

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL



Street Services – October 2024

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper fulfils the request made for a ‘General Update on Street Services performance’.

Street Services includes the Council’s most visible and high-profile services. The key functional areas are as follows:

- Environmental Operations* – Including Domestic Waste, Grounds maintenance & Arboriculture, and Street Cleansing.
- Plymouth Highways – including SWH contract, Structures, Parking & Marine Services
- Commercial Waste* – commercial collections and bulky waste
- Strategic Contracts & Disposal*: Chelson Meadow and Weston Mill Recycling Centres, all waste disposal contracts including the Energy from Waste Plant and the Materials Recycling Facility.
- Fleet Services – Fleet and Garage Management
- Environmental Planning – including strategic environmental projects (planning, delivery and funding) strategic oversight, transformation and development of PCC green estate play, playing pitches, parks, marine partnerships, and innovative green finance initiatives. Climate adaptation lead.

*Please note these services are generally grouped together as Street Scene & Waste and may appear as that on budgets.

Service Vision: *To improve and optimise the **safe delivery** of operational **Street Services** to ensure they meet the expectations of our customers; are considered good value; and help the City become a cleaner, greener and more vibrant place to live, whilst creating new opportunities to work alongside communities, reducing carbon and delivering climate resilience approaches.*

2. KEY CHALLENGES

Key challenges include:

- trying to deliver frontline services to a constantly growing City with resource levels which have reduced in real terms over the last 15 years.
- Lack of management resource has led to further challenges around service improvement capacity, culture change and tackling HS&W issues.
- Impending restructure over a long period has resulted in a management structure made up of temporary arrangements which has resulted in poor stability.
- Impacted by reduction in Corporate support functions over a number of years.

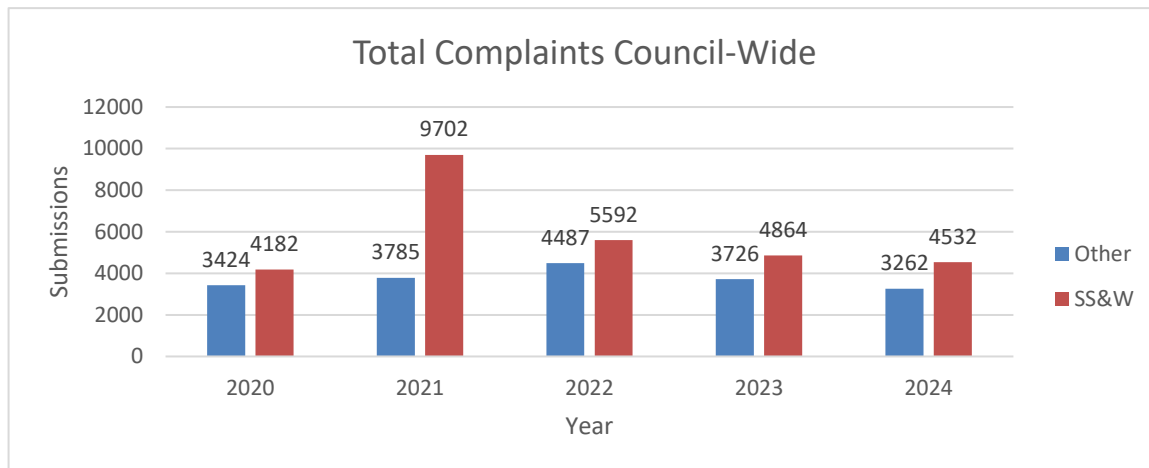
3. PERFORMANCE UPDATES BY FUNCTIONAL AREA

3.1 Environmental Operations Performance summary

3.1.1 General Customer / Cllr Correspondence:

- We have seen a 50% decrease in Street Scene & Waste complaints from 2021 to 2023 compared with a 14% reduction for complaints observed in all other Council areas combined over the same period.
- SS&W complaints as a percentage of all Council complaints have reduced from 72% in 2021 to 57% in 2023.

Figure 1: Comparison of SS&W complaints vs Council wide



3.1.2 Grassland Management

Overview

- 2021 was the year 60:40 grassland management policy was introduced. It set the principle of managing 60% for people and 40% for nature which was an increase from broadly 85:15 previously.
- Fairly static volumes for grass related feedback in last 3 years.
- Play areas – regular cutting since mid 2023 has drastically improved perception. Increased from 6 cuts in 2023 to a forecast 12 in 2024.
- Main road verges – regular cut has reduced feedback about visibility and appearance. Increased from 3 cuts in 2023 to a forecast 7 in 2024.
- General cutting – Added an extra seasonal cut in 2024 compared to last year but still struggling during main growing period of May to August. Compounded by a late start due to a very wet Spring. Latest cut has taken circa 6 weeks. Baling contract currently underway for designated wildlife meadows.

Plans to improve

There are a number of things in the pipeline to improve performance but they have not yet delivered improvements to delivery.

- Increasing capacity in Grounds resource - The net effect of the £300k extra resource agreed in February 2024 budget has not yet been fully realised as still recruiting and training teams – productivity increases planned for next year when full resource in place.
- Equipment – £154k investment in new grass cutting equipment that will improve service delivery. New push along and Ride on mowers. Better suited for longer grass.
- Traffic Management – Bedding in H&S requirements has almost doubled the time taken to do parts of the City. This started to be introduced in 2023 and has taken time to bed in. Teams will be more familiar with the systems next year which will drive productivity delivery.
- Restructure - supervision and oversight will improve as a result of the restructure of Grounds. It proposes new posts to support the planning, delivery and supervision of grounds teams to ensure policy compliance and support improvements in productivity.

- Team to review neighbourhood areas to remove parcels from meadow back to full cut whilst retaining 60:40 – request for Cllrs to engage in that process. Where Cllrs have been engaged satisfaction levels are higher.
- Propose further Cllr engagement (following last year’s process) in autumn 2024.
- Plan for Nature and People – grassland management was one of 9 key themes arising from recent Summer of Nature survey. The Steering Group (Chaired by Cllr Briars-Delve) has advised that each of these themes are discussed in further detail as part of focus groups in the next stage of engagement.

3.1.3 Grounds general

PCC was awarded best Grounds Maintenance and Arboriculture service at the 2024 APSE Awards last month. Particularly for recognition for the work that the service had achieved in its work in relation to tree management and planting and community engagement in collaborative manner with Environmental Planning (see below for separate achievements linked to this).

3.1.4 Tree Management

The Council owns and manages around 69,000 street trees across the city. A number of these trees – 2,855 – require cyclical maintenance to remove the branches back to the stem at around 4m+ above ground – known as pollarding - to maintain the size of the canopy at a reasonable level within street settings. Failure to manage these trees in this way brings risk of tree failure and risk of property damage, public dis-satisfaction and loss of valuable ecosystem services these trees provide for the city.

PCC has now let a 4-year contract to a local contractor to complete the pollarding of the city’s street trees. Appointing external contractors for this area of specialist work is the most cost-effective method for the Council to deliver this area of service provision, fulfilling its duty of care to maintain public safety and retain and maintain to high standards these important assets for the city.

Higher risk tree work has been a key area of focus over the last 12 months for our in-house arborist team. Tree Inspectors use a national standard Quantified Tree Risk Assessment process to capture any tree related risk. The level of intervention recommended by the HSE, which is less than or equal to 1:10,000, requires the Council to either take action or take steps to control the risk posed. Through the use of in house and external contractors the number of tree jobs in this category has reduced from over 250 in December 2023 to a current level of just over 50.

3.1.5 Street Cleansing

Over the past 12 months the Street Cleansing department have seen the introduction of new vehicles including 10 x small mechanical road sweepers and 3 x large sweepers.

Having struggled to secure a reliable Weed Treatment contractor in the prior 2 years a successful contract was delivered in 2024 with two citywide treatments. This has been bolstered by in house training and development of teams to undertake Controlled Droplet Application treatments across the City.

The team are busy focused on tackling the leaf fall season, working in conjunction with Highways to keep gullies clear from flooding. A further key focus has been deploying resource to keep the newly opened areas of the City Centre clean and tidy, including a regular surface washing treatment.

The team also visit 1078 street litter bins across the City and have emptied these bins a collective 104,407 times so far in 2024. They also manage fly-tipping, Unauthorised Encampment clearances and remove dead animals, graffiti, sex and drug litter and human waste daily, either through report or proactive observation.

3.1.6 Domestic Waste Collections

The team collect from 123k citywide properties every week for alternating residual or recycling waste, with a garden waste collection for 25k subscribed households every fortnight between April and November.

The latest performance data shows 5,053 missed bin reports in 2024 against a scheduled 4.7million domestic waste collections. These reports account for 0.1% of all scheduled collections against a target of <1%. By this point in 2023 we received 5,180 reported missed bins, showing a 2.5% improvement year-on-year.

Performance data against garden waste shows a reported 1,187 missed bins reported in 2024 against a scheduled 325,000 collections, accounting for 0.36% of all scheduled garden waste collections. Missed garden waste collections currently have no set target but are closely monitored to ensure a consistently high level of service quality. By this point in 2023 we had received 1,270 reported missed garden waste bins, showing a 7% improvement year-on-year.

Of those missed bins reported, 94.6% were collected within 2 working days against a target of >70%, vs 86.8% in 2023, marking a year-on-year improvement of 7.8%.

Often bins are missed due to access issues, usually caused by parked cars preventing access for our waste collection vehicles. This results in wasted return trips for crews in the hopes that vehicles have moved and, in instances where we were still unable to gain access, missed collection reports from residents. Since 1 January 2024 crews have reported over 7,500 instances where they were unable to collect domestic waste from a property due to access issues.

A project in Keyham was completed earlier this year which introduced parking restrictions in and around rear lanes that were regularly blocked by parked vehicles. The team have also been busy working with residents and Cllrs to review collection points for a series of locations around the City, which were posing H&S concerns related to manual handling for crews. So far, improvements have been made at 10 locations with more planned.

3.2 Plymouth Highways Performance summary

We currently employ South West Highways (SWH) to carry out our Highways Maintenance and Minor Work programme on a 10 year contract which is due to expire 2027. A lesson learnt review is ongoing to measure the effectiveness of this Term Maintenance Contract. We monitor performance by the use of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's), the result of this monitoring is reported to Corporate via Democratic Support, in addition, data is shared with DfT, who monitor departmental performance, which can influence funding by way of classification of council performance and efficiencies.

This information comes from SWH and is only looking at carriageway black defects (the closest analogue to potholes we have) this data excludes agreed exceptions, velocity jobs, emergency jobs and planned works. I am unclear on how it handles jobs returned a very low value, which I would ordinarily exclude.

Period	Jobs Received	Jobs Complete	Complete vs Received %	In time %
2024/25 Q1 – 01/04/24 to 30/06/24	775	939	121%	99%
2024/25 Q2 – 01/07/24 to 30/09/24	320	309	97%	100%

2024/25 Q1-2 01/04/24 to 30/09/24	1095	1248	114%	99%
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Internal KPI's are utilised to monitor contractual obligations, this includes performance and added value commitments

The local highway network is the largest and most visible community asset for which local authorities are responsible. It is used daily by the majority of residents, businesses and those passing through the City and is fundamental to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing 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 regeneration, social inclusion, community safety, health and wellbeing. With a total replacement cost circa £2 billion, the importance of its effective and efficient management cannot be understated.

We have adopted an asset management strategic approach that seeks to optimise the value of highway assets over their whole life and follows best practice as recognised by Dft . Plymouth City Council recognises that by taking an asset management-based approach to its local highway maintenance, investment can be targeted on long term planned activities that prevent expensive short-term repairs. This approach not only maximises value for money, ensuring informed investment decisions can be made, but also manages risk and maintains a highway environment that is safe and secure and accessible for our customers.

This approach includes a variety of factors including corporate strategy, local vision, local transport policies, expectations of stakeholders and legal and financial constraints.

Below is a summary of the assets maintained by Plymouth.

Asset Group	Quantity
Carriageways	873km
Footways and Cycleways	890km
Structures	175 Bridges, Retaining Walls and Culverts
Drainage	42,627 Highway Gullies
Street Lighting	31,066 Street Lights 5,360 Illuminated Signs
Traffic Signals	179 Traffic Signals and Pedestrian Crossings
Street Furniture and Signs	427 Grit Bins 18 Car Park Guidance Signs 14 Variable Message Signals

Carriageways

2024/25 delivery:

- Velocity spray injection patching Up to 13/09/2024 = 2,713 repairs completed, containing an estimated 3,931 defects, 135 m³, and 3,904 m²
- SWH reactive works = 2,230 carriageway defects, 740 pedestrian area defects, and 153 gully defects

SWH Find and fix patching works

- Up to mid-September we have issued a total of 54 streets to SWH for “Find and Fix” patching repairs to be completed, 19 of which are reported as completed. The list is added to as Highways Safety Inspectors and Technicians record defects in roads that would benefit from repairs even though they may not yet meet our investigatory levels. Repairs will be ongoing for the rest of this financial year.

Carriageway schemes (See Carriageways spreadsheet attached for further detail)

- Resurfacing schemes as follows:
 - 4 Carriageway schemes completed to date with a total area of 3,271.34 m²
 - 14 Carriageway schemes still to be delivered with a total area of 22,136.65 m². Most programmed for Sept/Oct 2024 with a few programmed for Jan 2025
- Surface Dressing schemes as follows:
 - 2 completed pre-surface patching sites with a total area of 351.81 m²
 - 38 pre-surface patching sites still to be delivered with a total area of 2,993.23 m². Most programmed for Oct/Nov 2024 with 14 awaiting programming.
 - 40 outstanding Surface Dressing schemes to be completed by specialist contractor in the next financial year, for which funding will be rolled from this year’s budgets. Total area of 102,530.38 m² and expected to be delivered in May/June 2025.

Carriageways are the most valuable highway asset in Plymouth, having a Gross Replacement Cost of nearly £1.5 billion and receive the greatest levels of maintenance expenditure. They were the first asset for which lifecycle plans have been developed, resulting in the creation of several investment scenarios which have modelled current condition, investment levels and desired performance outcomes. This has enabled a greater understanding of where to target investment to achieve the desired levels of service.

Plymouth City Council is responsible for the maintenance of 53km of principal (A) roads, providing transport links within or between large urban areas. The Council is also responsible for 211km of non-principal (B&C) roads connecting towns and villages and feeding traffic between principal and smaller roads. Unclassified, estate and rural roads serving local traffic account for 609km, the largest proportion of the Plymouth network. The condition of the carriageway asset is measured through annual surveys and inspections.

Planned maintenance is delivered by an annual programme. This programme of capital funded schemes of work is identified using an asset management approach. This evidence-based approach to maintenance is endorsed by Council Members and supports the overarching priorities of the authority.

Management of potholes and other carriageway safety issues arising across the network is delivered using a combination of capital and revenue funding. By employing an asset management-based approach and improving the co-ordination of road maintenance and improvement activity, Plymouth will continue to increase the value achieved in road maintenance, improve network resilience and reduce the burden on revenue budgets through the delivery of effective programmes of preventative work.

FOOTWAYS AND CYCLEWAYS

2024/25 delivery:

740 pedestrian area defects identified by routine inspection or customer reports via Firmstep

We carry out programmed works throughout the fiscal year, to date we have completed 10 schemes covering an area of 8,046m² and a further 4 schemes are due to be completed by March 2025 that covers 1,491m². We select a range of treatments, dependant on asset condition, ranging from Slab replacement, Replacement of slab with Asphalt and Slurry Seal

Footways and cycleways are critical assets supporting access and mobility for people in Plymouth. Securing continuous improvement in the safety and serviceability of footways and cycleways is necessary to encourage alternatives to the car, particularly for journeys in urban areas. Well maintained footways aid social inclusion, particularly improving accessibility for vulnerable people and support the Active Travel agenda.

Plymouth City Council is responsible for the maintenance of 31km of primary footways in high footfall areas, for example town centres, and 872km of footways providing access in residential and remote areas. The Council also maintains a number of cycleways as part of the highway network, mostly those which form part of, or are adjacent to, either the carriageway or footway networks. The footway and cycleway assets have a Gross Replacement Cost of nearly £182 million.

Footway and cycleway condition is assessed through regular condition surveys and inspections. Planned maintenance has historically been determined on a worst first basis and concentrated in urban areas with high footfall. However, in recent years this has transitioned to a more targeted asset management approach. The shortfall in maintenance budget or expenditure has resulted in overall long-term deterioration of the footway and cycleway network, a problem experienced by highway authorities nationally.

Following unprecedented levels of walking and cycling across the UK during the 2020 pandemic, the Department for Transport is keen to encourage more people to choose alternatives to private vehicles. This includes improved public transport and active travel options, making healthier habits easier and helping make sure the road, bus and rail networks are ready to respond to future increases in demand. This also aligns with the Council's environmental agenda to address the current climate emergency.

DRAINAGE

2024/25 delivery:

153 gully defects

Drainage (See drainage spreadsheet attached for further detail)

- A total of 24 drainage schemes ordered this financial year, of which:
 - 10 drainage schemes completed as of today
 - 1 drainage scheme in progress
 - 13 schemes awaiting programming. Dates are programmed in advance to ensure effective partnership working with South West Water

The highway drainage asset is critical to ensuring the controlled removal of water from the carriageway to allow customers to use it safely. The impact that failure of the drainage asset can have on other highway infrastructure is significant, particularly to the carriageway.

We have recently transferred 1x Inspector into the team dedicated to addressing drainage and surface water issues.

The current inventory of highway drainage assets across Plymouth includes approximately 42,000 gullies and 81 culverts. As part of an invest-to-save initiative, an inspection-led regime is being adopted in conjunction with the use of SmartWater, a risk-based prioritisation model, to focus gully cleansing activity on those gullies that need cleansing while utilising an Internet of Things (IoT) based approach. The prediction model will be verified through both re-inspection and real-time performance measurement through use of strategically placed sensors in gullies.

Outside of routine maintenance, the current approach to repairs and improvements is predominantly reactive, focussed on analysing and addressing known flooding hotspots to reduce those areas

presenting the highest risk of flooding. To proactively maintain the entire drainage asset into the future, we will continue to build a complete inventory and good understanding of condition including the associated risks that come with failure. This will enable us to undertake programmes of preventative maintenance whilst monitoring and reviewing performance.

Drainage is complex to maintain as it can be influenced by many other assets, including those not maintained as part of the highway network. As such, the establishment of a cross-discipline Water Management Group, with input from several areas of the Council, will enable effective management of drainage and flooding.

A key factor in the ongoing maintenance of the drainage asset is building upon the understanding of where the Council's assets interface with those owned and maintained by utility companies. A constructive dialogue with utility companies enables an effective resolution to be established where issues are seen to originate on assets not owned or maintained by the Council.

Improving our knowledge of drainage infrastructure across the city enables us to demonstrate evidence-based decisions on drainage maintenance and support our ability to secure future funding investment, while demonstrating savings in revenue expenditure through efficient and effective maintenance.

Permitting

Permits applications.

Received - 1/4/24 to 2/10/24 -	6334
Granted - 1/4/24 to 2/10/24 -	5432

Prediction for year totals - 2024/25

Received	-	12100
Granted	-	10500

Fixed Penalty Notices issued

1/4/24 to 2/10/24 - 294

Prediction for year total 2024/25 -580

Inspections completed

1/4/24 to 2/10/24 - 8031

Prediction for year total 2024/25 - 16700

Defects recorded

1/4/24 to 2/10/24 - 297

Prediction for year total 2024/25 - 550

Network Safety Engineering

Inclusive Mobility – To date, 20 pedestrian dropped crossing and improvement schemes across the City with 8 delivered to date. There are a further 5 scheme requests on the list to deliver in 2025/26.

Traffic Regulation Order Review No.13 has finished consultation and will be put before the Cabinet Member this month. This contains 39 proposals for Traffic Order changes across the City which will be delivered in the current financial year.

Living Streets Traffic Order Review No.7 is currently being prepared for advertisement. Consultations with ward councillors are still ongoing and funding will be allocated from individual living streets budgets.

Stentaway Rd Footway and Traffic Calming Scheme – This scheme will provide and footway and traffic calming scheme on a link used by both primary and secondary school pupils in the Plymstock area.

Embankment Rd Speed Limit changes – Consultation on this scheme is due to commence during the current financial year following a fatal collision in Jan 2023 (Inquest 14/11/24). It involves extension of the 30mph Speed Limit from Gdynia Way to Arnolds Point and replacement of the Safety Camera System between Seagull Bridge and Marsh Mills Roundabout. The Police are funding 50% of this project which is expected to be delivered in 2025/26.

Millbridge Shared Use Crossing and Stoke/N Stonehouse 20mph Zone – the Cabinet Member Report for this scheme is currently being prepared with construction due to begin in January 2025. This scheme is part funded (300k) from the Dft Active Travel Grant and supported by Plymouth Highways Capital from Inclusive Mobility and Collision reductions budgets as well as Living Streets contributions from both St Peter and the Waterfront and Stoke Wards.

Structures

2024/25 delivery Programme:

Resurfacing of 2 Footbridge

Review of City Wide Asset ownership and Ground Condition surveys at Elliot Rd Bridge, Haystone Place, Austin Crescent

VRS Barrier Repairs – Larkham Lane

Laira Bridge Cycle Way repairs

Refurbishment of 8 Subways

Soft Verge and Air Space clearance of Structural Assets across City

40 Structural Reviews on PCC bridges and Subways

Plymouth City Council actively manages its structural assets in accordance with principles set out in the UK Roads Liaison Group publication 'The Management of Highway Structures, A Code of Practice'. There are approximately 97 bridges and culverts, 25 footbridges, 48 subways, 4 tunnels and 1 viaduct being maintained, with a Gross Replacement Cost estimated to be £458 million. Routine maintenance of structures is based on a prioritised system of required work with the aim of minimising the risk to public safety and future maintenance costs.

The condition of the structures is monitored with four different types of inspections: general inspection, principal inspection, special inspection and post-tension special inspection which are all undertaken in line with guidance BD63-Inspection of Highway Structures.

All structures are maintained in a condition 'fit for purpose and safe for use'. This is undertaken in line with a risk-based methodology, prioritising identified works on safety critical elements as well as primary and secondary structural elements of the asset.

STREET LIGHTING

2024/25 delivery Programme:

City Wide Structural and Electrical Safety Inspections (7000 units to date)

CMS Control Node Upgrades x 4500

Replacement Column programme x2056 including Underground Cable interconnections (ICP)

Relighting design of Laira Bridge Cycle Bridge

Delivery of out of hour call out facility to deal with RTC and emergency incidents

Routine Maintenance and minor Repairs x 3670 to date

Street lighting is an important highway asset, contributing to public amenity, safety and the night-time economy. With a Gross Replacement Cost of £34 million, the lighting asset consists of approximately:

- 31,066 Street Lights (column and wall mounted);
- 5,360 other inventory items (i.e. illuminated and reflective bollards, internally and externally illuminated signs, school flasher etc);

The overall condition of the street lighting asset is monitored in accordance with 'Institute of Lighting Professionals Technical Report 22'. Plymouth City Council operates a 3 yearly general maintenance and visual inspection and 6 yearly general maintenance cycle, with all columns in the city being visually inspected for structural and electrical condition at each visit. This maintenance cycle has an overall aim of minimising non-routine visits and improves the efficient operation of the asset.

TRAFFIC SIGNALS

2024/25 PROGRAMME:

Tavistock Road/Park and Ride signal refurbishment – Target Delivery 31/03/25

Ford Hill/Milehouse Road signal refurbishment/Pedestrian improvements – Target Delivery 31/03/25

Old Laira Road/Bramley Road pedestrian crossing refurbishment – Target Delivery 31/03/25

Fort Austin Avenue/Widey Lane pedestrian crossing refurbishment – Target Delivery 31/03/25

Billacombe Road/The Ride signal refurbishment – Target Delivery 31/03/25

Ferry Road/Park Avenue – Equipment Replacement – Target Delivery 31/03/25

4 new VMS signs installed. (Final commissioning by 30/10/24)

2 new Mobile VMS signs delivered.

MOVA validation completed on Crownhill Road/Budshead Road

MOVA validation completed on North Hill/North Road East

MOVA validation completed on Embankment Road/Elliott Road

MOVA validation completed on Devonport Road/Paradise Road

MOVA Validation Transit Way/Crownhill Road – Target Delivery 31/12/24

MOVA Validation Wolseley Road/Auckland Road – Target Delivery 31/12/24

MOVA Validation Millbay Road/The Crescent – Target Delivery 31/12/24

MOVA Validation Union Street/Western Approach – Target Delivery 31/12/24

Brest Road/Morlaix Drive signal restaging – Target Delivery 31/12/24

Faults dealt with – 548 from April to September

Periodic Inspections – 62 Site inspections completed from April to September

Tavistock Road/Derriford Business Park – Traffic signal junction installation

Junction Design approval – Woolwell to the George Phase I traffic signal sites

Traffic signal-controlled junctions and pedestrian crossings form an important highway asset, contributing to the safe and efficient use of the road network and promoting economic growth within the city. With a gross replacement cost of £20 million, its efficient operation and maintenance allows those using the road network to move around the city with the minimum of delay and disruption. Efficient maintenance regimes also ensure that the traffic signal installations are maintained in a safe structural and electrical condition.

There are currently 119 signal-controlled junctions, 60 pedestrian signal crossings, 105 other inventory items (i.e. car park signs, variable message signs, traffic management CCTV cameras etc).

Congestion reduction is a key corporate target in line with the goal of Keeping Plymouth Moving for which traffic signals play a vital role. Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) are set and monitored to ensure that our contractor attends and rectifies faults within specified contract time periods.

Street Furniture

2024/25 delivery Programme:

Grit Bin Review

- We have completed a review of all existing 480 grit bins (both green and yellow) on the Highways network and have also considered an unprecedented 630 requests for new grit bins received since the Winter of 2022/23. Following a review of best practice used in other Councils, we considered a series of scoring factors to use against both new and existing bins with the total score being used as a guideline (subject to some site-specific exceptions) to recommendations to consider keeping or removing an existing bin, and whether or not to install a new requested bin. The findings of the report have been compiled and a report is being sent to the Highways portfolio holder, Councillor Mark Coker, for consideration and discussion with other councillor colleagues.
- No changes will be made to the grit bin network in this 2024/25 Winter season, but it is expected that any agreed changes that come from this review will be implemented after the conclusion of this Winter season on 31/03/2025 and prior to the commencement of the 2025/26 Winter season on 01/10/2025

A well designed and managed highway environment generates benefits for residents, businesses and visitors to the city. Road markings, signs and street furniture have a significant presence within this environment and appropriate design and maintenance of these assets is required to offer a safe and attractive public realm to road users.

PARKING SERVICE

Services

The Parking Service supports the management of Plymouths transport network and helps to support a safe transport network through the delivery of a range of services, these include:

- Parking policy and strategy

- Setting parking charges and restrictions
- Delivery of decriminalised parking enforcement (Issuing 65,000 fines)
- Manage 54 residential parking schemes
- Manage more than 40,000 applications for parking permits (Residents, Visitors, Hoteliers, Business, Pedestrian zones and Health Services)
- Management of the Councils Off-Street car parks

Key Assets

In delivering these services Parking is responsible for the management of a number of key assets:

- 47 Car parks including
 - 5 Multi Storey car parks
 - City wide district car parks
- On Street parking
- Over 200 payment systems
- Over 5500 parking bays
- 52 FTE of staff

Financial Performance

Parking generates net income to the Council, where income received through the delivery of services exceeds the cost of delivering these services. The net income from parking provides a critical source of income to support the delivery of key services, where net income is used to support the delivery of Highway services.

In 2024/25 parking is budgeted to contribute £4.912M to Highways.

The main sources of parking income are:

- 71% Income from the payment for parking time
- 16% Income from fines
- 12% Income from permits
- 1% Other income – such as fees for requests the suspension/closure of parking

DATA MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Plymouth City Council understands that in order to drive continuous improvement and inform effective asset management-based decision making, having the right data management systems in place is vital. The Authority believes that the collection, management and use of data needs to be based on a process, which identifies:

- Ownership
- Data requirements
- Responsibilities
- Costs to store, manage and maintain data

Asset data comprises information on what physical highway infrastructure assets the Council is responsible for, where they are and how they perform. Effective asset management planning and decision-making relies on this data being available, appropriate, reliable, up to date and accurate.

This data has been collected through condition surveys and comprehensive inspections regimes for highway assets and is stored within Plymouth's Highway Information Management systems. These systems support decision making through managing information and data to support asset management as well as to record and monitor its implementation.

The data management systems utilised to support highways asset management enable data-led modelling of investment scenarios and accurate feedback of both statutory and good practice data returns such as the Whole Government Accounts (WGA) asset valuation.

A data management strategy has been developed that fully supports the asset management strategy and performance framework.

The Climate Change Act 2008 places obligations on the Council and others to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare to adapt to longer term climate change. On the 18th March 2019, City of Plymouths Elected members voted unanimously to declare a climate emergency and in doing so, committed to meeting the most significant challenge facing our city and our planet.

As part of declaring a climate emergency the Council have produced a Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan 2021 to support the goal to become net zero by 2030. Plymouth Highways support this plan through the reduction of emissions by changing illuminated bollards and sign lights to LED and to increase to over 50% (by 2025/26) the number of road junctions with LED traffic lights. This follows a successful programme of LED streetlight conversion.

The highway delivery programme mitigates production of the gasses which are key contributors to climate change in other areas. Our asset management approach maximises early planned maintenance interventions avoiding costly reactive works reducing disruption and congestion on the road networks cutting journey times, reducing fuel use and the carbon footprint of travel. By looking to carefully adopt new and emerging practices we minimise carbon cost with a carefully managed impact on the overall lifecycle of the effected assets.

Sustainability with regards to asset management links highways to the wider environment and sustainability principles of the Council. The long-term approach driven by asset management considers the actions required to mitigate both direct and indirect impacts of highway maintenance on the environment and our local community. These include:

- Active Travel (walking and cycling)
- Biodiversity
- Carbon outputs
- Effects of Extreme Weather
- Environmental Impact
- Air Quality

We engage with neighbouring authorities and SW Highway Alliance to share good practice and we utilise ALARM and NHT to benchmark performance. We are currently working with a number of suppliers to ensure we adopt the most efficient asset maintenance techniques with regard to Cost and Cabon emission

INNOVATION

The Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure Code of Practice suggests that local authorities should be considering the adoption of new and emerging technologies as part of their highway service. Given the ever-changing technological landscape it is important that consideration should be given to new ideas, methods of working and innovation to drive greater efficiency.

Plymouth City Council is committed to driving innovation through the highway service and their membership to LCRIG will support their aim of making innovation a key aspect of its service delivery.

Best Practice and Performance Monitoring

Plymouth City Council is committed to the development of good practice and continuous improvement, having already played a leading role in the development of the regional agenda on highway asset management. Examples of memberships and actions that demonstrate the Council's commitment include membership of:

- The South West Highways Alliance;
- The Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT)
- Local Council Roads Innovation Group (LCRIG)
- Institute of Asset Management (IAM),
- Ringway Client Group - Well Managed Highway Infrastructure
- CIPFA HAMP Network; and
- Attendance at a variety of local and regional events.

With this strategy an implementation plan has been created to enable to continual review of progress against this plan in addition to undertaking formal annual reviews. The following Asset management objectives have been developed:

- To provide a safe, efficient, accessible and health-enabling highway network
- To reduce the environmental impact of the highway asset
- To deliver cost effective asset management
- To encourage the adoption of innovation in the highway service

3.3 Commercial Waste Performance summary

The commercial waste services consist of two main functions, firstly the servicing of business waste across the City and secondly the removal and disposal of bulky items from households and businesses.

In late September 2024 we were awarded the Plymouth University waste and recycling contract. This is a huge success for the service as we were up against national companies and is the largest contract by far that Commercial Waste Plymouth has. It is a 5-year initial term with an extension of a further 2 years. The service will start on the 1st of November so currently the infrastructure required to support the contract will be a priority for the team during October to ensure a smooth transition from Biffa to us. The contract is complex with 3rd party suppliers being used for clinical and hazardous waste. There is also a myriad of KPIs that are required to be achieved and reported on, some with financial penalties for non-compliance.

3.4 Strategic Contracts & Disposal Performance summary

The disposal team operate two Household Waste Recycling Centres, a Refuse Transfer Station and a closed landfill site. The focus is always on providing a safe and compliant operation at all our facilities.

The HWRC sites at Weston Mill and Chelson Meadow provide a service to allow residents to recycle their bulky household waste. In 2023/24 the sites received a total of 21,800 tonnes of which 65% was recycled.

The RTS provides a valuable commercial service to local waste disposal companies, we currently have over 280 customers using the site regularly. Revenue generated has increased year on year since 2019 and the focus is now on maximising the benefit from this operation to help support the service.

The closed landfill site has a leachate treatment plant which ensure that water from the old landfill does not cause pollution. The plant has been operational for over 25 years and as a result needs some maintenance and improvements to ensure that it can continue to operate effectively.

The current contract to operate the Materials Recycling Facility at Chelson Meadow is due to expire during next year and the focus is on agreeing an extension to that contract for a further 5 years. This will allow sufficient time for the full effects of new legislation to be known so that a competitive long term tender process can be concluded.

3.5 Fleet Management Performance summary

Fleet provides continuous legal management and compliance of the council's operator Licence for compliant vehicles with Council operations, this is a requirement of operating HGV's vehicles within our service.

The Operating Licence places statutory requirements upon the Council around : -

- Preventive maintenance standards auditing
- Service maintenance scheduling for all vehicles and plant average of (1,327) compliance checks a year
- Daily walk around checks compliance
- Drivers Hours monitoring
- Driver training Vehicle tracking and utilisation, challenging driver behaviour, measuring and improving efficiencies reporting to departments
- Vehicle overloading monitoring
- Tax & Insurance of all vehicles
- Vehicle hire bookings
- 6 monthly driver licence compliance checks with regular eye checks for compliant drivers the Council currently have 92 Compliance drivers and 1057 vehicle drivers across the whole Council

Figure 1 – The fleet replacement programme as of October 2024 Phase I

Phase	Delivery	Business Case	Vehicles	Value
I	2022/2024	Replacement of Hire Vehicles	12 of 35	£1,550,438
	2020/2024	Street Scene & Waste Vehicles	21 of 24	£2,605,645
	2020/2024	Electric Vehicles (Complete)	54 of 54	£1,175,811
Total			81	£5,331,894

Tenders are currently in process to deliver the remaining vehicles within Phase I

Figure 2 – Procurement in Process October 2024 Phase 2 & 3

Phase	Delivery	Business Case	Vehicles	Value	Spent
2	2024/2026	Phase 2 Sweepers, Bus's, SSW	26 of 44	£5,233,410	£3,531,000
	2025/2026	Phase 3	0 of 25	£2,147,000	0
Total			69	£7,3804,410	£3,531,000

Climate consideration

An additional 24 vehicles were identified to be suitable for conversion to Electric, PCC fleet now consists of 70 Electric Cars and Vans with plans to replace an additional 5 once alternatives have been identified.

There are now a number of alternative Electric commercial vehicles coming to the market, although these are very expensive with very little residual value after just a few years.

3.6 Environmental Planning Performance summary

Environmental Planning is made up of 65 staff members with a total expenditure budget of £2,579,638, the majority of which is salaries. The service has an income target against salaries of £1.77m which means 77% of staff costs are covered through income with remaining staff salaries acting as match to secure the external income. The income comes from many sources to ensure a diverse portfolio.

The Environmental Planning service has not been restructured since it was transferred to Street Services in April 2023. Which means many aspects remain unresolved since the move which did change roles and areas of responsibility. A restructure has been developed to resolve these issues. The proposed restructure approach will however also seek to bring together similar service areas in Street Services and align the successful income generation of the Service with the wider management of the estate and deliver a greater enhancement for people and nature.

The service has been shortlisted and won a number of awards showing the strength of delivery and innovation of approach including:

- **APSE Awards 2024**
 - Ocean City Nature (OCN) - Best Commercialisation and Entrepreneurship Initiative.
 - Best Service Team for Parks, Grounds and Horticultural Service, thanks to an incredible tree-planting programme that delivered more than 3,000 new trees across the city last winter.
 - Alongside the wins, we were also nominated in three other categories for the work of the Green Communities team (Best Community and Neighbourhood Initiative), the Bircham Valley Natural Flood Management and Plymouth Beaver Project (Best Innovation or Demand Management Initiative) and the Plymouth Natural Grid (Best Climate Action or Decarbonisation Initiative).
- **Green Business Awards**
 - OCN - Best Nature project shortlisted
- **Insider Property Awards**
 - Property deal of the year - shortlisted
- **ADEPT Presidents Award**
 - OCN - Highly commended
- **Plymouth Natural Grid**
 - Countryside Managers Association - Project of the Year 2023
 - Best Kickstarter (Diversity) programme in UK

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING DELIVERY

The service has a core focus on delivering across the City for nature and people. Enabling our green space sites to be more nature rich and welcoming for people – this includes a focus in our nature reserves, green spaces as well as in the heart of communities. The services natural spaces deliver needs to be enhanced to support a growing City. Therefore, enhancing the ability for these spaces to support the wellbeing of communities, support the management of water to improve water quality and reduce flood risk, help mitigate climate change and enable a high-quality investment environment is at the forefront of everything delivered. Delivery includes:

- Tree planting through the Plymouth and South Devon Community Forest
 - 2023/2024 – planted 55,036 trees which equates to 89.5ha
 - 2024/2025 – the planned pipeline includes 246.57ha of planting including 10-15ha urban planting within PCC boundary.
- Delivering the complex and innovative Central Parks Ponds project which is now nearing completion.
- Delivering capital projects at Poole Farm and Tinside to enable spaces for young people as part of the Youth Investment Fund
- Enabling events and activities in neighbourhoods – The Green Communities project enabled work in:
 - Keyham 76 events engaging 801 people

- Devonport 93 events engaging 1462 people
- Central Park 80 events engaging 1679 people
- Directly delivered activities across PCC sites to enhance them for people and nature people engaging 502 people in the works and securing 152 hours of volunteering support.
- Delivering a programme building resilience in communities in relation to flooding including the following and connecting with over 12,000 people in the process.
 - Delivery of a city wide 'Slow the Flow' Campaign to reach a wider audience
 - Create a neighbourhood flood relief pilot scheme in Lorrimore Avenue
 - Create a school flood awareness delivery programme
 - Deliver online and face to face training and workshops to Flood Responders & Flood Action Groups.
- Developing evidence base documents to support the growth of the City are underway including:
 - Plymouth Open Space Assessment, Review and Update - Underway
 - Plymouth Local Nature Recovery – Under development to meet Environment Act requirement.
 - Playing Pitch Strategy, Review and Update – Underway

INNOVATION

Innovation of approach and seeking to transform our natural spaces and how we value and care for them is a current focus and includes:

- **Green Finance** - Developing a Council Owned company, Ocean City Nature, as a new vehicle to develop the Green Finance Investment offer for Plymouth. The first fund within OCN is the habitat bank, which will develop biodiversity units which can be sold to developers and projects to ensure they can meet their legal obligations under the Environment Act.
- **Creative Partnerships** – All projects are developed in partnership and seek to maximise impact against Council and Plymouth priorities. Things delivered in the last 12 months include:
 - Youth Investment Fund - By linking natural spaces and young people's wellbeing funding has been secured not only for typical Ranger roles but also 3x Senior Youth Workers, 2 x Youth Workers and 1 x Eco therapist.
 - Rebalanced Earth – Natural Capital Investment Fund organisation signed an MoU with PCC to collectively work to drive investment into nature-based work around water management.
 - South West Water and Environment Agency – MoU signed with PCC and delivery programme being developed to focus on improving water quality and developing new nature-based approaches to delivery and funding.
 - National Trust – 10 year partnership which has led to joint PCC/NT ranger teams working across the City to enhance natural spaces in line with City priorities.