



Environment & Transport Select Committee
10 September 2014

Gully Cleaning Update

Purpose of the report: Scrutiny of Services and Budgets

To update the Select Committee on highway gully cleaning.

Introduction:

1. The routine cleaning of highway drains has continued to be an important issue for the council particularly during and after the challenges of the recent severe winter weather. This report provides an update on recent gully cleaning operations and the introduction of a new targeted cleaning programme.

Recent Gully Cleaning Operations

2. Given the significant impact of the severe weather during the last winter, our gully cleaning operations have needed to remain flexible during this period. Routine activities have continued, albeit suffering some minor delays and additional cleaning has been necessary to deal with the weather related impact.
3. Typically there are on average eight cleaning machines on the highway network every day. This resource includes machines that will clean gullies, resolve blocked connections and clean soakaways. During the severe weather gully machines were being diverted from routine cleaning to assist with the immediate highway response. This approach was necessary to manage the volume of calls during this period although it did impact on the 2013/14 cleaning programme, extending the duration of the programme by approximately four weeks.
4. In addition to the normal resource levels an extra five gully machines were utilised during and after this period to deal with the increased demand for immediate response and also to assist with the clear up operation, targeting additional cleaning in affected roads.

5. The minor repairs programme continued throughout the period, delivering a total of 341 drainage investigations and repairs in 2013/14. This programme has continued into 2014/15. Additional soakaway cleaning has also been prioritised for 2014/15 in response to the demand following the severe weather.

Revised Gully Cleaning Programme

6. As discussed previously, the 2014/15 routine cleaning programme has been developed to target the cleaning based on achieving desired silt levels. As a reminder, the requirements are that Surrey priority network (SPN) 1, 2 and 3 roads do not contain more than 50% silt and the SPN 4 roads do not contain more than 70% silt at any time.
7. The contractor has reviewed previous data inspection records, some going back to 2007 and calculated average silt level for each road. These have then been considered against each SPN category and a risk category applied as follows;

<u>SPN Levels</u>	<u>Average Silt Level</u>	<u>Risk Factor</u>
SPN 1, 2 & 3	Less Than 25%	Low Risk
SPN 1, 2 & 3	Between 25% - 50%	Medium Risk
SPN 1, 2 & 3	Above 50%	High Risk
SPN 4	Less Than 36%	Low Risk
SPN 4	Between 36% - 70%	Medium Risk
SPN 4	Above 70%	High Risk

8. From the three risk categories identified we have then produced a targeted two year cleaning programme. Cleaning against each of the categories will be carried out as follows; for High Risk it will be every six months, Medium Risk will be every 12 months and Low Risk will be every 24 months. Based on the initial programme calculations, across Surrey, 12 % of the gullies will be cleaned every six months, 40 % will be cleaned every 12months and 48% will be cleaned every 24months.
9. The silt levels are monitored during the course of the cleaning programme and any road that either exceeds its' average silt level or dramatically fails to meet it will have the cleaning frequency adjusted accordingly.
10. Please note that any blocked drain issues identified through the cleaning programme will be progressed in the usual way, i.e. by using the follow up blocked connection machine. If that fails to resolve the issue, then the location will be considered by the Local Highways Team for detailed investigation and repair works via the Kier Core Maintenance contract.
11. Since commencing the 14/15 targeted programme approximately 30,000 gullies have been cleaned over 1900 roads. This represents just under a quarter of the planned 2014/15 programme, which is approximately 129,000 gully cleans across Surrey. Early monitoring indicates that within the first three months of implementing the programme

approximately 5% of the programme will have the frequency adjusted to reflect the silt level requirement. Further reviews will be required over a longer period to determine if this percentage is representative across the whole programme.

Conclusions:

12. The gully cleaning programme responded well to the challenges of the severe weather, supporting the demand for immediate response and targeting roads for additional cleaning as part of the wider clear up operation.
13. A targeted cleaning programme, based on silt levels, has been introduced for 2014/15 as intended. Early indications on the programme are positive, with targeted levels in the vast majority of cases being as anticipated.

Recommendations:

That the Select Committee notes and comments on the progress of the gully cleaning programme.

Next steps:

The performance of the new targeted cleaning programme will continue to be monitored and adjustments made as required.

Report contact: Lucy Monie, Operations Group Manager, Highways & Transport

Contact details: Tel: 02085419896, email: lucy.monie@surreycc.gov.uk

Sources/background papers:

Gully Cleaning Update Report, Environment and Transport Select Committee
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