



Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson, Executive Director for Place

Report to:	Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee
Date:	19 July 2021
Subject:	Highways - Gully Cleansing, Repair and Surface Water Flooding

Summary:

This report sets out the reactive, cyclic, and planned aspects of highways drainage maintenance including low-level flooding response.

Actions Required:

The Committee is asked to consider and comment on the detail contained in the update and recommend any changes or actions.

1. Background

Drainage Cleansing

There are 190,000 highway drainage assets including gullies, Catchpits and Offlets across the county that Lincolnshire County Council is responsible for which are all visited on an annual basis for routine cleansing. For the financial year of 2020/21 I can report the following data:

- 163,000 were cleansed in the routine programme
- 3,000 are being cleansed with a hand digging crew
- 11,500 are cleansed by a traffic management crew and tanker
- 10,000 have defects and require follow up work
- 2,500 have not been cleansed and require follow up work

We now have live data from the field on every asset that is visited and are able to identify issues with performance via a mapping system. This is significant progress on the previous contract where we had only 139,000 cleansed in 2019/20 and were reliant on paper records filled in by operatives

The 11,500 assets requiring specialist traffic management have been arranged into specific routes and that picks up all junctions, roundabouts, level crossing and sites in busy urban

areas. These are problematic sites and having a clear programme for these will remove a number of on-going minor issues that have not been dealt with historically.

To date, there have been 10,000 defects identified during the inspections and these are recorded into four types:

- Jammed lids
- Broken or missing ironwork
- Damaged pots or chambers
- Blocked connections.

Our contractor takes photos of the broken/missing lids and damaged assets when they raise them as defects. This helps the local teams assess whether it needs immediate attention or can be planned for a later date. This has been a real time improvement, which helps to manage the coordination of our resources in dealing with the emergency works as the main priority.

We currently have eight tankers on this contract working in Lincolnshire on a daily basis. There are six on routine cleansing, one completing the traffic management sites and one doing jetting works on blocked assets.

Customer Transactions

When the public report blocked drains or flooding through the Customer Service Centre or on the LCC website/Fix My Street, the Local Highways Team will inspect the report on site and the following steps will be provided:

1. If the gully is simply blocked and is either due very shortly on cycling programme (or isn't causing anything other than a minor nuisance) a status will be selected which gives the message "We have assessed your report and the drain will be cleaned on the next programmed schedule."
2. If cyclic cleansing isn't expected shortly, and there is an issue which warrants more immediate intervention, then an off programme jetting job will be raised from site. The customer will receive updates to inform works are scheduled.
3. If more significant drainage works than off-programme jetting is required, then a job will be raised for AJet to investigate/dig down to carry out remedial works.
4. In areas where none of the reactive options are appropriate, either because the issue is very low priority and risk, or because longer term works and investigations with partner authorities are needed which may take over 4 months, a status will be used where the member of the public is notified of "no immediate action proposed" but this is backed up with a bespoke explanation from the officer on the site-specific actions required.

Drainage Improvements

For the financial year 2020/21 and 2021/22 we have been allocated additional funds for dealing with drainage as detailed within Fig.1. We have made some significant progress in delivering a variety of drainage improvements and continue to look for additional funding to address these types of works.

Fig. 1 - Drainage funding 2020/21 and 2021/22

Works Description	Budget	Expenditure
Minor Drainage Improvements 2020/21	£300,000	£436,000
Minor Drainage Improvements 2021/22	£600,000	£237,000
Community Maintenance Drainage Gangs 2020/21	£1,000,000	£975,000
Community Maintenance Drainage Gangs 2021/22	£1,000,000	£240,000
Development Drainage Fund 2020/21 & 2021/22	£2,000,000	£646,000
Total	£4,900,000	£1,766,000

Minor Drainage Improvements

The budget for minor drainage improvement is for small scheme scale works that typically take less than a week to complete and include a variety of works as detailed below:

- Replacing sections of damaged highway pipes
- Installing additional gullies and manholes where ponding occurs
- Increasing the size and capacity of the drainage system over small lengths
- Repairing bank or ditch slips

The funding for 2021/22 has been increased from £300,000 to £600,000 to deal with more of these local issues and also pick up small schemes that occur during each period of severe weather and have been reported to the Local Highways Managers.

Community Maintenance Gangs

We procured 3 Community Maintenance drainage gangs in 2020/21 which have been responding to a variety of local issues not covered by either the reactive or planned budgets. Funding has been made available for this to continue in 2021/22, which offers an opportunity to continue dealing with known issues and offer an improved customer service.

When the off-programme jetting cannot solve a problem, these gangs will carry out a more detailed investigation. They are set up with CCTV equipment and tools to carry out minor civils repairs or root cutting, etc. We have been focussing the programme of works for these crews on longstanding highways drainage issues which were exposed during recent flooding events and are not necessarily just down to blocked gullies.

To date these crews have attended and dealt with 180 sites, with a further 190 designed and scheduled for the rest of the year. We will continue to adjust this programme as more detail is collected from any heavy rainfall events where remediation work is identified and agreed.

Development Drainage Funding

Last year there was a successful Invest to save bid approved by councillors of £2.2million pounds and allocated to the Floods and Water Team. This includes £2m for works and £0.2m for specialist design resources. A programme of works has been developed in collaboration between the Floods and Water Team, the local Highways teams, and the asset teams to pick up known schemes.

We have delivered a variety of schemes to date to the value of £700,000 and the remaining budget will be spent within 2021/22.

Our contractors Balfour Beatty have identified additional resources for delivering these works and we have also employed additional specialist drainage engineers to complete all investigation and design work on the more complex schemes that our Technical Services Partnership design team is overseeing.

Flooding Response Data and S19 Investigations

The benefits of the Confirm Connect system mean that ER crews attending flooding reports as first responders are able to capture photos on site and document extent and severity of flooding, which can then be used to inform follow up response as well as Section 19 investigations by the Floods and Water Management team where internal property flooding has occurred.

We have mapped all flooding and drainage reports through the CSC and Fix My Street for the last 10 years and are currently overlaying this with the S19 data from the Floods and Water team to ensure that the two sets of data do correlate, and also to inform the prioritisation of the various levels of work identified in this report.

2.

Conclusion

The Committee is asked to consider and comment on the detail contained in the report and recommend any changes or actions to the Executive Member for Highways, Transport and IT. They are also asked to consider and comment on the collaborative working across directorates and with partners.

3. Consultation

a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out??

No

b) Risks and Impact Analysis

N/A

4. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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