

**Open Report on behalf of Richard Wills, Executive Director for  
Environment and Economy**

Report to:	<b>Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date:	<b>13 July 2015</b>
Subject:	<b>Enhancing our Users' Experience</b>

**Summary:**

To brief the Councillors on actions being taken in enhancing our users' experience with regard to the highways and transport services.

**Recommendation(s):**

To discuss contents of this report, note steps being taken to enhance our users' experience and agree to receive a further report in six months' time.

**1. Background**

- 1.1 At the time of Senior Management Review in summer 2014, it was recognised that we needed to improve highways and transport services user experience. Recognising the need, the position of Network Manager South was allocated the county-wide responsibility for this.
- 1.2 Since then various reviews have highlighted the importance of Customer Engagement if we are to keep on being a 'high performing' authority. This also has the potential of increasing reward funding that we receive from the Department for Transport and positions us well to bid for other one-off funding opportunities.
- 1.3 To brief the Councillors on actions being taken in improving the user's experience with regard to the highways and transport services.

**2. Details**

*Communication Strategy*

- 2.1 Working with the Executive Portfolio Holder and Communications Team, a review was done to improve the way we communicate highway services with the users and a Communication Strategy was developed in summer 2014, identifying a number of actions. Discussions were held in May 2015 to

assess progress and to re-launch this strategy. The strategy is attached with this report as Appendix A.

#### *Major Urban Area Webpages*

- 2.2 Following positive feedback from the Lincoln major projects webpage that was launched in autumn 2014, we are extending this to the other major centres within the County. Arrangements have been made to publish a webpage for Grantham and it is intended that Boston will follow.
- 2.3 With the above webpages, weekly updates or whenever there is change, information will be uploaded on the website for the users to view. There is a facility within this for the customers to subscribe to get the updates as they happen.

#### *LAGAN (Lincolnshire Citizen Portal)*

- 2.4 As part of the Future Delivery of Support Services Programme (FDSSP), a contract has been awarded to SERCO that commenced on 1 April 2015. One element of this contract is Customer Services Centre (CSC) provision.
- 2.5 Since summer 2014, as part of the transition arrangements, a number of highways staff and CSC staff have been working with SERCO to develop a web based system called LAGAN for transforming the customer journey. SERCO already provide this system to Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and we visited HCC to see how we can use this system to improve highways customers' experience in Lincolnshire.
- 2.6 Highway customers generally contact the service direct through the highways office or through the CSC, using our web site, via telephone, in writing, by email or in person. The highways service has already been putting more information on the web, which has supported channel shift and encouraged self-service. As part of the LAGAN system, we intend to include more highway related matters for electronic transactions e.g. applications and payments for highway licenses. We will also be investigating, as part of the channel shift proposed, what additional functionality within the highways and transport service areas could be better dealt with through the CSC.
- 2.7 LAGAN system was launched on 18 June 2015. Various presentations have been made to the Councillors and Officers in preparation for the launch. Feedback received has been analysed and taken on board wherever possible before the system launch. The system will be continually updated to make sure that it is as user friendly as possible.
- 2.8 In terms of future actions, LAGAN presentation is to be arranged for the Parish Councils and relevant communications will be issued to make customers aware and encourage them to use the system.

### *Highways Alliance 60*

- 2.9 At the Alliance 60 event on 15 January 2015, a workshop was held to address the following 3 questions:
- a. What needs to happen to improve the way we all interact with our customers?
  - b. What are the barriers to measuring the customer experience across the whole journey? And what are the solutions?
  - c. What can we do to be more proactive in engaging with our customers? And what are the benefits and pitfalls?
- 2.10 From the above workshop the following actions have been highlighted.
- a. Actively promote our services, informing people what we do and why we do it by tapping into local newspapers, local magazines, Parish newsletters etc.
  - b. E-mail updates to people registered on website, twitter, facebook etc.
  - c. FAQs on website with regard to key services.
  - d. Improve communication with CSC Advisors with timely and accurate information.
  - e. Journey time information on website, e.g. roadworks.org.
  - f. Improve interaction and communication with customers, especially on smaller projects.
  - g. Make major programmes (e.g. surface dressing and patching) available on our website.
  - h. Gather more information (e.g. analysis of calls) from customers to identify themes and target communication.
  - i. Make more use of VMS.

### *Highways Alliance Customer Excellence*

- 2.11 Discussions were held on 2 March 2015 to see what could be done to achieve Customer Experience Excellence. Working with our Alliance partners we aim to deliver a seamless, consistent, high standard of customer experience. Subsequently, an action plan and quality framework was drafted and arrangements are to be put in place to deliver the agreed actions. Examples of simple but effective actions include giving 'tool box' talks to the site operatives to ensure that factual information is being given to the users and to improve works signage, especially when there is no site activity.

### *Works Programmes*

- 2.12 Work is currently underway to address reporting and publications of the works programmes. Highways Alliance is working with Collins in using the Primavera software for regular reporting of the more extensive works programmes. This will help in managing the impact of changes due to

resources or weather and take appropriate actions. In turn, this will assist in giving greater visibility and certainty of delivery of the programme.

### *HMEP Peer Review*

- 2.13 Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme Peer Review was undertaken in March 2015. This involved a number of review teams meeting with Councillors, Senior Management, Highways Alliance Partners, Parish Councils and Highways Officers to review the service that we provide. The review was conducted under 4 headings namely Context & Priority Setting, Planning & Performance, Delivery and Enablers.
- 2.14 Findings of this review were reported to this Committee on 1 June 2015. The following considerations were highlighted in relation to the user experience by this review.
- a. External stakeholders (District Councils, Parish Councils and the wider public) understand the value of an effective asset management approach. This will include the management of expectations as the service becomes more proactive. This consideration will be actioned as part of the communications strategy.
  - b. The customer journey/engagement loop is closed. 'You said/we did and how did that feel for you' is a critical element of the user experience. This consideration too will be actioned as part of the communications strategy.

### **3. Objectives and Outcomes**

- 3.1 The following are key objectives and outcomes.
- a. Further increase shift from personal and paper based transactions to telephone and online services, with the focus for online services.
  - b. Improve service delivery perception and performance against public expectations.
  - c. Improve the customer journey.
  - d. Improve service efficiency by investigating where best the Highways and Transport functionality rests.
- 3.2 The following three key outcomes need to be achieved to ensure that the above objectives are realised.
- a. Provide real time, reliable and accurate information of appropriate quality to enable the road users to plan their journeys.
  - b. Provide maximum flexibility to customers to help themselves in accessing and resolving enquiries relating to the highway services.
  - c. Assist partners in developing and implementing appropriate interfaces.

## 4 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The following working and reporting are suggested for this 'project'.

- a. Lead Responsibility - Network Manager South reporting to Chief Operating Office, Development Services.
- b. Project Team - Liaison with officers from the CSC, SERCO, Communications Team, Highways Alliance and other LCC services.
- c. Reporting - Councillors will be updated regularly on progress with an outcome report brought to the Scrutiny Committee in December 2015.

## 5 Work Schedules and Timescale

5.1 The following work schedules and timescales are suggested for this 'project'.

- a. Re-launch Communications Strategy within service areas - Summer 2015.
- b. LAGAN launch and demonstrations to Parish Councils - Summer 2015.
- c. Works Programmes launch within the service areas - Summer 2015.
- d. Finalise delivery of Highways Alliance Action Plan - Autumn 2015.
- e. Finalise delivery of HMEP Review Action Plan - Autumn 2015.

### a) Policy Proofing Actions Required

N/A

## 6. Appendices

Appendix A - Communication Strategy – Highways and Transportation
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## 7. Background Papers

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
N/A	N/A

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