

SELECT COMMITTEE REVIEW - OBTAINING BEST VALUE FOR THE COUNCIL'S HIGHWAYS RESURFACING PROGRAMME

Committee name	Property, Highways and Transport Select Committee
Officer reporting	Steve Clarke, Democratic Services Officer
Papers with report	Appendix A – LBH Highway Safety Inspection Policy & Procedure
Ward	All

HEADLINES

This item will act as the first session of the Select Committee's review into obtaining best value for the Council's Highways Resurfacing Programme. As a starting point for the review and to assist discourse, this report provides Members with an overview of Hillingdon's Highway network, maintenance procedures and the Council's highways safety inspection procedures. The aim of the review is to take a broad assessment of existing procedures, new technologies, methods, materials and scheduling possibilities to obtain best value and service for residents.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Select Committee note the contents of the report and use the first witness session of the review to enquire as to the Council's existing approach to Footways and Carriageways Resurfacing.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The following witness will be present to take part in the information gathering session on 18 October 2022:

Poonam Pathak	LBH Head of Highways	A key officer in the implementation and strategic development of the Council's Highways maintenance programme.
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Hillingdon's Highways Network

The Council is tasked with maintaining 905 kilometres of footways and 700 kilometres of carriageways (roadways) within Hillingdon.

The Council is not responsible for the maintenance of a number of prominent highways in the Borough, these include:

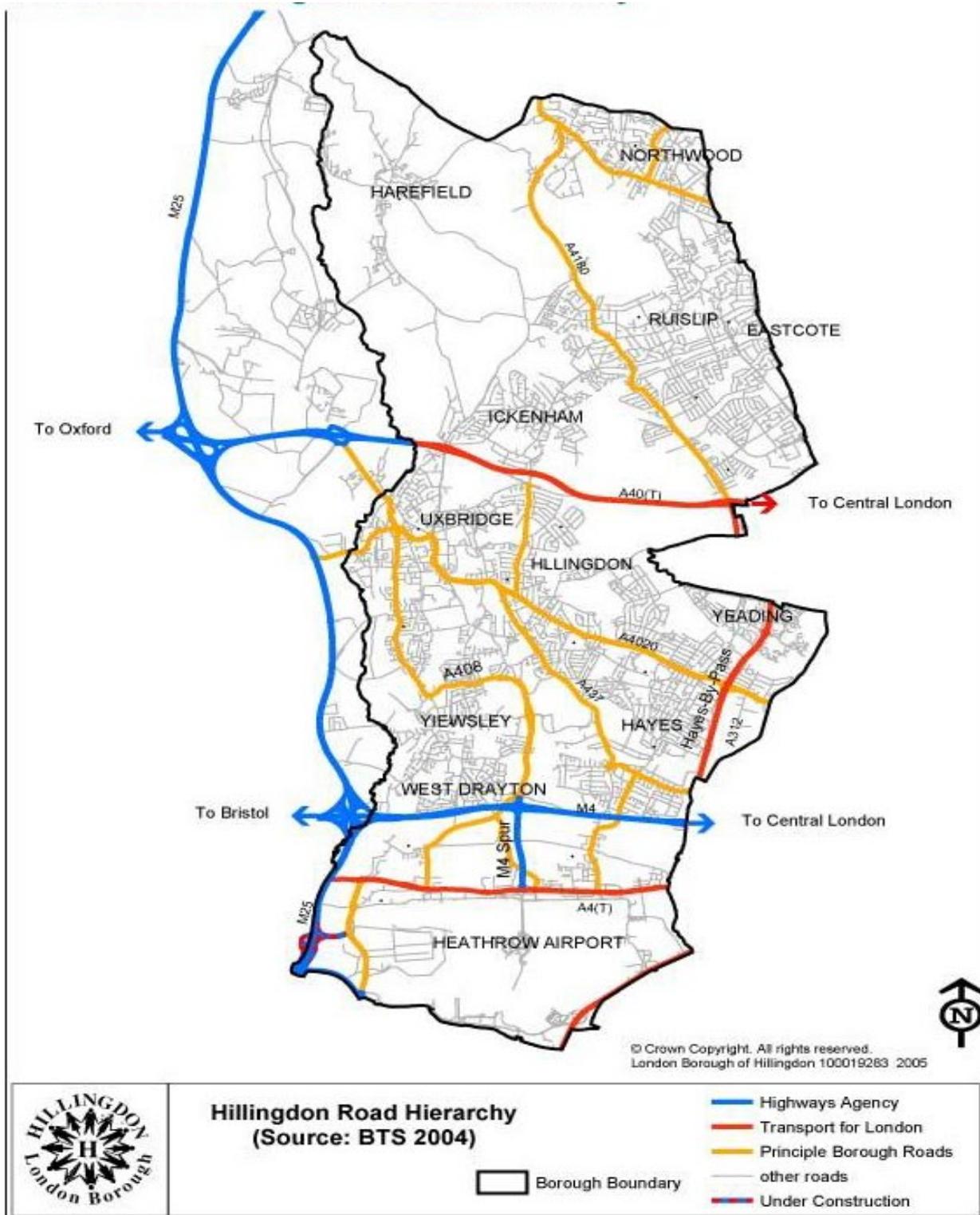
- A4 Bath Road
- A40 Western Avenue
- A30 Great South West Road
- A312 The Parkway

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- A4180 West End Road south of the Polish War Memorial (including the roundabout)
- A3113 Airport Way (including the roundabout on Stanwell Moor Road)
- M4 Motorway including Heathrow spur
- M25 Motorway

These highways are maintained by a mix of Highways England and Transport for London as detailed below.



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Of the roads that the Council is responsible for maintaining, these have been categorised into groups A – D within Hillingdon’s road hierarchy. Categories are determined based on road classification with due regard to functionality, traffic use, character and trends. The vast majority of the Borough’s road network (82%) falls within category D.

Feature	Hierarchy	Functionality factor	General description	Category	Length (m)
Road	Main Distributor	Borough principal roads; very high traffic flow routes.	Routes linking strategic network.	A	51,662
	Secondary Distributor	Traffic sensitive roads; classified non-principal roads; high traffic flow routes.	Routes linking main distributor network	B	20,343
	Link Road	Medium traffic flow routes. Mainly unclassified.	Routes linking secondary distributor network; industrial interconnecting roads.	C	52,700
	Residential / Local Access	Low traffic flow routes. No traffic generator. Unclassified.	Residential roads; access to individual properties and land.	D	574,151

Similarly, the footway hierarchy takes into account local factors such as the proximity to town centres, shopping parades, schools, hospitals, and public transport hubs. Footways are categorised in groups 1 – 4 detailed below. Again, the majority of footways (94.5%) fall within category 4.

Feature	Hierarchy	Functionality factor	General Description	Category	Length (m)
Footway	Primary Walking Route	Very high pedestrian volume. Major bus route.	Busy urban town centre; shopping and business centre; main train stations; main pedestrian routes.	1	14,197
	Secondary Walking Route	High pedestrian volume.	High usage routes through local areas feeding into primary routes; shopping parades; large schools.	2	5,437
	Link Footway	Medium pedestrian volume.	Linking local access footways; local shops.	3	46,824
	Local Access Footway	Low pedestrian volume.	Low usage footways; residential housing estates; cul-de-sacs.	4	1,148,302

Highways Maintenance and Management

The Council's highways maintenance activities can be categorised under three primary functions:

- **Reactive Maintenance**
 - o Patching
 - o Potholes
 - o Drainage
 - o Road markings
 - o Highway Inspections
 - o Street Lighting Repairs
- **Regulatory Functions**
 - o Network Management
 - o Utility Inspections
- **Planned Maintenance**
 - o Resurfacing
 - o Surface Dressing

With regard to reactive maintenance, the Council has three rhino patch machines that are used to repair potholes. These machines are quicker, produce longer lasting repairs and are cheaper than traditional road repair methods. They're also more eco-friendly as they produce around 80% less CO2. They are particularly effective because no joins are left between the old and new surface, so water can't leak into cracks and cause repeat problems.

For the benefit of residents, the Council's website provides a list of the Borough's road closures authorised for roadworks by the Council. For road closures pertaining to communications and utility companies, Network Rail, Transport for London, and Highways England, the Transport for London website provides a register of roadworks taking place across London.

Management of the Council's highways asset is a strategic endeavour that enables the Council to make decisions over what service is provided and what can be achieved within budget limits. It enables officers to identify the best allocation of resources for the management, operation, preservation and enhancement of highway infrastructure to meet the needs of current and future residents. Asset management therefore supports business decisions and provides longer term financial benefit.

Safety Inspections

The Council has an Inspection Regime in place that sees all roads and footways in the Borough inspected for defects on an agreed frequency in line with the Code of Practice for Well Managed Highways Infrastructure and the Borough's road and footway hierarchies.

Defects can also be reported by residents through the Council's Contact Centre or on the Council's website.

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Footway and Roadway Defects

When a defect is reported, highway inspectors will objectively assess the severity, nature and location of defects to determine how urgent the required work is. Defects will only be repaired if they are regarded as hazardous or serious and, in order that consistent standards are adopted throughout the Borough, clearly defined categories known as 'investigatory levels' are set. If the defect assessed is not considered to be hazardous or serious and does not meet the required 'investigatory level', repair will not be undertaken. However, if it does, the priority allocated will depend on the severity, nature and location of the defect.

It is recognised that on any highway network, a multitude of minor defects will exist which do not pose any risk to either the safety or the integrity of the highway and for which it may be impractical and inefficient to expend limited financial resources to undertake repairs. Investigatory levels provide guidelines to highways inspectors, as to which defects should be considered for treatment or repair. All defects inspected that meet investigatory levels are evaluated and the likelihood of injury or damage to a highway user assessed. This approach helps to ensure that defect repairs are appropriately planned, resourced and completed to the correct standard. It should be noted that minimum investigatory levels are provided as a guide only. Should the Inspector, following a risk assessment, deem it necessary to record any specific defect at a higher level, then they should do so.

Hillingdon's Investigatory Levels

Item	Defect	Investigatory Level
Carriageway	Pothole / depression (<i>depth/width</i>)	>40mm & >200mm
Cycleways	Pothole / depression (<i>depth only</i>)	25-40mm
Controlled crossing points (<i>zebra, pelican, puffin, toucan etc</i>)	Pothole / depression (<i>depth only</i>)	25-40mm
Carriageway	Standing water / water flowing onto public highway / blocked drain	> 1/3 width of carriageway and > 40mm deep
Signs/bollards/pedestrian guard rails	Damaged/misaligned item causing a hazard (including sign fixings)	Defect present
Footway	Trip / pothole / sunken cover	> 20mm
Footway	Rocking flagstones / block	> 20mm vertical movement
Footway	Loose kerbs (<i>All</i>)	50mm horizontal 20mm vertical
Footway	Missing kerb section	> 20mm
Footway	Depression / ponding	>1m sq & >40mm deep
Footway	Horizontal gap (<i>paving slabs</i>)	>20mm wide & >20mm deep
Footway	Filletts / open joints	>20mm wide & >20mm deep

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Prioritisation criteria

Hillingdon currently adopts a “worst-first” approach to asset management whereby the worst condition roads are identified, and a one-year programme of road resurfacing and reconstruction works is developed. Officers are preparing a 5-year work programme which will include both major resurfacing and preventative maintenance which is the first step towards long-term programme development.

Condition surveys are commissioned and used to determine which roads will be suitable for major resurfacing and preventative maintenance. For the 2022/23 programme and beyond, a number of factors have been taken into account other than road condition in determining surfaces for repair, such as accident claim, defect records, complaints, road usage levels, and footfall.

The prioritised future years works programmes of highways capital resurfacing schemes are reviewed and updated based on the results of the latest road condition survey data.

Implications on related Council policies

A key role of Select Committees is to monitor the performance of Council services within their remit. Select Committees may also make recommendations on service changes and improvements to the Cabinet who are responsible for the Council’s policy and direction.

How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

The vision for highway assets sits within the Councils core priority (Our People, Our Natural Environment, Our Build Environment and Financial Management), which is achieved by providing highway assets which are in good condition, fit for purpose, energy efficient, provide accessible services to residents, represent value for money through long term planning, and enhanced allocation of resources. Moreover, the Council endeavours to provide improved service and quality of life to users with high customer satisfaction.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

Legal Implications

None.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – LBH Highway Safety Inspection Policy & Procedure*

**The lists of LBH footways and carriageways (pages 24 – 159 of the policy) have been omitted from these agenda papers for conciseness; however they can be found on the Council’s website at the following url - https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/media/9337/Highway-Safety-Inspection-Policy-and-Procedure/pdf/Highway_Safety_Inspection_Policy_and_Procedure.pdf?m=1649170824107*

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