



WOKING JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: 4 MARCH 2015
LEAD OFFICER: GEOFF MCMANUS, NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES MANAGER,
WOKING BOROUGH COUNCIL

SUBJECT: WOKING TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT -
UPDATE 2015

AREA: WOKING TOWN CENTRE / GOLDSWORTH EAST & HORSELL
VILLAGE

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

This report is to update the Joint Committee on the progress of the Woking Town Centre Management Agreement since the initial report in June 2014.

Phased transition of the respective highway powers was fully completed on 1 January 2015 and Woking Borough Council are now in a position to manage the defined area of the Town Centre proactively applying all the agreed powers. The Woking Borough Council website has been updated to reflect the changes and the necessary interfaces are in place with Surrey County Council.

The focus continues to be on safety first, enhanced reactive maintenance regimes and planned / enhanced maintenance / management arrangements to complement the larger scale development in the Town.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Woking Joint Committee is asked to note the report.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Continued update on town centre management activity.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

1.1 Following the previous report in June 2014, Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Council officers have continued to work closely to ensure a seamless transition of highway powers for the town centre of Woking.

- 1.2 A process that was fully completed on 1 January 2015 when Woking went live with the formal management, administration and coordination of street works activity in the Town Centre.
- 1.3 Websites have been updated to reflect the changes and the necessary interfaces are in place with Surrey County Council. Applicants for works in Woking Town Centre are now signposted to officers in Woking.
- 1.4 The focus continues to be on safety first with two weekly safety inspections, enhanced reactive maintenance regimes and planned / enhanced maintenance to complement the larger scale development in the Town. Examples are shown later in the report to illustrate some of the numerous workstreams associated with managing a busy and developing Town Centre.
- 1.5 This report is for information.

2. Making A Difference

2.1 Coordination and Works Promotion

All required permit's, licences and related training have been completed to allow Woking Borough Council Officers to manage all contractors working in the Town either by licence or permit utilising the Streetworks Management system.

2.2 Website

A new area on Woking Borough Council website is in place to signpost and process applications for works in the town centre.

2.3 Highway Safety Inspections

Over 400 repairs have been completed in reactive or planned programmes arising from the regular safety inspections. During the first 6 months, the works required have now changed from largely reactive to planned programmes of works aimed at aesthetic rather than safety improvements.

The targeted response times for dealing with different identified hazards during the safety inspection have been successfully achieved using one of the following categories:

- **Urgent**, within 2 hours
- **Dangerous** within 1 day after making safe.
- **Planned** within 28 days

2.4 Road Markings

All road markings within the town centre have now been refreshed.

In the future we propose to undertake this programme every 18 months.



2.5 Drainage and Gully Clearance

Approximately 150 gullies are located within the town centre and have been serviced twice this year to reduce and eliminate any surface water flooding.

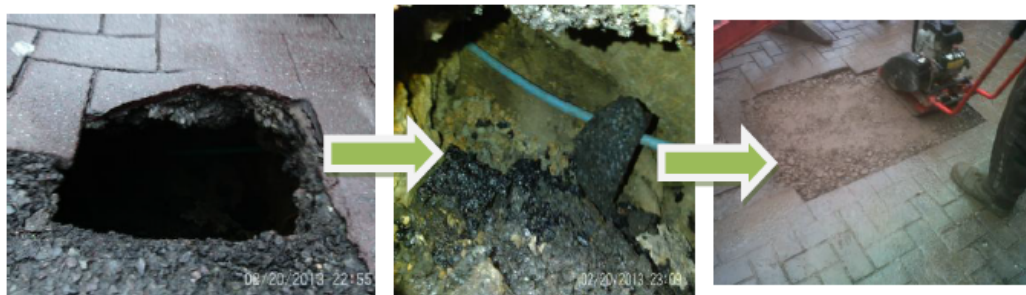
Due to the scale of the task the initial clearance was very slow and incurred extra cost due to the excess amount of silt in the system as shown in the photos below.



2.6 Emergency response

As an example of the proactive work in the town centre there are pictures below of a void that appeared overnight in Chertsey Road.

The response time of the engineering team to make safe, investigate and re-instate the hole that appeared along Chertsey Road was very prompt assisted by the new arrangements. The hole appeared early morning of 29/10/14. An area was cordoned off immediately, investigated by officers and re-instated the same day using the Woking Borough Council term contractor without disruption to the traffic and businesses.



On a slightly different timescale the Engineering Team successfully managed to liaise with Virgin Media to take ownership of the emergency repair of one of its utility covers which is located along Chertsey Road. Further, the permit and related proposed traffic management plan was processed and agreed by the Engineering Team.

The ability to chase, facilitate and achieve long standing utility repairs is another positive outcome of the new arrangements. See below.

Sunken Virgin Media inspection chamber cover in Chertsey Road



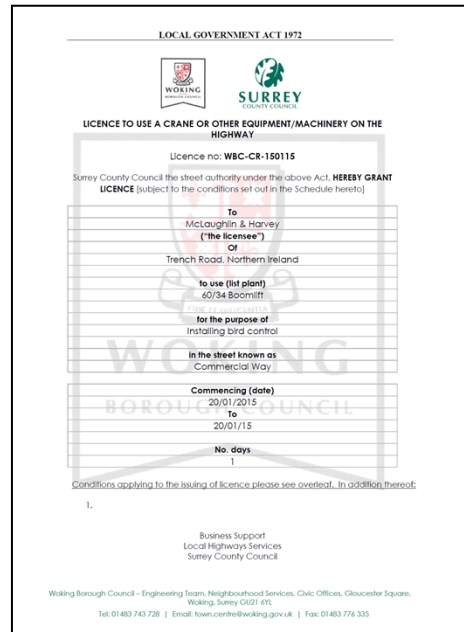
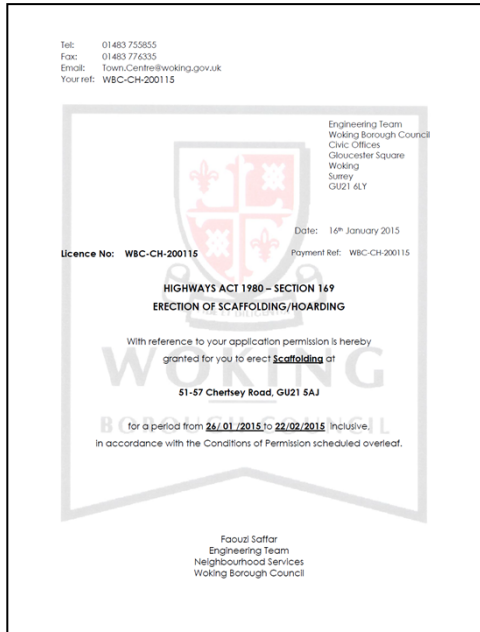
2.7 Directional Signs

Due to the limited available budget this year, the process of changing the faded and damaged signs in the town centre has been slower than we would like. The aim of this task is to assist with clear direction, informing and controlling road user's behaviour in an effort to make the roads within the town centre a safe area and at the same time remove any redundant signs.



2.8 Licensing within the Town Centre

Licensing applications for the town centre are now entirely processed by the Engineering Team from checking insurance details, taking payment to issuing the licence as shown below and monitoring works closely thereafter.



2.9 Bicycle Tags

Suspected abandoned bicycles are being tagged with a Woking Borough Council designed tag for 7 days informing the owner that if the bicycle is not moved within the seven days it will be removed and stored for further 7 days before being disposed of. Practically any bicycles not claimed are being donated to the cycle project in the Borough.



2.10 A Boards in the Town Centre

Promoting and enforcing the Council's procedures relating to A-boards. Working with the shopping centre the Engineering team designed and distributed the attached leaflet.

It is proposed to managed a phased improvement within the town centre to keep the street accessible to all, reducing trip hazards, reducing street clutter and improving the street scene generally

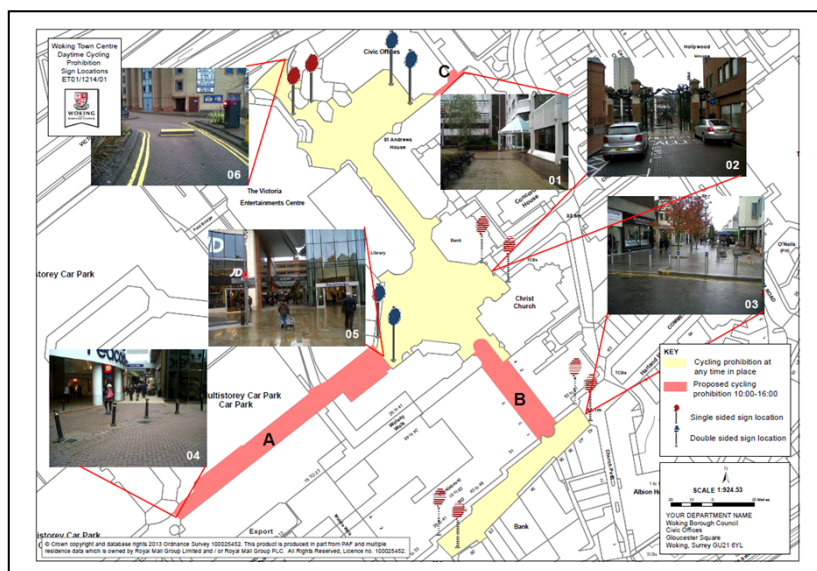


2.11 Cycling Prohibition within the Town Centre

Following the earlier report all related papers have been passed from Surrey County Council officers to the Woking Borough Council Engineering Team.

Officers have liaised directly with the Department for Transport (DfT) for consent in using town centre specific signs to enforce the traffic regulation order. A formal response was received at the end of January and subject to minor clarifications it is anticipated that the signage issued should be resolved at the time the committee report is received.

This leaves the formal processing of the traffic regulation order and supply and installation of the necessary signage during April and May 2015. See plan below.



2.12 Emergency Assistance and Accident Repair Claims

Similar to paragraph 2.6 the Engineering Team has been able to assist the police in securing the accident area below and obtaining the necessary details to claim back related repair expenses.

The accident resulted in damaging two bollards and adjacent footway. The Council's term contractor carried out the works with the cost reclaimed from the insurer.



2.13 Future Improvements

As budgets allow the intention is to look at the following areas in order to upgrade and improve the street scene.

- Chertsey Road (discussions ongoing with Gas Board and Thames Water to complete planned repairs ahead of any proposed improvement).
- Crown Square
- Addison Road Car Park and adjacent Access Road.
- Chapel Street. New Barrier to High Street.
- Church Street East. Town Gate to Church Path.
- High Street and Broadway.

3. OPTIONS:

3.1 Through the tabled report members are able to directly influence the priorities and programme associated with the Town Centre Agreement.

3.2 The programme for further planned improvements will seek to complement wider town centre development and be approved separately in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and the Leader of the Council.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

4.1 The contents of this report has been considered by the Leader of Woking Borough Council, respective Portfolio holders, officers of both authorities and Woking Access Group.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 The agreed revenue budget for 2014/15 of £99,947 has been fully spent in the following areas.

Percentage Budget Spend	Work Area
64%	Reactive day-to-day repairs
5%	Road Markings
5%	Drainage Maintenance
5%	Street Furniture repairs
21%	Planned Improvements

5.2 For 2015/16 the total revenue budget available is made up of the annual maintenance budget of £50,000 per annum jointly funded by Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Council.

5.3 In addition, we have the parking surplus of £89,890.64 confirmed for the financial year 2013/14 making a total revenue budget of £139,890.64 in the new financial year to support the Town Centre Management Agreement.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT:

6.1 All risks are properly managed through the agreed resources and finances of the Town Centre Agreement.

7. LOCALISM:

7.1 The main impact of the Town Centre Management Agreement continues to be upon businesses, residents and visitors to Woking Town Centre.

7.2 Maintenance and improvement works continue to receive a lot of positive comments.

8. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

8.1 Resolution of safety defects and prompt attention to new issues ensures that all town centre users benefit from the new arrangements.

9. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report – however, improved street scene may impact upon individuals behaviour.
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	No significant implications arising from this report.
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report.
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report.
Public Health	Reduction in public insurance claims for potholes and trips.
Human Resource/Training and Development	Training ongoing for Woking Borough Council officers in a variety of disciplines (where possible training opportunities shared with Surrey County Council).

10. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

10.1 The Joint Committee are asked to support the works proposed through the continued operation of the Woking Town Centre Agreement.

10.2 The continuing aim will be to maintain and enhance the Town Centre street scene through the operating of agency powers as outlined in the agreement.

11. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

11.1 Woking Borough Council officers will continue proactive management of the town centre as outlined in this report.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

Respective portfolio holders, Leader of the Council and Council Officers

Borough Portfolio Holder

Councillor Beryl Hunwicks

County Council Cabinet Member

County Councillor John Furey

Annexes:

None

Sources/background papers:

None

