grass cutting to pothole filling. A further £10 million is typically spent each year on improving the network, covering activities such as major road resurfacing and bridge strengthening. Around £2 million is spent each winter on gritting roads and footways. Cambridgeshire County Council have committed an additional £90 million to fund further improvements to the highway network over a five year period, which began in 2012/13. Proposals are currently being considered, which would result in the remainder of this sum being spent over a longer period, ending in 2022/23. When all of these activities are combined with the development and design of major projects, the annual spend over 2013/14 was £35 million.

4.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications

The teams within the Local Infrastructure and Street Management service actively ensure that engagement and consultation with communities is integral to our work. Recent initiatives such as highway drop in sessions at the local Community Hubs have proved a successful way of liaising with our communities on highway issues.

4.5 Localism and Local Member Involvement

This contract is the key method of developing and delivering Local Highway Improvements. This Initiative empowers communities to take forward highway improvements through contributing to the cost of locally important highway improvements. Through the contract we also work

with communities who are active in volunteering – such as the highway warden scheme and the winter volunteers.

Members are actively involved with the contract on a day to day basis – be it through their District Highway Manager and Local Highway Officer for everyday highway issues, or through the many other aspects covered by the contract (such as road safety, highway and bridge improvements, street works, development management, traffic management.)

4.6 Public Health Implications

Through the provision of infrastructure that encourages active travel, the contract contributes to the public health agenda. In addition, our road safety work contributes to ensuring that the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads is reducing on an annual basis.

Source Documents	Location
Highways Annual Report 2013/14	Attached