REVIEW OF THE IMPACT OF UTILITY ROAD WORKS ON BOROUGH RESIDENTS

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Papers with report None

REASON FOR REPORT
To enable the Committee to review the impact of roadworks undertaken by utility companies on the Residents of the Borough and make recommendations for improvements, if deemed appropriate.

OPTIONS OPEN TO THE COMMITTEE
1. Question witnesses on the work that they undertake and the impact that their work has on Borough Residents
2. Ask additional questions as required
3. Make recommendations to address any issues arising from discussions at the meeting

INFORMATION

Background
The Council has a duty under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 and the Traffic Management Act 2004 to manage the works carried out in the street by statutory undertakers (Utility Companies) so as to reduce the disruption caused to road users and to protect the structural integrity of the road asset.

In order to effectively manage works carried out by undertakers and to co-ordinate the use of the road network for the benefit of the travelling public and local community, the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 and the Traffic Management Act 2004 introduced a range of powers to be used to control and regulate the actions of the statutory undertakers when carrying out works.

These powers are in place to ensure works are executed safely and quickly, that the road is reinstated to an acceptable standard and that, in doing so, disruption to road users and the local community is minimised.

This report provides details of the Council’s management of street works carried out by public utility companies (statutory undertakers) and road works carried out by the Council’s own highways maintenance and improvement projects teams and their contractors on Hillingdon’s road network.
Context

Each year in Hillingdon, around 10,000 utility street works and over 9,000 Council planned road works are carried out on the Borough road network. These works range from small repairs to the road surface and inspection cover replacements to complete public utility cable and pipeline replacements, carriageway resurfacing and traffic improvement schemes. These 19,000+ works are all managed and co-ordinated internally by the Council.

To assist with the management, planning, co-ordination and regulation of these works the Council has various powers available which can be used to stipulate when and how works must be carried out. These powers are contained predominantly within the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) and the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA).

Approximately 75% of all works are small in size with durations of between one and three days. These works generally do not impede traffic flows or obstruct pedestrian movements considerably and do not have the potential to cause unmanageable disruption that may affect the residents of Hillingdon. The remaining works may last between one week and over a year and these have the potential to seriously disrupt traffic and the daily routines of residents if not properly planned and managed.

Current and recent major utility street works carried out within Hillingdon include a Borough wide fresh water main renewal programme carried out by Veolia Water (previously known as Three Valleys Water), the replacement of commercial and residential gas pipes in the north of Hillingdon by the National Grid Gas Alliance and the proposed Iver to Hayes high voltage electricity mains replacement by Scottish and Southern Electricity. Also underway is the installation of a new major gas main supply through Hillingdon from Southall to Harefield which is one section of a new West London gas supply. These works are mostly progressing ‘off-highway’ although there are some roads which will be affected by the construction.

It is important to understand that the smaller works, although not as extensive and highly visible as the more major works, are no less important and are managed to ensure that residents and road users in Hillingdon are not unduly inconvenienced by any type of essential works carried out in the Borough.

Current Major Works in Progress and Other Works Proposed

As noted above, there are many works currently underway in Hillingdon to improve utility service supplies, connect new developments to essential services, repair leaks and faults and to maintain and improve the surface and infrastructure of the road transport network itself.

Major Gas Pipeline Construction – Southall to Harefield

Much interest has been generated in the Borough by the construction of a new West London Gas Main by National Grid Gas. These works are being undertaken to improve and increase the gas supply capacity for West London. Within Hillingdon, the pipeline runs from the Borough boundary with the London Borough of Ealing at Southall to the Borough boundary with Buckinghamshire County Council at Harefield / Denham.

The majority of construction work and pipe laying is being carried out ‘off-highway’. This is due mainly to the sheer area of land required to install the 1.22metre diameter pipeline. Whereas
many standard services such as local water and gas supplies, telecommunications infrastructure and electricity cables are housed within the road network under the road surface, it is not possible to accommodate such a large pipeline within the highway. The installation is taking place in ‘green spaces’ much of which are owned and managed by the Council including Uxbridge Golf Course, Hillingdon House Farm and the Yeading Valley.

The avoidance of any major construction works within the road network has helped to minimise traffic disruption. Where the pipeline has had to cross a road the use of ‘tunnel boring’ technology has been used to install the pipeline underneath roads and has negated the need to dig across roads. This had enabled roads affected to maintain the full traffic flow capacity throughout and made it unnecessary to restrict road traffic through the use of temporary traffic signals or lane closures and has meant no roads have been closed to traffic or pedestrians during the course of laying the pipeline.

Due to the construction of the pipeline through ‘green spaces’ there has been a need to temporarily close or restrict access to some Public Rights of Way routes in order to ensure the safety of pedestrians. Where this has been necessary, Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTRO’s) have been raised to legally close these routes and divert pedestrians along an alternative. These closures have been implemented under legislation contained within the Gas Act 1986 (amended in 1996) and the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Throughout the construction of the pipeline, the Council has been in close liaison with the contractor, Murphy’s Ltd, working on behalf of National Grid Gas to ensure that the Council’s interests have been protected.

**Water Main Replacements**

Veolia Water is progressing with a Borough wide major works programme to renew the infrastructure that carries the freshwater supply to Residents, businesses and industry in the Borough. Extensive works have been carried out in Hayes, Hillingdon, Uxbridge and Northwood to date with further works planned in West Drayton and Yiewsley throughout 2009/2010. Once completed, the intricate network of water pipes in Hillingdon will have been upgraded and will be less susceptible to leaks which have the potential to cause major disruption to Residents and businesses through interruptions in the water supply and also to road users when roads are dug up to access apparatus.

**Gas Main Replacements**

National Grid Gas (Gas Alliance) is currently working in Eastcote, Ruislip and Uxbridge to upgrade their apparatus to improve supply and reduce the risk of gas leaks on their network. The works are on-going and are due to progress gradually through the Borough over the next two to three years.

As with the water main renewals underway by Veolia Water, once completed the gas main works will reduce the risk of leaks on the network of pipelines, reducing disruption and inconvenience to residents and businesses who have previously experienced loss of supply. The major investment by National Grid Gas in the works programme will also reduce future instances where roads have to be dug up to access faulty and damaged apparatus.

**Electricity Main Replacements**

Scottish and Southern Electricity will carry out works to install a new high voltage electricity main from Iver to Uxbridge and Hillingdon from late 2009 into 2010 which will involve works in the Cowley Mill Trading Estate, Cowley Road, Uxbridge Road and other local residential roads.
Previously, works have been undertaken on this project in Iver in Buckinghamshire County Council under liaison with the Council.

**Emergency Works**

Much of the 'works-related' activity on Hillingdon’s road network carried out by the statutory undertakers and the Council’s own contractors are planned works. As a result, these can be managed and co-ordinated to mitigate the impact on the residents of Hillingdon and people using the road network to travel to work, the shops, school or social engagements.

Unfortunately, a proportion of the works carried out on the network are deemed ‘Emergency Works’. Emergency works may be in the form of repairs to a burst water main, location of a gas escape or the repair of a telecommunications cable or high voltage electricity main or to make safe a dangerous highway. These works, by their very nature, cannot be pre-planned and must be completed immediately to reduce the risk of danger to the public and to restore essential services. In the case of emergency works, the Council will liaise with the undertaker carrying out the works, and possibly the Metropolitan Police and the Council’s Civil Protection Service to ensure that the works are carried out expeditiously and that the area affected is returned to normality as soon as is safely possible.

**Other Works carried out by the Council and third parties**

As previously mentioned, the Council itself carries out over 9,000 works on the road network per year, some planned and some reactive. These works are managed internally to ensure traffic is not unduly disrupted.

By far the most significant works, in terms of volume, are the smaller works (service connections, inspection cover replacements, reactive highway maintenance repairs, etc) which, although not as visibly predominant as the major and emergency works, require dedicated resources to ensure that they are efficiently planned and managed so as not to conflict with other more intrusive works.

One vital aspect of the co-ordination of these works is to ensure that they do not conflict with the diversion, or escape routes reserved for vehicular and pedestrian traffic that may need implementing when major works are executed on adjacent or parallel roads that require road closures. It is essential that the Council is able to manage, co-ordinate and plan these works efficiently through the use of its statutory powers so as to ensure that the road network can remain as operationally efficient as possible during the undertaking of essential works.

**Managing Works**

All works carried out on the public highway by any statutory undertaker are co-ordinated, monitored and regulated by the Council. The Council is responsible for ensuring that all works undertaken by statutory undertakers are carried out in line with the NRSWA (New Roads and Street Works Act 1991) and that notifications for all works are submitted prior to works commencing in order to efficiently co-ordinate all works on the network.

A team of Inspectors carry out regular inspections of undertaker's works to ensure they are completed on time with no undue disruption caused to the road user and that the works are carried out safely and reinstated to agreed specifications. The team proactively co-ordinate planned works only allowing disruptive activities to take place on the network outside of traffic sensitive periods when traffic levels are lower. Major works involving road closures, the use of
temporal traffic signals or complex temporary traffic management systems and diversions are planned in advanced and advertised with advanced warning signs at the location, letter drops to affected residents, publications in local free newspapers and on the Council’s website, as well as in weekly Cabinet briefings and, when appropriate, via the London Traffic Control Centre.

On-site and office based meetings involving Council officers, works promoters and the Metropolitan Police Traffic Management Unit take place regularly and prior to all major, and disruptive works taking place to discuss traffic management, road safety implications and how to mitigate the impact of the works on the Borough’s 250,000 Residents and many businesses.

The Council use a live map-based database to record, search for, and manage the notifications for the 19,000+ works activities which take place on the network annually. Using the Local Street Works Register to record works notices submitted by both the statutory undertakers and Hillingdon’s internal works promoters allows the Council to manage competition for road space, identify conflicting works and, where feasible, identify ‘coincidences’ which will allow joint working between more than one organisation thus reducing works duration and road space occupancy.

The Council intends to further improve the co-ordination, regulation and management of street works for the benefit of road users through embracing new advances in map-based technologies offered by both the Council’s Local Street Works Register software provider and Transport for London. Officers will take a lead in developing internal processes to make use of these technologies and will use the available applications within the organisation to both disseminate information regarding planned works and activities throughout the organisation and also to identify where conflicts and coincidences concerning works may arise.

The New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) & The Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA)

The NRSWA is the primary legislation in place nationally to manage works carried out on public roads by utility companies. The NRSWA regulates the works carried out by the utilities when discharging their statutory duty to maintain their assets.

The NRSWA contains a range of powers available to, and duties imposed on the Council to:
1. Prohibit unauthorised persons from carrying out works in the street unless licensed to do so by the Council (section 50);
2. Regulate ‘emergency works’ and the response by an undertaker to an emergency situation that may cause a danger to persons or property (section 52);
3. Hold a register of all streets under the authority’s control with information pertaining to the make up of the street, its traffic sensitivity, the reinstatement category of the road as well as all other information that may be required to enable street works to be executed without detriment to the street or the people that use it (section 53);
4. Require a statutory undertaker to give the correct notice to the Council of its intention to carry out works on the Borough road network in order to allow officers to co-ordinate works and competition for road space. Different advance notice periods are required for different categories of [disruptive] works (section 54 to 57);
5. Protect highway construction, maintenance and improvement works once complete from excavation by further works undertakings. Section 58 allows the Council to raise a notice to stop an undertaker digging up a new road surface to carry out works that could have
been planned for execution before, for example, carriageway resurfacing. There are some exemptions in instances of emergency works;

6. Impose a duty on the Council to ‘use its best endeavours’ to co-ordinate the execution of works of all kinds (section 59);

7. Impose a duty on the statutory undertaker to co-operate with the requests and stipulations imposed by the Council when executing works (section 60);

8. Designate certain highly trafficked and locally strategic streets as ‘Traffic Sensitive’. Works on traffic sensitive streets are subject to strict controls imposed on the undertaker by the Council in relation to the timings in which works may be carried out. In Hillingdon, works on traffic sensitive streets may not be executed in the am and pm peak commuter ‘rush hour’ periods. Works may not be executed at weekends in High Streets and shopping centres or on access roads to public car parks used by shoppers unless otherwise agreed (section 64);

9. Require the statutory undertaker to take measures to secure that any part of the street which is broken up or open, or obstructed by plant or materials is adequately guarded and lit and that traffic signs are placed and maintained in accordance with specifications set out in Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002, having regard, in particular, to the needs of people with a disability. An undertaker who fails to comply with the requirements commits an offence and is liable to a fine on summary conviction (section 65);

10. Serve notice on an undertaker failing to execute works in a reasonable time period. If the Council consider that works executed by an undertaker are causing avoidable and unnecessary delay or obstruction, the Council can request the works cease and the road is reinstated. If the undertaker does not co-operate, it is an offence subject to conviction and fine (section 66);

11. Ensure that the works are supervised by a person(s) carrying the relevant national road works qualifications so that the Council is confident that the works are carried out safely in the street. This stipulation is enforced to ensure that the works site is safe and will not cause a danger to the travelling public or Residents of the Borough;

12. Regulate the reinstatement in the road network carried out by the undertaker. The undertaker has a duty to reinstate the road network to the specification to which the road was originally built. If the reinstatement is of a substandard finish the Council has the power to inspect, charge for the inspectors time, and issue by way of notice, a defect to the undertaker instructing them to carry out further reinstatement to the satisfactory standards (section 70 to 73); and

13. Impose financial penalties against a statutory undertaker to penalise overrunning works on the road network. If start and end dates for a works programme are mutually agreed by the undertaker and the Council and the works overrun without the Council’s agreement, causing congestion, disruption and inconvenience, the Council has the powers to impose financial charges against the undertaker. These charges range from £200 to £2,000 per day dependant on the road category and its traffic sensitivity. The Council rigorously imposes the financial penalties against the undertaker in order to drive performance improvements (section 74).

The TMA, introduced in 2004, reinforced and amended the regulations laid in the NRSWA, introduced additional powers for managing works in the street and imposed a new statutory Network Management Duty on the authority ‘to manage the road network with a view to achieving, so far as may be reasonably practical, the following objectives –

(a) securing the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority’s network; and

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The overall aim of the “expeditious movement of traffic” implies a road network that is working efficiently without unnecessary delay to those travelling on it.

New powers available to the Council through the introduction of the TMA allow for the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices against statutory undertakers when the Council considers that the information submitted by the undertaker to give notice of their intent to carry out works is inaccurate or untimely. The issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice is to be used as a deterrent against the supply of unacceptable information that prohibits the Council from co-ordinating works on the road network.

The TMA introduced the necessary legislation required to tighten the existing regulatory framework to which statutory undertakers are permitted to dig up local roads, giving the Council potentially more powers to co-ordinate works to reduce disruption through the creation of a Permit Scheme. Through the creation of a permit scheme statutory undertakers, highway authorities, and any other party wishing to dig up the road would have to apply to the Council for permission to carry out the works as opposed to giving notice of intent to carry out works.

It is not compulsory for the Council to run a Permit Scheme as the current NRSWA Notification process is still currently viewed as an adequate system for managing Street Works and Road Works. It is also not yet shown how a Permit Scheme will improve the current regime in use under the NRSWA to manage works in the street.

A common Permit Scheme for London has, however, been developed by a core group of London boroughs with implementation anticipated in early 2010. To date, seventeen of the thirty three London boroughs (traffic authorities) and Transport for London (TfL) are due to adopt and run the proposed scheme once it has been approved by the Secretary of State for Transport.

Hillingdon is currently awaiting the implementation of the scheme in the first phase boroughs in order to carry out an extensive analysis of its success and the resource implications attributable to the operation of the scheme before committing to its adoption.

**Reducing the number of occasions roads are dug up**

Section 58 of the NRSWA allows for the Council to impose a restriction on a road which will prohibit planned street works from being carried out once road works (carriageway resurfacing, footway reconstruction etc) have been carried out. The duration of a restriction under the NRSWA was 12 months, this has however been extended to up to 5 years under the TMA.

The Council executes the use of this power whenever major resurfacing or reconstruction programmes are implemented. Recently, the Council has successfully prohibited statutory undertakers from excavating to carry out planned works in Dallas Terrace and Hyde Way in Hayes, Green Lane in Northwood, High Street Uxbridge, and Ivy House Road in Ickenham. Section 58 restrictions will also be imposed on High Street Uxbridge from Windsor Street to Belmont Road, Windsor Street, Station Road West Drayton and High Street Yiewsley upon completion of major street scene improvement works.
Enacting this power allows the Council to protect the structure of the road and the aesthetic appeal of new surfacing as well as to reduce disruption and inconvenience to residents and businesses subjected to what may appear to be endless works in the same place.

However, it is stressed that although this power is available and is used, there are exemptions to the prohibition. Emergency works to reconnect supply or access a burst or leak are not subject to the restrictions, neither are new service connections whereby a private or commercial customer may request connection to the main water, gas or electricity supply or telecommunications network.

In order to try and mitigate the instances where newly surfaced roads are dug up to enable a service connection to take place, the Council does publicise in advance any planned works giving the statutory undertakers a three month window to carry out any works they may have before the resurfacing / reconstruction works are carried out.

The Council actively encourages ‘trench sharing’ whereby more than one statutory undertaker is asked to carry out works in the same location at the same time to reduce works duration and subsequent digging up of the road. Although this cannot be enforced, and in some instances is not feasible, i.e., laying a high voltage electricity main next to a water main, the Council has had some success in practicing this innovative working arrangement. Most recently in January 2009, the Council successfully managed and facilitated concurrent works by four individual works promoters on North Hyde Road to reduce works duration, disruption and congestion on the busy main distributor road thus reducing the impact of the works on the local community.

Prior to any works taking place, meetings were held with all parties present in order to plan the works to take place concurrently rather than individually. The aim was to facilitate traffic signal modernisation works with Veolia Water mains renewal works as these would require lane closures and the use of temporary traffic signals. Gas main replacement works had the potential to conflict with junction improvement works being carried out by the Council and ‘gridlock’ the area and as such were planned to start prior to the Council works.

Advanced planning enabled the works promoters to agree to joint working, the sharing of advanced signing and traffic management and the phasing of the works without the need to close North Hyde Road. The total works duration was reduced from a proposed duration of 6 months had the works taken place individually, to a more reasonable 3 months. The joint working also allowed for considerable cost savings for each of the undertakers sharing the site.

Although Veolia Water had to return to site and have only recently completed their remedial works on North Hyde Road, the Council consider that possible disruption and congestion was reduced by half.

**Dealing with Non-Compliance**

As stated earlier in the report, the Council has a range of powers available to manage statutory undertakers works as well as a range of duties, including the Network Management Duty, that the Council must undertake to discharge to ensure traffic, including pedestrian traffic, is kept moving. The Council also has a responsibility to ensure that any activities carried out on the public highway are done so in a safe manner so as not to endanger members of the public.
As well as the regulatory powers available to the Council to impose conditions on working practices and timings of work and the legislation in place allowing Hillingdon to issue financial penalties for over-running works and the supply of inaccurate works information, the Council has in place a range of procedures in which to deal with non-compliance at an operational level.

The Council holds regular meetings with individual utility companies to discuss issues of non-compliance in order to develop agreements which will lead to service improvements. Service improvement agreements will be monitored through site inspections, the raising of defect notices where necessary and in some instances through the monitoring of complaints received against a works site on the Onyx public enquiry management system.

As well as individual meetings, quarterly co-ordination meetings are held by the Council. These meetings involve the attendance of representatives from all statutory undertakers working in Hillingdon, the Metropolitan Police, local transport providers such as Transport for London, the Council’s traffic manager and, on occasion, elected Members.

The quarterly co-ordination meetings are minuted with actions distributed. The meetings cover items including, utility performance, inspection of works sites and reinstatements, defective works, FPNs and section 74 charging, traffic management issues and any issues raised by members of the public and elected Members.

Council officers also attend quarterly West London Street Works Management meetings and London wide Network Management meetings in which good practice in street works management is shared and where common problems with non-compliance can be discussed and actioned collectively.

In order to improve the service provided to residents and to demonstrate that their voices will be heard when raising concerns with regard to works carried out by statutory undertakers, the Council has on occasion requested that the undertakers concerned take responsibility for their actions by contacting the resident directly. Indeed many utility companies working in Hillingdon now employ public relations officers and the Council requests that these resources are made use of when major works are planned.

The Council stipulates that all residents affected by planned works, road closures and disruptive activity are written to by the statutory undertaker proposing the works to ensure that the plans are fully understood and to allow the resident time to question the undertaker on the proposals and raise any concerns they may have prior to works commencing if necessary.

Recently, a designated email address has been set up and advertised on the Council website which members of the public can use to contact the Council and email their queries and concerns about works on the road network. roadnetworkmanagement@hillingdon.gov.uk is available twenty-four hours a day. A response will be provided by the Council within the standard corporate time frame of ten days, and often a lot sooner.

The Council also has the power to prosecute statutory undertakers in the Magistrates Court for non-compliance. However, this power is not often used as the costs of bringing a case against an undertaker can often outweigh the benefits. Court action also has the potential to destroy working relationships built up between the Council and the statutory undertaker and can result in a negative working relationship developing.
Maintenance of Sub-Stations

When the Council is made aware of any sub-stations or other buildings for which an undertaker is the owner that have been graffitied or are in a general state of disrepair, the Council will request that the buildings are brought up to an aesthetically acceptable standard. Powers introduced under Sections 12 and 13 of the London Local Authorities Act 1995 (LLA) are used by the Council regard to signs and graffiti causing a blight on the local environment. This legislation gives the Council the power to serve a Graffiti / Sign Removal Notice on the owner of a building if it is considered that the graffiti / signing on premises, apparatus or plant is considered to be detrimental to the amenity of the area or is offensive.

Notices have been served successfully to various building owners within the Borough previously requesting that the visual appearance of the building is improved.

The Council also has powers under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 to deal with overgrowth from private land and infestation of land and buildings by rodents.

Cost of managing Statutory Undertaker works versus the monies received from levying Penalty Charges

The Council has a duty to manage the road network for the benefit of the travelling public and the residents of Hillingdon. In order to contribute to achieving this works executed by statutory undertakers must be managed and co-ordinated.

The Council employs a specialist team to fulfil this duty. The team carry out many tasks including inspecting works in progress, inspecting reinstatements under guarantee from the undertaker to ensure that they have not defected, liaising with, and dealing with queries and complaints raised by members of the public and elected Members and planning and programming major works and mitigating their impact on the road network.

In addition, when issues of non-compliance of the regulations governing the execution of street works arise, the team is responsible for enforcement of the regulations, often through the levy of financial penalties. The team has an officer designated to chasing and enforcing non-compliance. The cost of this officer has been fully self funding and has even created a budget surplus with the post holders’ productivity providing a net gain for the Council in the monies accrued from the fines levied.

Conclusion

The Council has a statutory duty to manage works on the road network to ensure road users are not subjected to avoidable delays and disruption as a result of road works. The Council is also committed to improving the quality of life for those living and working in Hillingdon. The successful management of road works on Hillingdon’s road network will contribute to achieving these commitments. Through working in partnership with the statutory undertakers to promote proactive management and co-ordination of works, the Council is able to reduce works durations, limit the number of times roads are dug up and ensure that essential residential and commercial service supplies are maintained.
The Council will continue to drive performance improvements in the statutory undertakers and will continually look to identify improvements in working practices including identifying whether the adoption of the London Permit Scheme for the management of street works and road works will be beneficial to the Council’s service provision.

Witnesses

Representatives from the following stakeholders have been invited to attend the meeting:

- Veolia Water (previously known as Three Valleys Water)
- Thames Water
- National Grid Gas
- Scottish and Southern Energy
- EDF Energy
- Openreach (formerly BT)
- Virgin Media
- Metropolitan Police
- Transport for London

SUGGESTED SCRUTINY ACTIVITY

Members to question representatives from the utility companies on the work that they undertaken on the roads in the Borough and the implications for Residents of this work and whether to take any further action.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.
1. How are residents consulted / made aware of the works you carry out that will have an impact on their daily routines?

2. If your works are causing a problem or nuisance to a resident or business how can they inform you and what will you do to rectify the problem?

3. What actions do you take to ensure that works are carried out in a timely manner and that they are completed within timeframes agreed by the Council?

4. Do you prioritise the completion of works on avoiding fines, returning service provision to normal, reducing the impact of road works on road users, or perceived risk of public complaints?

5. What priority is given to ensuring that your works are compliant with current legislation and specifications?

6. Do you carry out your own quality control to ensure works are completed to the standards set out in the current legislation and specifications. If so how is this recorded?

7. What qualifications do operatives need to obtain to work in the road?

8. How do you plan your major works? Does much thought go in to planning to carry out works with other utility providers to reduce the disruption caused to residents and road users?

9. How can you work with other utility providers and the Council to reduce the disruption caused to residents by road works

10. Do you have an annual programme of asset (pipe / cable) replacement in Hillingdon as it appears that a lot of the pipes and cables in the borough are unreliable and at risk of bursting / breaking frequently?

11. Are you investing money to reduce the amount of times roads are dug up to attend to ‘Emergency Works’ by carrying out more permanent cyclic and planned maintenance?

12. How do you liaise with the Council to ensure that when a road is resurfaced it does not then have to be dug up to repair a service main? Is there anything that can be done to protect newly laid road surfaces from being dug up time and time again?