



WOKING JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: 9 MARCH 2016
LEAD OFFICER: GEOFF MCMANUS, NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES MANAGER, WOKING BOROUGH COUNCIL

SUBJECT: WOKING TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT - UPDATE 2016

AREA: WOKING TOWN CENTRE / GOLDSWORTH EAST & HORSELL VILLAGE

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

This report is provided as an update on works related to the Woking Town Centre Agreement from March 2015 to date.

In this period it has been possible for Woking Borough Council Officers to fully manage the Town Centre whilst maintaining regular communication with Surrey County Council Officers. Examples of typical works and key achievements are highlighted within the report.

Moving forward, the operation of the Woking Town Centre Agreement has proven a solid platform in order to build upon and allow further coordinated maintenance works in the Borough.

Any additional works would be a combination of normal highway maintenance functions and opportunities for Woking Borough Council to enhance such activities. All within agreed budgets and no reduction is anticipated to the Woking Joint Committee from the Woking parking surplus as a result of these proposals.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Woking Joint Committee is asked to note the report and support the proposals for officers to work more closely providing maintenance functions across the Borough.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

To support ongoing Town Centre management activity and further joint working to achieve better outcomes for citizens of Woking.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 Following the previous report in March 2015 Woking Borough Council have continued to proactively manage the highway powers for the town centre of Woking.
- 1.2 During the period, efforts have been made to consolidate and refine the key maintenance and streetworks coordination activities whilst maintaining effective and positive relations in the town with businesses, utility companies, developers and Surrey County Council colleagues.
- 1.3 It has also proved possible to change works to a more planned basis rather than reactive which has served to gradually upgrade the streetscene around the town centre.
- 1.4 Following the success to date of the Town Centre Management Agreement and as part of wider discussions with Surrey County Council colleagues it is now proposed to move forward with closer working between officers in the delivery of maintenance services on a Borough wide basis from April 2016 as detailed later in the report.
- 1.5 Woking Joint Committee is asked to note the contents of the report and support the provision of further highway maintenance activity across the Borough.

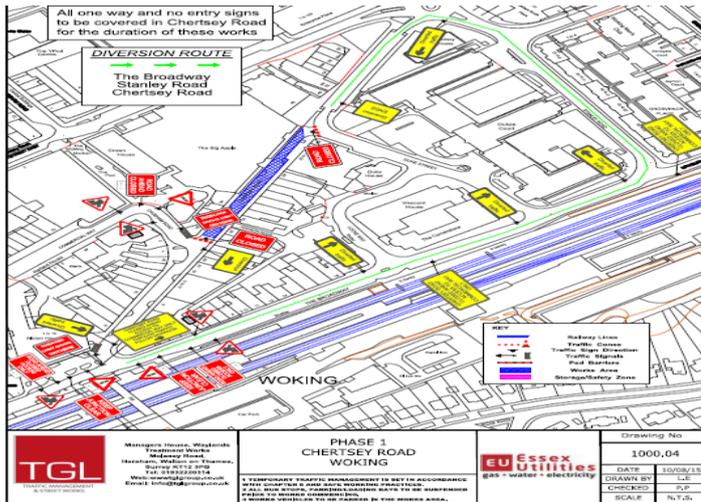
2. Town Centre Management Activities

2.1 Utilities – Streetworks Coordination

Streetworks permits, works licences and temporary road closures are now fully managed by Woking Borough Council officers.

A review meeting was held towards the end of last year to ensure compliance to the Surrey County Council standards applied across Surrey which proved a positive endorsement of the work carried out during the period. Officers regularly attend the Surrey wide Coordination meetings organised by colleagues at Surrey County Council to discuss and update utility companies with any issues related to the town centre.

Numerous utility works have been directly managed during the period. The most recent challenge took place during January 2016 with an application from Southern Gas Network to relay a gas main in Chertsey Road requiring a full road closure. Close working with the utility company and direct liaison with local business resulted in a shorter works duration and the minimum of inconvenience to all concerned.



Diversion plan and works area

2.2 Highway Safety Inspections

The safety inspection regime and associated repairs have proven successful with no claims being made during the period relating to defective paving. The Town Centre Engineering Team completed training during the year and are now registered Highway Inspectors with the Institute of Highway Engineers.

2.3 Road Markings

Works are now programmed every 18 months with the next scheduled road marking programmed due to be completed in spring / summer 2016.

2.4 Drainage and Gully Clearance

Approximately 150 gullies within the town centre have been serviced as planned before the winter season. On this cycle, the clearance operation took more than three days and approximately 4 tonnes of silt was removed.

The works are completed out of hours which generated no complaints from residents and allowed the necessary access without undue delays.



2.5 Emergency response

The prompt response of the engineering team and our partner Serco has been an integral part of the new arrangements acting quickly to reports or hazards encountered through routine inspections.

One example was a water leak that appeared outside Victoria Way car park pedestrian exit toward Church Street East on 4 December 2015, which made the area very slippery and created a hazard for the pedestrians.

As soon as officers discovered the leak, the area was made safe and Affinity as well as Thames Water were made aware to investigate and action. Affinity Water confirmed ownership and urgent repairs were carried out.



In other examples, members of the Engineering Team identified that a contractor carrying out refurbishment works was not safe working safely. As such the works were stopped immediately and the contractor instructed to put in place the necessary traffic and pedestrians management systems to work safely. Elsewhere, successful claims have been pursued where damage has been caused to street furniture.



2.6 Directional Signs

Many of the directional signs in the town centre required attention and therefore replacements were ordered and installed. Approximately 30 signs were installed in

total and stainless steel posts have also been introduced to reduce the cost of future maintenance.



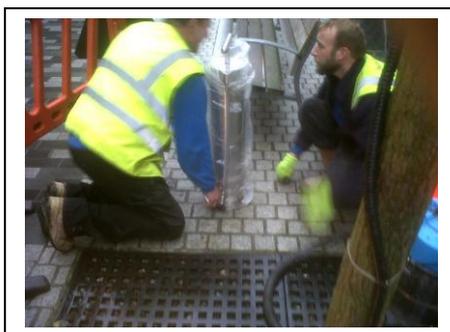
2.7 Licensing within the Town Centre

More than twenty licences have been issued during the period including cranes, skips, scaffolding and hoarding licences. 14 tables and chairs licences have also been issued during the same period.

2.8 Public Bicycle Pump

The Engineering Team successfully applied for a grant to purchase and install two public bicycle pumps within the town centre.

We will also take the opportunity to install further bike stands along Gloucester Walk before the end of March 2016.



Works will be completed between the Town Gates and the junction with Christchurch Way. Starting late February 2016, with an estimated duration of 5 weeks.

All finishes will be consistent with high specification paving recently completed in Commercial way.

2.11 Next Steps

As budgets allow the intention is to upgrade further areas of the Town Centre to complement the larger scale development.

At the same time, it is suggested that the provision of the functions shown below are developed from April 2016 to allow the Borough and County Council to work more closely and effectively.

Functions for Woking Borough Council to assist Surrey County Council colleagues Borough wide

- Road markings – Surrey County Council highway programmes to continue, with the opportunity for Woking Borough Council to supplement, particularly where parking restrictions can be remarked at the same time.
- Road signage, maintenance including cleaning – Surrey County Council highway programmes to continue and the opportunity for Woking Borough Council to supplement, where parking signs can be maintained at the same time.
- Grit bins, maintenance and stocking – Salt would be provided as normal from Surrey County Council with stocking and maintenance undertaken by the Borough contractors who can have spare resource to deploy in adverse weather conditions.
- Hedge notices – Woking Borough Council officers to receive formal delegation to allow officers to serve notices where appropriate. Provides greater coverage and assistance to Surrey County Council officers with continued liaison to avoid duplication.
- Street furniture. Guard rails and bollards – Surrey County Council highway programmes to continue and the opportunity for Woking Borough Council to supplement activity in liaison with Surrey County Council officers.
- Licences – skips, scaffolds, materials, tables and chairs – Reporting and feedback channels to be agreed to allow early identification of issues and early resolution to assist Surrey County Council officers.
- Gully cleansing – Surrey County Council highway programmes to continue and the opportunity for Woking Borough Council to supplement activity in liaison with Surrey County Council officers.
- Highway ditches – Surrey County Council highway programmes to continue and the opportunity for Woking Borough Council to supplement activity in liaison with Surrey County Council officers.

Existing functions currently undertaken by Woking Borough Council are shown below for information.

Street Scene functions currently undertaken by Woking Borough Council

- Town Centre Management Agreement
- On Street Parking – Agency – 3rd year review in October 2016
- Grass Cutting – Agency Agreement

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- Highway Trees – Agency Agreement
- Weed Control – Agency Agreement
- Public Highway tree works – Agency Agreement
- Street furniture. Bins, benches, planting (watering) – Borough Function
- Roundabout Sponsorship – Agency Agreement
- Verge maintenance – extension of Grass Cutting Agency Agreement
- Tree planting – extension of Highway Tree Agency Agreement
- Fly posting removal – Borough wide
- Winter maintenance – Footways and ad hoc support

3. CONSULTATIONS:

3.1 The contents of this report have been considered by the Leader of Woking Borough Council, respective Portfolio holders and officers of both authorities.

4. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

4.1 The agreed revenue budget for 2015/16 of £139,890 has been fully spent in the following areas.

Percentage Budget Spend (14/15)	Percentage Budget Spend (15/16)	Work Area
64%	14%	Reactive day-to-day repairs
5%	0%	Road Markings
5%	3%	Drainage Maintenance
5%	14%	Street Furniture repairs
21%	65%	Planned Improvements

4.2 For **2016/17** the revenue budget is the annual maintenance budget of **£50,000** per annum jointly funded by Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Council and in addition the parking surplus of **£133,092** confirmed for the financial year **2016/17** making a total revenue budget of **£183,092**.

4.3 Should the closer working proposals be accepted it is intended that activities will be contained within existing budgets with no additional demands upon agreed maintenance budgets.

4.4 Any proposals should not result in a reduction to the funds made available to the Woking Joint Committee from the Woking parking surplus.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT:

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

6. LOCALISM:

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

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

7. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

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

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report – however, improved street scene may impact upon individual's 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).

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

9.1 The Joint Committee are asked to approve the ongoing works proposed through the continued operation of the Woking Town Centre Agreement.

9.2 The continuing aim will be to maintain and enhance the Town Centre street scene whilst working closely with Surrey County Council colleagues to increase the effectiveness of agreed maintenance operations across the Borough.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

10.1 Woking Borough Council officers will continue the operation of the Town Centre Management Agreement and from April 2016 develop maintenance arrangements Borough Wide.

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10.2 This is likely to be a continuation of Surrey highway maintenance functions and a combination of improved reporting by Woking Borough Council Officers and additions to maintenance programmes where opportunities allow.

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
