



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

Report to:	Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee
Date:	22 May 2023
Subject:	Highways - Gully Cleansing/Repair and Surface Water Flooding Update

Summary:

This report sets out the recent developments that have or are about to take place with respect to highway drainage asset management.

The report aims to ensure the Committee is updated on all aspects of highway drainage asset management and that any comments or recommended changes or actions are recorded to inform future decisions.

Actions Required:

The Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee is invited to:

- (1)** Consider and comment on the detail contained in the update; and;
- (2)** Recommend any changes or actions to relevant Officers and Executive Portfolio Holders.

1. Background

This report provides an update on the actions and initiatives that are currently taking place with respect to the development of the highway drainage asset management function within the Highways Service.

Since the previous report the following has or is about to be actioned:

Highway Drainage Legacy Data Capture (HDLDC) – Phase 1

This phase of the project is now virtually complete and is ready for transfer to our asset management system.

Over 150 recently adopted developments have been reviewed and additional data harvested from digital drawings and classified under one of 13 active drainage asset classes, such is the complexity of modern highway drainage systems.

This additional data will support the forward planning for major maintenance interventions such as whole system cleansing operations, which will be extra over current cyclic programmes, and it will also allow the development of cyclic maintenance for critical ancillary assets such as flow control devices.

Legacy Data Capture - Phase 2 will commence this year and will commence the review of existing paper-based records and drawings.

Parish Drainage Data Initiative

An online reporting page on the 'Let's Talk Lincolnshire' platform is being developed to allow uncharted drainage assets to be highlighted for assessment. The reporting page will be made available to parish councils and county councillors so we can utilise their local knowledge and identify missing or lost assets.

Briefly, once logged into to the reporting page, all existing recorded assets highway drainage assets will be shown on a map within a parish boundary. A simple menu will allow users to selected predetermined features and add them onto the map at the correct location. There is also a facility to upload a photograph of the asset and add comments. Full instructions on use will be provided once the page is ready to be launched.

The page will close on a predetermined date when the data collected will be assessed, with respect to ownership, and if deemed a highway asset will be added to our asset management system. If appropriate, we will advise other Risk Management Authorities that we believe the asset may fall within their remit for maintenance.

As with the HDLDC project, this initiative will further enhance our data set on highway drainage assets. The page is expected to go live during June 2023.

Gully Cleansing

The gully cleansing cycles are on target and there has been a much-improved performance from the teams in terms of capturing defects accurately including a photograph. This will improve the efficiency of the decisions made for urgent or early interventions along with programming the rectification of less serious defects.

Gully Cleansing Media Campaign

A media campaign was launched recently to highlight the issues of vehicles blocking access to road gullies. This typically occurs in urban areas with high levels of street parking.

We are currently unable to reach around 2500 gullies meaning they can't be cleaned out and eventually, over time, they will become blocked which could eventually lead to flooding.

The media campaign is raising awareness of the issues our crews come across and how the public can help, from taking note of the early notification signs to moving their vehicles prior to cleansing taking place.

Blocked Gully Lateral Trial

During the gully cleansing process, it is often found that the lateral (the pipe connecting the gully to the main drain) is blocked and can't be readily cleared by the gully cleansing teams with the equipment they have. Blockages can be caused in many ways, but examples are roots from nearby trees and bushes, pipes that have slipped or are crushed and /or accumulations of larger pieces of litter or debris.

A trial has taken place utilising a higher-powered jetting machine that also carries root cutting equipment and a CCTV camera for inspecting the laterals. The data received is still being validated but early indications are that, in the four trial locations, a blockage clearance success rate of over 90% has been obtained. For laterals that can't be cleared in this way, the CCTV footage of the lateral and its defect will be assessed to determine the most appropriate intervention method for permanent repair.

The trial is being extended this financial year.

Pollution Control Device Cleansing

Cleansing of our pollution control devices commenced last financial year with 14 completed. The remainder will be cleansed this year.

These devices prevent contaminants in the highway runoff polluting the natural environment.

Minor Drainage Works Programme

An exercise is underway to ensure all proposed minor drainage works are captured as a Forward Programme Brief to give a high level of visibility of proposed schemes.

In conjunction with the above, the development of minor schemes is being transitioned from 'investigate, design and construct' in one year to 'investigate and design' in one year and undertake construction the following year. The reason for the change is the increasing complexity of the issues raised and the time needed to formulate an appropriate solution, as well as to add increased certainty in terms of delivery and cost. The two-year cycle also allows the opportunity to engage with other Risk Management Authorities and develop schemes in partnership where there are common issues.

Allowance will be made in the programme for urgent and unplanned works to be undertaken in year.

Major Drainage Works Programme

As with the Minor Drainage Works Programme an exercise is underway to ensure all proposed works are captured with a Forward Programme Brief to ensure that high level of visibility.

Works to be undertaken within this programme this year are:

Whole highway drainage system cleansing – supplementing the ongoing cyclic drainage maintenance, this will entail the complete cleanse of highway drainage systems including, but not limited to carrier pipes, combined kerb drains, storm water storage tanks and ancillary components such as flow controls and penstocks. The initial focus will be on our primary route network and housing developments with critical assets that manage flood risk. The data from HDLDC -phase 1 will support the identification and assessment of need for these projects.

Highway Drainage Legacy Data – Phase 2 - similar to Phase 1 mentioned earlier, Phase 2 will commence this financial year utilising existing paper records such as adopted development drawings and highway scheme drawings.

Pollution Control Device Signing –following the recent and pending cleansing exercise it is proposed to sign each pollution control device to recognised national standards. This will ensure timely interventions should incidents occur on our highway network that involve spillages.

Defective Gully Grates and Chamber Covers – a programme of work is being developed to reduce the number of outstanding defective gully grates and chambers identified as part of the gully cleansing programme. These are defects that do not require urgent attention to make safe but will include ironwork that is cracked or seized. The repairs will be a permanent undertaking.

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.

3. Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

As this is an update report inviting comment and questions, no decisions are being proposed for Scrutiny and so an Impact Assessment has not been carried out. The report updates on the results of previous decisions which have been subject to risk an impact analysis.

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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