

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee - 5 December 2018

**Subject:** Planning and Delivery of Pavement and Footway Maintenance and the Management of Traffic Flow

**Report of:** Deputy Chief Executive

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## **Summary**

This item seeks to address issues that the Committee has asked officers to report on, namely the communications associated with highway works, the planning and delivery of pavement and footway maintenance and the management of traffic flow across the city.

This written report focuses on the first two of these issues. It explains how planned maintenance work on pavements and footways is communicated to local residents and businesses and how the programme of footpath and pavement maintenance is developed and agreed.

A separate presentation will be given at the meeting by officers from both Transport for Greater Manchester and the City Council on the management of traffic flow. This will include an explanation of how roadworks are planned and what measures are taken to respond to events and incidents to try to ensure that traffic flow is effectively managed.

## **Recommendations**

The committee is asked to note and comment on:

- The arrangements for measuring and assessing pavement and footpath conditions;
  - The methods for communicating about planned maintenance work with local residents and businesses; and
  - The arrangements that are in place to manage traffic flow and respond to incidents and events.
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**Wards Affected:** All

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## Alignment to the Our Manchester Strategy Outcomes (if applicable)

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of the contribution to the strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	A well managed and maintained highway infrastructure will encourage business growth, creating jobs and opportunities
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	The Highways Investment Strategy will provide opportunities for the development of skills.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	The improvements to the roads in the Community Network will contribute towards this strategy.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Safe and improved highways will encourage people to visit, live and work within the City.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	The maintenance of highways is a major contribution to this strategy.

### Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

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**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

- Report to Executive 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015 - Highways Asset Management Policy and Strategy.

## **1 Background**

- 1.1 Manchester's highway network includes over 1,350 km of road length, 2,600 km of footway length and over 350 bridges and structures. Based on the latest valuations, the total highway asset has an indicative gross replacement value of over £2.7billion, making it the Council's most valuable asset.
- 1.2 The network is used daily by the majority of people who live or work in the city and by those who visit Manchester. It is therefore fundamental to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the community. It helps to shape the character and quality of the local areas that it serves and makes an important contribution to wider local authority priorities, including growth & regeneration, social inclusion, community safety, education and health.
- 1.3 This item reports on highways related address that the Committee has asked officers to report on; namely the communications associated with highway works, the planning and delivery of pavement and footway maintenance and the management of traffic flow across the city.

## **2 Communications**

- 2.1 A Highways Communication Strategy has recently been developed which covers both the delivery of highway maintenance service and the asset information and decision making behind it. The strategy aims to ensure high quality communication between the Council and its stakeholders. The communications approach varies depending on the nature of the work being undertaken be it relatively small scale maintenance or more major highways investment.

### Planned maintenance works:

- 2.2 Whilst the Council will make greater use of web based access to information and social media, there is still a demand for traditional methods of communication. For programmed highways schemes, it is the intention to use the most appropriate communication method for the audience and the message it aims to convey, these include:
  - Keeping local members up to date. As well as informing relevant members on specific schemes in their wards, since June monthly dashboard reports have been trialled in several wards which include reports on the number of gullies cleaned, completed resurfacing schemes and patching repairs carried out. Feedback from members has been sought on this and we are currently reviewing our overall approach of communicating highway works taking place across the city.
  - The Customer Contact Centre - is briefed to deal with and signpost any enquiries regarding the highway network to the most appropriate officers.
  - Neighbourhood teams – Developed work programmes are shared with neighbourhood teams in advance to check against other infrastructure developments in the ward and local priorities. Programme update meetings are then scheduled periodically to keep the teams informed of progress on highway schemes.

- Working directly with TfGM to help put out travel messaging, advising all road users of forthcoming works and potential disruption. (This issue will be covered in more detail during the presentation to the meeting).
  - Media releases – convey important notices and events to local and national media. Information is relayed via our communications team and includes dedicated highways communications weeks, where videos, social media posts and other infographics are used to inform residents of our work and invite feedback on our service.  
Letter Drops – To properties directly affected by MCC road works.
  - Signs – are placed in advance of major works starting, to allow users of the network to change their travel plans, and for local residents and businesses to adjust their arrangements to accommodate the works, with minimum inconvenience and disruption.
- 2.3 Advance notice of the proposed works start are posted on the Greater Manchester Road Activities Permit Scheme (GMRAPS) system to inform other statutory undertakers of the proposals and check for clashes with other programmed infrastructure works.
- 2.4 All relevant key stakeholders are notified as appropriate – e.g. Major employers, bus operators, TfGM, Emergency Services, Housing Associations, Cycle forums etc.
- 2.5 Local members will also be informed of the proposed start dates and where requested, a walkabout / site visit will be arranged to discuss details of the proposed works.
- 2.6 Any required changes to the programme, such as where emergency utility works become necessary, will be discussed and agreed at Highways management board meetings, with any amendments to the schedule communicated to the appropriate locality teams so that local members and residents are kept informed of these changes.
- 2.7 The status and duration of works are updated on the GM roadworks website via GMRAPS - [www.gmroadworks.co.uk](http://www.gmroadworks.co.uk)
- 2.8 In advance of the works starting on site, the contractor will carry out a letter drop to all local residents and businesses on the street informing them of the intended start dates, nature and duration of the works and contact details for the site agent as well as the Council representative. A typical resident's letter is shown in Appendix 2.
- 2.9 When the works are on site, an information board is displayed giving works information and construction related contact details. Notices are also posted on lamp columns etc. giving details of the work duration and requesting residents to keep the road clear of vehicles during this time.

## Large Highway Projects

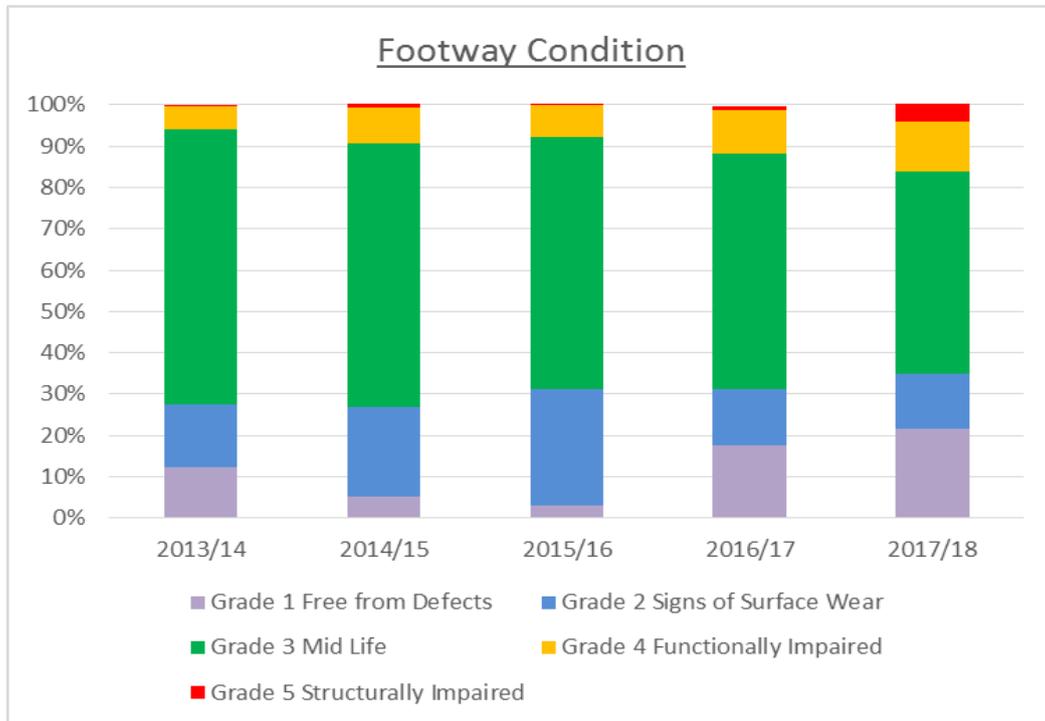
- 2.10 For larger projects, such as the current Water Street / Regent Road scheme, in addition to the above, any significant employers in the vicinity of the works are also identified and mail drops and briefings are used at any applicable meetings/forums. All businesses will be visited and contact details obtained so that regular targeted email updates can be provided. For larger schemes additional publicity is provided through outdoor advertising in advance of the works and social media is used to further raise awareness of what is planned.
- 2.11 Local members are contacted at an early stage to be informed of the proposals and site visits are offered.
- 2.12 Advance warning on key commuter routes using VMS signs provided by the appointed contractor and other partners (TfGM and Highways England) will also be provided where necessary.
- 2.13 An example of a communication that has been sent to occupiers affected by the current Manchester Salford Inner Relief Road works is attached at Appendix 4. In the case of this scheme additional briefing and question and answer sessions have been organised attended by officers from Manchester and Salford City Councils and Transport for Greater Manchester these have included information on next steps and timelines.

## **3 Pavement and Footpath Conditions**

- 3.1 It is important to recognise that National Government funding decisions and resulting under-investment since 2010 has led to significant deterioration of the highway network across the country. Once the condition has fallen into serious disrepair, it becomes much more expensive to rectify.
- 3.2 Each year, we carry out a condition survey of about half of our road and footway network. This means that we have a full network condition update every 2 years.
- 3.3 Our survey contractor collects high quality video images of the network, which are subsequently analysed to categorise road and footway condition into one of the following 5 bandings:

Grade 5 (Red):	Structurally impaired (no residual life)
Grade 4 (Amber):	Functionally impaired (approx. 1 to 3 years of residual life)
Grade 3 (Green):	Mid-life
Grade 2 (Blue):	Aesthetically impaired
Grade 1 (Lilac):	As new
- 3.4 More detail on the condition bandings with example photographs is shown in Appendix 1.
- 3.5 The condition survey carried out in 2017 highlighted the overall deterioration of our highway network and the need for the current investment. The overall

percentage (by area) of our footways rated as condition Grade 4 or 5 (poor) rose from 11% in 2016 to 16% in 2017. Condition ratings for footways since 2013/14 are shown in the chart below:



- 3.6 The survey was carried out before the majority of the year 1 programme was carried out, so is a good indicator of condition prior to investment.
- 3.7 It should be noted that our footway network is in a better condition generally than our roads; the overall percentage (by area) of our roads rated as condition Grade 4 or 5 (poor) has risen from 19% in 2016 to 25% in 2017.
- 3.8 As well as the annual condition surveys, highway inspectors carry out walked and driven safety inspections across all of the adopted highway network at regular frequencies. Every road and footway is inspected at least once every 12 months and some are inspected monthly.
- 3.9 Officers also respond to reports of potholes from local residents and businesses – inspecting them to assess whether they need urgent repair and fixing them where they do - in fact over 20,000 potholes across Manchester have been repaired in the last year.
- 3.10 Our planned programmes of footway maintenance work are developed to prioritise the worst condition footways on the Key Route Network (KRN) and Community Network (CN) and tie in with the road resurfacing programme where possible. Works involve resurfacing or overlay of the existing footway, with kerb replacement where required.

- 3.11 Neighbourhood teams are consulted on the proposed programmes at an early stage to check that they include as many local priorities as possible and do not clash with any other known development works. Residents' views that came from 'Our Manchester' Highways week are also considered.
- 3.12 Feedback from local members is subsequently sought on the draft programmes, following which the lists of schemes were finalised. The programmes are then taken through to scrutiny committee for members to scrutinise and comment on, and then taken to executive for final approval. The Council website is being updated to allow the approved maintenance programmes to be visible online.
- 3.13 Investment programmes are subject to approval by Delegated Powers and agreement from the Executive Member for the Environment, Planning and Transport.
- 3.14 Once our maintenance team have allocated the work to our framework contractors, works are programmed taking into account available resources, traffic management restrictions and estimated duration. Appropriate diversion plans are drafted that can be agreed with the network resilience team to try and minimise any disruption.
- 3.15 The approved footway resurfacing and overlay programmes for 2018/19 and 2019/20 are attached at appendix 3. This programme was considered by Scrutiny Committee on 23 May 2018 and was approved at Executive on 30 May 2018.

## **4 Managing Traffic Flow**

- 4.1 The management of traffic flow in Greater Manchester is a joint responsibility between the City Council, as the local highway authority and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM). TfGM have responsibility for the day to day management of the Urban Traffic Control system including the installation and maintenance of traffic signals. A presentation will be provided at the meeting to explain the roles, responsibilities and processes that are in place to manage traffic flow across the city, including how incidents are responded to and events are planned for.

## **5 Contributing to the Manchester Strategy**

### **(a) A thriving and sustainable city**

- 5.1 A well maintained highway infrastructure will encourage business growth, creating jobs and opportunities.

### **(b) A highly skilled city**

- 5.2 The Highways Investment Strategy will provide opportunities for the development of a variety skills within the highways industry.

### **(c) A progressive and equitable city**

- 5.3 The improvements to the roads on the Community Network will contribute towards unlocking the potential of our communities.

**(d) A liveable and low carbon city**

- 5.4 Safe and improved highways will encourage people to visit, live and work within the City.

**(e) A connected city**

- 5.5 A connected city needs a well maintained highway infrastructure and the Highways Asset Management Strategy is targeted to achieving this.

**6 Key Policies and Considerations**

**(a) Equal Opportunities**

- 6.1 A well maintained highway network will improve access for vehicles and enhance pedestrian and cycling facilities, contributing to the corporate objectives of making the environment accessible to all and creating neighbourhoods of choice. Where appropriate Equality Impact Statements will be undertaken

**(b) Risk Management**

- 6.2 Coordinated maintenance works will reduce the risk of traffic disruption and help to keep the highway network functioning.

**(c) Legal Considerations**

- 6.3 The Council has a duty under the Highways Act 1980 to carry out highway maintenance.