

Wiltshire Council

Environment Select Committee

21 November 2017

Final Report of the Highways and Street Scene Task Group

Purpose of the report

1. To present the findings and recommendations of the task group for endorsement by the committee and referral to the Cabinet Member for response.

Background

2. The task group was created through converting the Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) Task Group into the Highways and Street Scene Task Group in October 2015.
3. Following discussions between the executive, O&S members and officers [a report from the Highways and Street Scene BBLP Task Group was presented to the Environment Select Committee on 27th October 2015](#). The report addressed the termination of the council's contract with BBLP and the alternative arrangements for service delivery.
4. Following the termination of the council's contract with BBLP the Highways and Street Scene Task Group was established through converting the BBLP Task Group. The task group was asked to consider the development of the new contract.

Terms of reference

5. The following terms of reference for the task group were endorsed by the Environment Select Committee on 7th June 2016:
 1. To support the service in developing a framework for the whole service (as per peer review) and ensure that the performance framework includes measures of members of the public's satisfaction / wishes;
 2. To consider the proposed Key Performance Indicators and monitoring of the new contract to ensure that the experience of members of the public is taken into account;

3. To monitor the implementation of the contract whilst considering how the monitoring of the delivery of the contract should be reported to the Environment Select Committee once the task group has completed its work.

Membership

6. The task group comprised the following membership:

Cllr Bob Jones MBE (Chairman)
Cllr Gordon King
Cllr Magnus Macdonald
Cllr Linda Packard
Cllr Tony Trotman
Cllr John Walsh

The late Cllr Jeff Osborn was Chairman of the task group from October 2015 to May 2016.

Methodology

7. The task group received evidence from the following witnesses:

Wiltshire Council witnesses:

Cllr Philip Whitehead	Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport
Dr Carlton Brand	Corporate Director
Parvis Khansari	Associate Director, Highways and Transport
Ian Gibbons	Associate Director, Legal and Governance
Adrian Hampton	Head of Local Highways, Weather and Emergency Services
Peter Binley	Head of Highways, Asset Management and Commissioning
Stephen Slater	Commercial Team Leader, Legal Services
Theo Biney	Category Specialist, Strategic Performance

External witnesses:

David Gibby	Director, Ringway Group Limited
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8. The following written evidence was received by the task group:
 - Highways and Street Scene Contract Cabinet Report (Parts 1 and 2)
 - New Highways Contract Report
 - Highways Peer Review
 - Highways Performance Management Report
 - National Highways and Transport Survey: Comparison with South West Counties based on 2016 Results
 - Contract Monitoring Scorecard Record: Ringway
 - Wiltshire Highways Contracts: Summary Report (average monthly scores per service)

9. The task group met six times as demonstrated in the following table:

Date of meetings	Item / topic	Details
2015		
15 Oct	Termination of BBLP Contract	Considered Part 1 and Part 2 reports on the termination of the Highways and Street Scene Contract with BBLP.
15 Dec	New Highways Contract	Considered a report describing the process followed to procure the new highways contract.
2016		
25 May	Scoping	Agreed terms of reference and scoping of future work based on the Highways Peer Review.
15 June	Workshop	To support the Highways Service to develop a performance framework for the whole service, which would enable the public to understand performance for the service (and what they could expect).
06 Sept	Highways Performance Management	Considered progress on the development of performance indicators and the Performance Management Framework.
28 Nov	Highways Performance Management	Considered contract and satisfaction scorings for Highways contracts.
2017		
October	Final Report	Agreed the final report of the task group based on the work performed.

10. The work of the task group was recommended to pause whilst the latest results from the National Highways and Transport Public Satisfaction (NHT) Survey were being finalised for April 2017.
11. In its initial scrutiny form the Highways and Street Scene Contract Rapid Scrutiny Exercise (Balfour Beatty Living Places - BBLP) provided [a final report on 18th February 2014](#) which addressed the monitoring element of the new contract with BBLP.
12. The new Highways and Street Scene Task Group submitted [a report to the Environment Select Committee on 27th October 2015](#). The report addressed the termination of the Highways and Street Scene Contract with BBLP and the recommendations of the task group following its consideration of a report.

Evidence

Development of a Service Framework

13. Following the termination of the Highways and Street Scene Contract the task group met and received information relating to the process for tendering the new contract.

14. Wiltshire and Swindon were undertaking a joint procurement process with a single set of prices and specifications. However, each council would sign contracts separately to retain the separate liabilities. Wiltshire benefited from the joint arrangement by being able to demonstrate collaborative working with other councils, which is a factor when central government determines local authority funding levels.
15. Under the new contract the council would be able to award the provider a six-month extension for every year that a suite of KPI targets are delivered, with a maximum total extension of 2 years. The council could also remove these extensions if performance is not satisfactory.
16. Small amendments to the contract had been made since the previous version to close small loopholes and ensure clarity about terms and expectations. These included defining the specification for the parish steward role.
17. ICT issues experienced under the previous contract would be addressed. In part, this would include helping enable operators to use the MyWiltshire system, resulting in no loss of data on logged issues. Operators would respond directly to issues logged on the system, rather simply than 'close', 'complete' or 'reject'. This had caused communication issues previously.
18. Improvements in ICT and the MyWiltshire system would allow Parish Stewards to work remotely across the county, rather than needing to come to the office daily. However, they would still be required to work in an office from time to time.
19. No unexpected difficulties in recruiting for the new job vacancies were experienced. The contract managers were cut from the previous contract, and three new contract managers appointed.
20. Four depots were to be vacated (Bowerhill, Churchfields, Bath Road and Kennet House) and two new depots were to be used (Melksham and Junction 17 of the M4). The potential shared use of High Post and co-location with Wiltshire Council at the Melksham depot was to be investigated in the future.
21. The pricing information submitted by bidders allowed calculations to be performed and used when assessing the impact of the new contract on the council's 2016/17 financial plan.
22. A Performance Management Framework was being prepared in accordance with the latest highways asset management guidance. It contained a suite of performance measures based on the themes of:
 - a. Network Safety Condition and Resilience
 - b. Planned Maintenance
 - c. Maintenance for Sustainable Transport
 - d. Infrastructure to Support Economic Growth
 - e. Environmental Sustainability
 - f. Customer

23. The task group's work with helping decide the performance indicators focused on the Customer.
24. As part of their work, members of the Task Group were invited to form one of the focus groups contributing to the 2016 LGA Peer Review of the council's highways service. One of the main focuses for the review was to share experience of how a Highways and Transport Service can better contribute to an area's vision.
25. From the Peer Review the following 10 actions were agreed:
 - a. Develop a vision for Highways service
 - b. Develop a Performance Framework
 - c. Implement a Learning & Development Framework
 - d. Review role of CATGs
 - e. Transform Winter maintenance
 - f. Move into Department for Transport's Band 3
 - g. Innovation
 - h. Improve Supply Chain management
 - i. IT systems
 - j. Major schemes pipeline management
26. From these actions, it was agreed that the one which would specifically benefit from input from the task group was setting performance targets for the whole service area from the perspective of members of the public.

Key Performance Indicators

27. As previously stated, under the new contract the council can award six-month extensions for every year that KPI targets are delivered, up to a total of 2 years. Extensions can also be removed by the council if performance is not deemed satisfactory.
28. Support from the Highways and Street Scene task group in "setting performance targets" was agreed at a meeting with the Peer Review Team, with attendance from highways managers and Carlton Brand. Setting performance targets was one of ten actions agreed at the meeting.
29. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) had been set for the contracts themselves already. The new work was to agree KPIs with the contractors as part of a performance framework for the service area (e.g. what are the expectations / priorities for members of the public and how can performance for these be measured). These KPIs would include measures for the masonry and pothole workforce.
30. Ringway was working with Wiltshire Council to develop the KPIs, as this had been a short mobilisation period and the KPIs had not yet been fully developed. The KPI's for the service would sit as a part of the overall performance management framework.

31. The following themes were recommended for inclusion in the performance measures:
 - a. Network Safety Condition and Resilience
 - b. Planned Maintenance
 - c. Maintenance for Sustainable Transport
 - d. Infrastructure to Support Economic Growth
 - e. Environmental Sustainability
 - f. The Customer

32. The task group received a Highways Performance Management report which detailed the overall performance management framework for the service. The report detailed the following Highway Contract Performance indicators:
 - a. General Management
 - b. Financial Management
 - c. Customer Service and Quality
 - d. Health and Safety
 - e. Staffing Issues
 - f. Service Development and Innovation
 - g. Information Technology
 - h. Environmental Management
 - i. Technical Performance - Quality
 - j. Technical Performance Programme and Cost

33. Wiltshire Council had signed up to the National Highways and Transport Public Satisfaction (NHT) Survey. This survey is carried out by Ipsos MORI for the National Highways and Transport Network of local authorities across England.

34. The survey collects data on “Key Benchmark Indicators (KBIs)” through samples of around 2000 members of the public, which are selected to provide a representative selection of Wiltshire’s public. Questions asked include the condition of pavements; safe crossing provision; roadwork helplines; road markings; street lighting; and repair speeds.

35. The results from the NHT are used to understand what people in the covered area think about the services. Statistics from the NHT survey were to be included as part of the proposed KPIs.

36. It was noted that the above report suggested data from the MyWiltshire system would be used to inform the KPIs. Both the time taken to fix a problem and “reactive” maintenance could be measured through the MyWiltshire system. Information from the system could provide real-time data that could be broken down for reports to individual area boards.

Monitoring of the New Contract

37. The following two methods of monitoring the contract are currently used:
 - a. Monthly Satisfaction Score
 - b. Score against Contract Objectives

38. An annual score is produced for each of these methods used to calculate whether a contract extension could be awarded. Scores from 6.0 to 7.9 would lead to a three-month extension, and scores of 8.0 and over would lead to a six-month extension.
39. The satisfaction scores from the NHT survey were produced with comparisons to other counties in the south west. These included Gloucestershire, Somerset, Dorset, Devon, Hampshire and Cornwall.
40. It was noted that the data from NHT does not cover street scene entirely, and that this would need to be covered in the KPIs.
41. The highways indicators noted in para 32 would be included in the proposed KPIs. The scoring system requires each organisation (Wiltshire Council; Ringway; and Atkins) to score each other based on performance. Scoring is based on answering several questions based on the ten objectives mentioned in para 33.
42. These indicators were suggested by the contractor during the procurement and formed part of the quality submission and were being developed in discussions between Ringway and Wiltshire Council.
43. The factors considered in the creation of the highways contract indicators included: ease to do business with; ability to work as a team; and promises trust and honesty, as well as the more typical performance to time and budget measures. The question used to gather data aimed to help build up a broader picture of performance by the partners and assist with the management of the contract as they are reported to the Service Delivery Teams and Contract Management Meetings.
44. It was asked by the task group if these would necessarily be KPIs that the public would have any interest in, or if they were for purely professional scoring.

Conclusions

Highways Peer Review 2016

45. Members of the Highways Contract Task Group took part in the peer review. As part of this they were interviewed by the review team as a Focus Group. With the outcomes of the review fed back into the Environment Select Committee.
46. The reinstatement of the Parish Steward scheme was supported by the task group. It was noted it would further empower parish councils and communities. It would also assist in CATGs helping to manage local expectations, allowing local communities to resource, influence and deliver services.
47. The task group agreed that all councillors would be informed or reminded of the existence of the grass and grounds maintenance maps for their area, which had been sent to parish councils, and that the maps should be made available to Wiltshire Councillors on request.

48. It was concluded that the highways service should investigate available IT systems support integration and workflow and feedback. From the work of the task group this included the use of the MyWiltshire system in supporting the collecting of highways data.
49. The Peer Review also concluded that local delivery and decision making was effective, with Area Boards which have devolved decision-making and increased community involvement. This needed to be supported with the development and monitoring of customer-oriented KPIs for the service.

Highways Service Workshop

50. The task group held a workshop event with officers with the aim of supporting the Highways Service to develop a performance framework for the whole service, which would enable the public to understand performance for the service (and what they could expect).
51. Considerable discussion about each of the services offered by both Highways and Amenities led to the identification of five general areas in which performance would be important to the public at large and which could be applied across the whole service area.

52.

	Performance Area	Example Measure
1	Responsiveness - to receive a timely and accurate acknowledgment then a timely and accurate response (emphasis on un-ambiguous wording to avoid issues such as irritation caused by the system referring to work being “completed” when it had been referred to another team for action);	Average time taken to acknowledge receipt of a highway or street scene report.
2	Feedback – to provide information on the reasons for a decision (particularly a “negative” response as this may prevent customers reiterating their request(s) or at least will provide officers with a response they can keep using);	Proportion of reports that receive feedback within the target time scale.
3	Information – to promote understanding of the service on offer including the reasons for decisions (e.g. grass cutting), and the programmes of work (if this information is kept up-to-date and accurate it can be linked to / referred to in responses to customer – rather than be “re-written” every time);	Work schedules published on line
4	Impact – to minimise the disruption that will be caused and maximise the positive effect on the lives of Wiltshire residents.	Proportion of major highways works completed in given timescale

5	Quality – to ensure timely completion and the quality of work.	Repeat repairs ratio
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53. The importance of not adding to the workload of the service was considered. The task group therefore agreed that making use of data already being collected, or planned to be collected was essential.
54. In terms of providing clear information at the right time the task group suggested that the following should be considered by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport:
- a. To have a generic road works sign that would refer to the Wiltshire Council website for further information on the works being carried out (recommendation 7);
 - b. A generic sign with date to be inserted could also be used where a problem has been identified and agreed that work would take place but will not yet start immediately. This should also note more information is available on the council website. This may also avoid people reporting an issue that has already been reported (recommendation 8).

Key Performance Indicators

55. The task group considered that the indicators included in the Highway Performance Management report should be included in the final proposed KPI's (appendix 3) (recommendation 1).
56. However, concern was expressed regarding the potential lack of customer oriented KPIs. They were not covered sufficiently in the Highways Performance Management report as part of their proposed indicators. It is important to have indicators that Wiltshire residents can understand and care about.
57. Data comparisons with other Local Authorities were important to view the indicators in the context of other local authority areas. This was an option available to the data gathered by the annual NHT Survey. When possible this should be done with all data.
58. However, the annual nature of the NHT Survey was considered as being too infrequent to rely on, as it may take too long locating and highlighting any issues.
59. It was noted that the NHT Survey does not cover street scene in its questions. However, task group also noted that street scene data was included in the highways contract scoring data.
60. Officers explained that a draft public satisfaction survey was being developed for street scene, and that scrutiny were welcomed to offer their comment on the proposals. The task group welcomed this offer (recommendation 5).
61. However, the NHT data collected was considered sufficiently customer oriented along the six themes of: Accessibility; Public Transport; Walking & Cycling;

Tackling Congestion; Road Safety; and Highway Maintenance & Enforcement. The presentation of the data providing quick visual impressions of strengths and weaknesses, current situation, and performance in relation to other areas was also considered customer friendly (appendix 1 & 2).

62. The task group supported the following indicators from the NHT Survey (recommendation 2):
 - a. Condition of pavements.
 - b. Provision of safe crossing points.
 - c. Dropped kerb crossing points.
 - d. Helplines to find out more about roadworks.
 - e. Condition of road markings.
 - f. Speed of street lighting repairs.
 - g. Quality of repair to damaged roads and pavements.
 - h. Weed killing on pavements and roads.
 - i. Keeping drains clear and working.
 - j. Undertakes cold weather gritting.
 - k. Dealing with potholes and damaged roads.
 - l. Conditions of highways.
 - m. Speed of repair to damaged roads and pavements.
63. Once finalised the task group decided that it would be useful to offer Environment Select the opportunity to monitor the NHT scoring on an annual basis to act as an impartial monitoring body (recommendations 3 & 4).
64. It was important to note that the data from the Highways Contract Scoring was scored against contract service levels, not public expectations. So whilst they provided useful data, they were not specifically designed for the public and instead they were primarily for professional use.
65. The relaunch of the MyWiltshire system to use in the gathering of data for service monitoring was supported by members. The information gathered by the system was real-time data, so would provide the most up to date information. The latest data from the MyWiltshire system should be broken down to area board level and be made available to the boards for information at their meetings. This would support the 2016 Highway Peer Review conclusion that Area Boards which have devolved decision-making and increased community involvement (recommendation 10).
66. The task group wanted to be sure that a standard was set for the clearing and state of gullies across the county, and requested that to do this all the gullies be surveyed (recommendation 9).

Proposal

67. To endorse the report of the Task Group and refer it to the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste for response at the Committee's next meeting.

Recommendations

That the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste:

- 1. Continues to use the Monthly Satisfaction Scores and Score against Contract Objectives to monitor the Wiltshire Highways Contract.**
- 2. Continues to use the National Highways and Transport Network Survey Report to provide customer-oriented KPI measurement of the Wiltshire Highways Contract.**
- 3. Presents the Annual National Highways and Transport Network Survey Report to the Environment Select Committee for their monitoring and consideration.**
- 4. Requests the attendance of a representative, if available, from the National Highways and Transport Network when presenting their Survey Report to the Environment Select Committee.**
- 5. Continues development of the public satisfaction survey for street scene key performance indicators and includes collaboration with Overview and Scrutiny in this work.**
- 6. Progresses the improved co-ordination of road works with relevant utility bodies and departments to ensure efficiency and minimal public disruption from road closures and repairs.**
- 7. Develops generic road work signs which refer the public to the Wiltshire Council website for further information on the works being carried out.**
- 8. Develops a generic highways sign which can be used where a highways issue has been identified, and it has been agreed that work would take place, but will not yet start immediately.**
- 9. Initiates a survey of the gullies in Wiltshire to ensure that a standard is set for their status and clearing.**
- 10. Continues to investigate the use of the MyWiltshire System in collecting real-time highways data and breakdown of data into Area Board level reports for consideration at Area Board meetings.**

Cllr Bob Jones MBE, Chairman of the Highways and Street Scene Task Group

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Appendices

Appendix 1: NHT Survey Report 2017: Summary Report for Wiltshire

Appendix 2: NHT Survey Report 2017: Question by Question Results for Wiltshire
Appendix 3: Ringway Infrastructure Services, Year 1: Monitoring the contractor's performance through Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) and Monthly Staff Satisfaction Scores.

Background documents

None