

## Highways Communications - Summary Internal Audit Findings and Recommendations

Annex A

Audit	Background to review	Key findings	Audit opinion	Recommendations for improvement (Priority)
Highways Communication	<p>Surrey County Council (SCC) spends over £32m each year on highways schemes. Each scheme requires communication with a large number of different stakeholders; including county members, internal and external county and borough colleagues, residents, local businesses and emergency services.</p> <p>Concern has previously been expressed by members over the communication between the SCC Highways Team and local community, over the timing of the delivery of some of the works.</p>	<p>The Auditor reviewed the Communications provided for each scheme tested. There were a number of projects where no communications was evidenced. A Communication Strategy has been developed and Communications Manager appointed recently. This should help improve the communications in future.</p> <p>A variation order (VO) is where there are changes to the original contracted works, this can be for changes required for the materials to be used of the quantities. Of the 10 files tested by the auditor, all VO's were issued after the works were completed.</p> <p>In one of the sample tested, there was error in the final account presented by the contractor. The % uplift for 40% for nightwork was calculated against the estimate rather than the final cost. This should have been picked up by the engineer when they checked the final account.</p>	Significant Improvement Needed	<p>Ensure the communication strategy for highways schemes is complied with consistently. <b>(M)</b></p> <p>The Highways Team should ensure VO's are issued promptly and before the works are completed. <b>(H)</b></p> <p>SCC should ensure that all final accounts are carefully checked and the overpayment of £13,000 is recovered from the highways contractor. <b>(H)</b></p>

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