

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



Monday 24th November 2008

at 4.00pm

**in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Hartlepool**

MEMBERS: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:

Councillors Akers-Belcher, Barker, R W Cook, Coward, Cranney, Fleming, McKenna, Worthy and Wright

Resident Representatives: John Cambridge, Mary Green and Brenda Loynes

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 10th November 2008

4. RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM

No items.

5. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

No items.

6. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS/BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS

No items.

7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- 7.1 The Condition of the Highways in Hartlepool – Draft Final Report –
Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum (to follow)

8. ISSUES IDENTIFIED FROM FORWARD PLAN

No items

9. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Date of next meeting 12 January 2009 at 4.00 pm in the Council Chamber

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

MINUTES

10 November 2008

The meeting commenced at 4.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Stephen Akers-Belcher (In the Chair)

Councillors: Caroline Barker, Rob Cook, John Coward, Kevin Cranney, Tim Fleming,
Gladys Worthy and Edna Wright

Also Present in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.2 (ii): -
Councillor David Young attended as substitute for Councillor Chris McKenna

Resident Representatives:
John Cambridge and Brenda Loynes

Officers: Dave Stubbs, Director of Neighbourhood Services
James Walsh, Scrutiny Support Officer
Laura Starrs, Scrutiny Support Officer
Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

50. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted for Councillor Chris McKenna and Resident Representative Mary Green.

51. Declarations of interest by Members

None

52. Minutes of the meeting held on 27 October 2008.

Confirmed.

53. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum

None.

54. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

None.

55. Neighbourhood Services Department: Budget and Policy Framework Initial Consultation Proposals 2009/10 (*Scrutiny Support Officer*)

The Scrutiny Support Officer advised that at a meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee held on 31st October 2008 it was agreed that the initial consultation proposals for 2009/10 to 2011/12 be considered on a departmental basis by the appropriate Scrutiny Forum. The Director of Neighbourhood Services was in attendance and presented the departmental pressures, terminating grants, priorities and proposed efficiencies which were attached as appendices to the report. Details of proposed contingencies were also provided to members during the meeting. The vast majority of savings were expected to come from staffing reductions.

Discussion also centred around energy savings in Council buildings. The Director of Neighbourhood Services reported that a number of measures were already in place within the Civic Centre including sensor-controlled lighting, energy efficient light bulbs and computers with automatic shutdown. Revisions to the transport system had also been made with all Council drivers enrolled on a driver efficiency course. The Carbon Trust had been approached but had come up with theoretical strategies rather than the more practical suggestions needed.

Members also queried whether weed control treatments could be carried out more than three times a year in certain areas and if savings could be made by reducing the number of recycling centres as part of the tendering process.

The Chair commented that the budget priority for highways investment should be more reflective of the recommendations arising from the Forum's recent investigation into the Condition of the Highways in Hartlepool, specifically focusing on a move from reactive maintenance to planned maintenance.

The Scrutiny Support Officer reminded members that they would have a further opportunity to comment on the proposals at their meeting on 14th January 2009.

Recommendation

The Budget and Policy Framework initial consultation proposals for 2009/10 to 2011/12 were considered and the following proposals would be presented to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 28th November 2008 to enable a formal response to be presented to Cabinet on 15th December 2008 :-

- I. Members supported the schedule of budget pressures as outlined in Appendix A
- II. Members supported the schedule of terminating grants, as outlined in Appendix B.
- III. Members supported the schedule of budget priorities as detailed in Appendix C.
- IV. Members supported the schedule of budget efficiencies as detailed in Appendix D.
- V. Members supported the schedule of contingencies as tabled during the meeting.

56. Issues Identified from Forward Plan

None.

57. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent

None

58. Next Meeting

Monday 24th November 2008 at 4.00pm in the Council Chamber.

The meeting concluded at 4.30pm

CHAIRMAN

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

24 November 2008



Report of: Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum

Subject: DRAFT FINAL REPORT - THE CONDITION OF THE
HIGHWAYS IN HARTLEPOOL

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the draft findings of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum following its investigation into the condition of the Highways in Hartlepool.

2. SETTING THE SCENE

- 2.1 Hartlepool Borough Council, as the Highway Authority has a statutory duty under the Highways Act 1980 to protect the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of any highway which includes the duty to maintain the highway. A highway is an established right of way for the public to pass and repass, which includes public footpaths and bridleways as well as all “roads” as defined by the Road Traffic Act.
- 2.2 The highway network is the largest and most visible community asset for which local authorities are responsible and the Council has a road network of 236 miles and footpaths covering 472 miles. It is used on a daily basis by the majority of people and is fundamental to the economic, social and environmental well being 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, education and health.
- 2.3 In order to fulfil its potential, it is crucial that the local highway network is appropriately maintained. Continuing growth in traffic and its attendant problems has brought increased pressure on the highway network and increased the rate of deterioration. Consequently, concern is increasing about the current level of investment in highway asset management and the effectiveness of current highway maintenance provision. Inadequate maintenance today leads to greater problems for the future.

- 2.4 The Council has a statutory duty under the Highways Act 1980 to maintain highways to ensure that they are safe and fit for ordinary traffic and such care has been taken in all the circumstances which were reasonable. Fiduciary duties placed on the Council include asset management, financial management, procurement, performance and planning, whole life costs, treatment selection, quality management and sustainability.
- 2.5 Greater pressure has been placed on limited budgets due to the requirement for higher than minimum standards to be achieved resulting in the current struggle for the Council to even provide the minimum acceptable standard. According to research by the Local Government Association, Councils are paying out more for compensation claims on potholes than they are spending on repairing roads. The research indicates that £53 million paid out to motorists last year could have been spent repairing an extra 946,429 potholes. The Chair of the Local Government Association's Transport and Regeneration Board is pressing for new legislation to combat the compensation culture created by no-win, no-fee lawyers.
- 2.6 Central Government developed a ten year Transport Plan which set out a realistic view of the challenges faced along with an ambitious vision of what could be achieved by 2010. One of the key challenges which the Plan aimed to address before 2010 was to eliminate the maintenance backlog for local roads, bridges and lighting as part of a £30 billion programme. However, to date this has not been achieved. According to the Asphalt Industry Alliance's Annual Road Survey 2008, the number of trenches and road openings has increased over the past year and there is an 11 year backlog of local maintenance work, with an existing shortfall of more than one billion. The Head of Urban Access Policy at the Freight Transport Association criticised Central Government's lack of provision for local road maintenance, stating that the "Government must increase the funding to local authorities in order that they are able to maintain their roads in a fit and proper condition rather than on what seems to be the current patch and mend basis".

3. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

- 3.1 The overall aim of the scrutiny investigation was to review the Council's approach to highway inspection and maintenance and to suggest areas of improvement to ensure the town's roads are maintained to an acceptable standard.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

- 4.1 The following Terms of Reference for the investigation were as outlined below:-
- (a) To gain an understanding of the statutory and regulatory framework for highway inspection and maintenance;

- (b) To identify provision in local strategies / programmes of relevance to inspection and maintenance of highways in Hartlepool;
- (c) To examine the Council's operational approach to highway inspection and maintenance to ensure that the highways where appropriate are brought up to and maintained to an acceptable standard, with particular focus on:-
 - (i) the associated costs;
 - (ii) the public liability and cost of funding insurance requirements;
 - (iii) the current response times to respond to and rectify varying categories of road defects / maintenance;
 - (iv) the current level of intervention standards and practices; and
 - (v) the arrangements available to the public for the reporting of maintenance / road defects.
- (d) To investigate the local area focus of the Council's current provision to determine its effectiveness and examine ways of extending this principle for the delivery of Highway Services;
- (e) To compare Hartlepool's approach to highways maintenance with other local authorities in the region by consulting to seek good practice; and
- (f) To consult with major stakeholders on the Council's approach to highway inspection and maintenance.

5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

5.1 Membership of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum for the 2008/9 Municipal Year was as outlined below:-

Councillors Akers-Belcher (Chair), Barker, R W Cook, Coward, Cranney, Fleming, McKenna (Vice – Chair), Worthy and Wright

Resident Representatives: John Cambridge, Mary Green and Brenda Loyes

6. METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

6.1 The Members of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum met formally from the 11 July 2008 to 24 November 2008 to discuss and receive evidence directly relating to their investigation into the Condition of the Highways in Hartlepool. A detailed record of these meetings is available from the Council's Democratic Services or via the Hartlepool Borough Council website.

6.2 A brief summary of the methods of investigation are outlined below:-

- (a) Presentations and reports from Hartlepool Borough Council Officers;
- (b) Evidence provided by the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities;
- (c) Consultation with the North, South and Central Neighbourhood Consultative Forums;
- (d) Site visit by Members to a selection of roads / pavements across Hartlepool;
- (e) Site visit by Members to Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council to examine areas of good practice;
- (f) Written evidence from Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group;
- (g) Written evidence from Hartlepool's 50 + Forum;
- (h) Written Evidence from Resident Representatives;
- (i) Consultation with the Headland Conservation Advisory Group;
- (j) Written evidence from the Highways Agency;
- (k) Written Evidence from the Town's Member of Parliament;
- (l) Focus Group held with the members of the public at Hartlepool Civic Centre on 15 September 2008; and
- (m) Attendance by the Chair at the Asphalt Industry Alliance, 'Journey to the Perfect Road' Conference held on 22 October 2008.

FINDINGS

7. CURRENT HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE ISSUES IN HARTLEPOOL

7.1 In relation to the issues associated with the current highways maintenance service, Members received evidence from a variety of witnesses as outlined below:

Evidence from the Town's Member of Parliament (MP)

7.2 The written contribution of the Town's MP to the investigation was very welcomed and his views on the condition of the highways in Hartlepool are outlined below.

- 7.3 The MP indicated that in his experience, the provision of highways maintenance is of a good quality referring specifically to the responsiveness of the highways team. The MP commented that he does not receive a large proportion of constituents' correspondence relating to highways maintenance and inspection but when issues are raised, he has found the highways section of the Council to be professional and extremely responsive.
- 7.4 The MP highlighted that constituents have tended to raise concerns with him in respect of poorly maintained kerbsides or pavements, where a fall has occurred rather than potholes in roads. He appreciates that the small scale nature of the local authority often makes it difficult to manage different priorities but it also means that the team is able to respond to concerns quickly.
- 7.5 When asked about his views on the standards of the highways in Hartlepool in comparison to national and regional standards, his understanding is that Hartlepool is currently in the top quartile in the country regarding Government indicators relating to highways maintenance but he does not think this will be the public's perception. He imagines that the public believe that the town's roads are of inferior quality to other areas. Although does not advise increased communication on the matter as his belief is that the public would wish to see any additional resources pumped into the actual maintenance and inspection rather than greater public relations.
- 7.6 One area raised by the MP was the matter of unadopted roads in Hartlepool and he believes that a clearer policy on unadopted roads would contribute to the economic development and well-being of the town. Although, he can understand the reluctance of the local authority to take on responsibility for these highways with possible considerable liabilities to the taxpayer.
- 7.7 The MP suggested several areas of improvement in order to ensure the town's roads are maintained to an acceptable standard. These can be summarised as follows:
- (a) **Funding:** The Government is moving away from specific ring-fenced funding for certain activities and providing more resources for local authorities to spend according to local priorities. About £5 billion of resource funding for councils has been mainstreamed into area-based grant or revenue support grant. This means that local authorities have the flexibilities to allocate funds to key priorities rather than having to report specific matters to central government. The MP would suggest that the Council should come to a view as to the importance of highways maintenance in its overall strategic priorities.
 - (b) **Economic and social development:** The MP strongly believes that a well maintained highway system is essential to the economic and social development of Hartlepool. The effective flow of traffic, both in terms of vehicles and pedestrians is important and contributes to the sustainability and well being of the town. As much as possible the local authority should be 'future proofing' increasing traffic flow through the

provision of a well-planned highways system, which allows for efficient and safe passage of travel. The MP indicated that there needs to be close strategic links between highways maintenance and other parts of the local authority, including planning and economic development.

- (c) **Public transport:** In order to reduce the wear and tear on the roads and assist highways maintenance, the MP is of the opinion that given the centralised nature of much of Hartlepool it would be feasible to try to encourage and incentivise car users to use public transport. Therefore, a greater link between highways and public transport provision is important.
- (d) **Planned maintenance:** The MP suggested that the local authority should consider a greater emphasis upon planned maintenance rather than reactive works, as planned maintenance should prove to be less costly in the long run and help to ensure the efficient use of the town's roads. In addition, given a growing tendency for litigation on highways matters, the MP suggested that it may be cost effective and efficient in the long-term if the local authority devoted more resources to this issue in the short-term, to reduce the risk of litigation in the future.
- (e) **Main and strategic roads:** The MP understands that there is a need to ensure that Hartlepool's main and strategic roads are well maintained, but also thinks that greater consideration needs to be given to the condition of the roads in some of the less busy streets.
- (f) **Use of materials:** There is a balance to be struck between the use of cheap materials to undertake a 'fix job' and a higher spend initially to provide greater value for money over the long-term, although this is a judgement for the local authority. However, the MP's own preference would be for the latter, to provide a greater degree of sustainability.
- (g) **Local involvement:** The MP believes that the involvement of the local community is vital and recommends this involvement to hear community views.

Evidence from the Authority's Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities.

7.8 The Forum was pleased to receive evidence from the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities relating to the Council's approach to highway maintenance as summarised below:

- (a) His roles and responsibilities in relation to the Council's highways maintenance and inspection are to oversee officer's responsibilities in relation to the statutory duties for highway safety and to ensure that all officers comply with the standards set within Central Government guidelines.

- (b) The Portfolio Holder emphasised that the Highways Team do an excellent job within the confines of a tight budget and the hard work of the Highways Team was acknowledged by the Forum. One of the main problems which was indicated by the Portfolio Holder was the lack of planned maintenance work due to the increase in reactive maintenance. In order to reduce the reactive maintenance it was suggested by that an increase in the programmed maintenance budget would improve the current condition of the highways in Hartlepool and would result in less reliance on reactive maintenance.
- (c) It was emphasised by the Portfolio Holder that the current condition of the highways was reflective of the fact that there were outstanding insurance claims of £308k for highways and £440k for pavements.
- (d) The Portfolio Holder acknowledged the current budget situation and reiterated that an injection of £5m over the next five years for the planned programme of maintenance would result in vast improvements to the condition of the highways in Hartlepool. It was highlighted to the Forum that if there was no increase in the highways budget, it would result in a greater shift to reactive maintenance rather than planned maintenance.

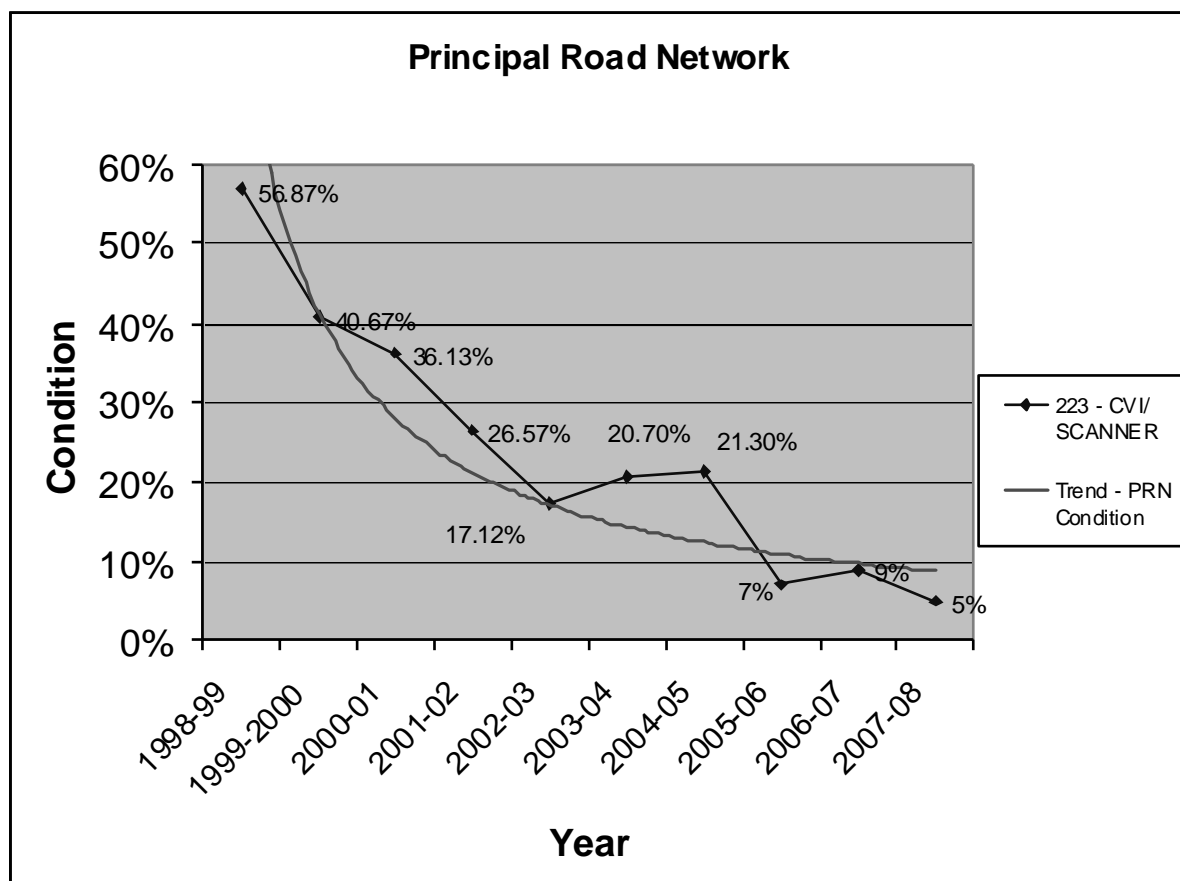
Evidence from Elected Members of the Scrutiny Forum – Site Visit to Carriageways / footpaths across Hartlepool

- 7.9 Members of the Forum thought it would be beneficial to the undertaking of their investigation if they visited a selection of carriageways / footpaths across Hartlepool to gain an understanding of the issues faced in relation to highways maintenance. During the course of the site visit Members were shown carriageways which were due to be resurfaced / badly scoured surfaces / utility trenches / patching / surface dressings and also footway deterioration.
- 7.10 The site visit took place on 1 September 2008 and the feedback from Members can be summarised as follows:-
- (a) A variety of carriageways looked in serious need of repair but from a maintenance perspective were in good condition;
 - (b) Utility trenches looked untidy;
 - (c) Footways were in poor condition in some areas;
 - (d) A number of speed humps were in need of maintenance; and
 - (e) Concerns over the introduction of speed humps in certain areas.

Good Practice Evidence from Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

- 7.11 Members of the Forum were very interested in visiting a good practice Local Authority in order to gain an insight into their highways maintenance success. On this basis, Members of the Forum visited Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council as they were awarded Beacon Status, which is a recognition of excellence, for their approach to highways maintenance.
- 7.12 Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council maintains 1,150km of road comprising 129km 'A' roads and 1021km local roads. In the past limited funding dictated that the maintenance of Barnsley's highways was very much reactive. Increased funding made available by Central Government as part of its 10 year transport plan and by the Council (in response to major concerns expressed by citizens about the condition of the roads and footways) required a substantial rethink of their maintenance strategy from reactive to proactive. This new approach to highways maintenance resulted in Barnsley Council achieving Beacon Status in 2003/2004 for their street and highway works.
- 7.13 Barnsley's approach to highways maintenance can be summarised into key themes. These themes have contributed to Barnsley's reactive maintenance, which was 80% in 1999 reduced to 18% in 2008, and therefore their planned maintenance has increased dramatically resulting in better maintenance of their highways, as outlined in the graph below:

Graph showing the Condition of the Highways in Barnsley (1998 – 2008)



7.14 The key themes are as follows:

- (a) Utilities Work: Barnsley Council have developed a non adversarial approach which focuses on common objectives aimed at improving standards.
- (b) Better co-ordination of works: A pro-active approach was developed to engage with the utility companies to manage the network and future maintenance. Meetings between Barnsley Council and the utility companies are now held on a regular basis, where both parties discuss their planned maintenance programmes and identify any co-ordination issues. This has resulted in utilities either accelerating their works or undertaking them at the same time using the same traffic management arrangements. In some cases the Council has deferred its works to enable the utilities to complete their works so that newly laid surfacing would not be disturbed. Sharing of longer term programmes has resulted in area based working by all parties to reduce disruption.
- (c) Partnership with the public: Barnsley Council's have developed effective communications with the public to keep them informed of highways maintenance issues. Communication methods include a map based roadworks report on a web site, weekly reports in local newspapers, individual letters to residents and businesses affected by roadworks activities, and feedback from the public on the quality of the works operation and the scheme itself.
- (d) Highway works: partnership working with contractors to encourage innovative treatments and early contractor input to develop new ideas / techniques. For example, the use of re-cycled material in schemes.
- (e) Effective monitoring and performance management: links the overall approach to street and highway works. It is an integral part of Barnsley's annual service and financial plans. This approach has resulted in service delivery strongly allied to performance targets.

7.15 Barnsley Council's service delivery key advice aimed at improving highway maintenance is as follows:

- (a) Develop a clear vision and strategy;
- (b) Full commitment of the Council from both Officers and Members;
- (c) Excellent engagement with the public and streetwork providers;
- (d) Public service agreement: one element of Barnsley's Public Service agreement with Central Government included additional funding for improved footway maintenance linked to stopping the increasing number of insurance claims against the Council; and

- (e) Working at off peak periods.

Evidence from Members of the Public – Focus Group Event

7.16 The Forum was very keen to engage with members of the public to hear their views in relation to the problems that they encounter on the highway on a daily basis.

7.17 As such, a Focus Group Event was held on 15 September 2008 at the Civic Centre, Hartlepool. Whilst turnout was low, the event was well publicised in the local press together with the distribution of leaflets/posters to community groups and venues.

7.18 Members of the public were given the opportunity to express their views on the condition of the highways in Hartlepool and provide input into the investigation. The Group's views were sought on the following questions:-

(i) What in your opinion are the main problems with the highways in Hartlepool?

- (a) Highways were not seen as a priority, an example provided was that the budget did not reflect the growth of the town;
- (b) Roads were not built to carry the current volume of traffic;
- (c) The speed of traffic effected the condition of the roads; and
- (d) Paved footpaths were seen as a danger.

(ii) In your opinion are the highways in better / worse condition compared to other local areas?

- (a) General opinion was that the roads were in worse condition than neighbouring authorities; and
- (b) Concerns were raised over traffic calming schemes.

(iii) Have you ever suffered any personal injury or damage to vehicles due to the condition of the highways in Hartlepool? If so, was the problem on the highway rectified?

- (a) Psychological problems resulting from noise / vibrations;
- (b) Depression;
- (c) Emotional demands / tensions; and

- (d) Concerns over obstructions in particular for the elderly.
- (iv) **Have you ever reported a road / pavement defect? If so, was the problem resolved and approximately how long did it take? And who did you report it to?**
 - (a) Reported on several occasions but problem never resolved;
 - (b) By Letter;
 - (c) Civic Centre Complaints Department;
 - (d) Consultative Forums; and
 - (e) Confusion over how to report defects.
- (v) **What areas of improvement if any, would you suggest to ensure the town's roads / pavements are maintained to an acceptable standard?**
 - (a) Redirect traffic calming money to fund other major maintenance issues;
 - (b) Tarmac was the preferred option for pavements; and
 - (c) More money from Central Government / lobby Parliament.

Consultation with Hartlepool Support Groups

7.19 During the course of the investigation consultation was undertaken with a number of support groups in relation to their views / opinions on the condition of the highways in Hartlepool. The following groups formed part of the consultation exercise:

- (a) Resident Representative Forum;
- (b) Headland Conservation Advisory Group;
- (c) 50+ Forum;
- (d) Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group; and
- (e) Hartlepool Access Group.

7.20 The general feedback received from the groups can be summarised as follows:

- (a) Uneven / broken paving stones and tarmac causing injury and falls;

- (b) Pavements very high;
- (c) Very few drop kerbs;
- (d) Too many speed bumps / do not achieve their objective;
- (e) Too many pot holes / some pot holes are not repaired;
- (f) Some road markings are dull / incorrect lines painted in the centre of the road;
- (g) Parked cars / lorries preventing wheelchair access to pavements and damaging pavements;
- (h) Parked cars on pavements causing risk of injury / illegal parking;
- (i) Works carried out by utility companies – condition of road not reinstated;
- (j) Positioning of drop kerbs / tactile pavements;
- (k) Standardisation of practices / policies for drop kerbs / tactile pavements;
- (l) Limited consultation with the Support Groups;
- (m) Repairs do not last therefore regular inspections are essential along with quicker response times;
- (n) Roads are in a bad state of repair and have been neglected;
- (o) Pavements need maintaining / cleaning especially in winter as they become dangerous;
- (p) Other towns roads are in better condition;
- (q) The Headland Conservation Advisory Group commented on the use of paving stones in conservation areas rather than tarmac stating that in some areas of the Conservation Area paving stones are welcomed as it adds to character of the area.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS TO HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE

- 8.1 Members agreed that a number of important stakeholders should be invited to provide evidence, in relation to the Forum's investigation into the Condition of the Highways in Hartlepool. The evidence of key stakeholders is outlined below.

Evidence from Hartlepool Borough Council

- 8.2 Members heard that Hartlepool Borough Council's statutory duties in relation to maintaining the highways in Hartlepool are set out in the Highways Act 1980. Officers from the Neighbourhood Services Department gave evidence to the Forum on several occasions and the evidence was categorised into two areas, operational and financial issues, both of which are detailed below.

Operational Approach to Highways Maintenance

- 8.3 The current management arrangement within the Council for highways maintenance is that reactive maintenance, highway inspections and the day to day flagging repairs and filling of potholes is the responsibility of the Neighbourhood Management Division and is delivered by internal resources. The planned maintenance, major one off reconstructions due to major failures and the carriageway resurfacing programme is the responsibility of the Technical Services Division and is delivered by external contractors. Overall management responsibility is with Technical Services.
- 8.4 However, the structure is currently under further revision as a consequence of the Traffic Management Act, which has contributed to the need to establish an Integrated Transport Unit to focus on Traffic and Transportation issues. In a similar manner, it has been determined that the highways section needs to have the same focus and be in charge of its own destiny, so the highway functions are also in the process of being integrated into a single service unit. Once implemented, Neighbourhood Management will be responsible for all aspects of highway maintenance and this will further enhance the area basis of the service delivery.
- 8.5 The Forum were informed that the highway works element of the Highway Services Section has the following staff members:-
- Highway Works Manager
 - Highways Supervisor
 - Highway Technician
 - 7 No. Paviments
 - 12 No. Driver/Labourers (interchangeable roles, but at any one time, 7 will act as labourers for Paviments, 3 will act as the patching team and 2 will be on general works/drainage works)
 - 4 No. Gully Cleansing Operatives
 - 2 No. Modern Apprentice Paviments

The vehicles used are:-

- 5 No. 17 tonne demountable body wagons
- 5 No. 7½ tonne fixed body wagons
- 1 No. 3½ tonne pickup (Rapid Response)
- 2 No. Gully Machines
- 1 No. JCB
- 1 No. Tractaire Loading Shovel

8.6 Members were informed that there are two types of maintenance, reactive and planned, and each were defined as follows:

- (a) Reactive maintenance is defined as the removal of hazardous defects to ensure the safety of road and footway users. It is carried out in response to routine inspections (monthly for high amenity features, 3 monthly for medium amenity features and 6 monthly for low amenity features) or customer reports; and
- (b) Planned maintenance involves the replacement of surfaces that have come to the end of their life cycle. Planned maintenance is carried out to maintain the serviceability of the highway asset, for example, good ride quality on carriageways.

8.7 Members raised their concerns over the amount of reactive maintenance which was being undertaken and how the minimisation of the volume of reactive work was vitally important. The Neighbourhood Services Department informed the Forum that the unit cost for reactive maintenance is much greater than that of planned maintenance. However, it is vital that all actionable defects are repaired for the full 52 weeks per annum as failure to ensure this may lead to an increase in successful insurance claims.

8.8 The Council produce a Planned Maintenance Programme annually which is part of a five year rolling programme. Members were informed that the 2008/09 programme contains 2 carriageway reconstructions, 33 planning and resurfacing schemes and 15 footway reconstruction schemes.

8.9 The maintenance backlog was an area of concern for the Forum as the current estimated cost of rectifying the highways already identified as defective is approximately £20M. The maintenance backlog comprises carriageway defects, footway defects, gully and drainage defects, bridge defects and also includes items such as barriers, bollards, traffic signs, street name plates and white and yellow lines.

8.10 The Forum was interested to hear what the current response times to rectify defects on the highway are and the Forum were informed that there are currently three categories of response, as detailed below:

- (a) Emergency Works – 1 hour. This category is for extremely dangerous situations only. When a repair is possible, it is carried out immediately but this category is usually restricted to making safe by the erection of barriers.
- (b) Urgent Works – 24 hours. This category is for defects that are actionable and pose a medium risk hazard. Consequently it is more usual to require a 24 hour response on a high amenity footway than a low amenity footway.
- (c) Routine Reactive Works – 28 days. This is for all other “actionable” defects.

8.11 The forum raised concerns over the work carried out by utility companies and the inspections in place after the utilities had completed their work. Members were informed that inspections on utility works are prescribed under the RASWA Code of Practice for Inspections and as an Authority are entitled (and required) to inspect 30% of utility works, 10% at 3 specific categories of works, for example:

Table 1 – Categories of Inspection

Category	Description
Cat A	(10%) Inspections undertaken during 'live' works
Cat B	(10%) Inspections undertaken within a 6 month period of completion of works
Cat C	- (10%) Inspections carried out (within 3 month) prior to end of guarantee period

8.12 The above inspections are chargeable at prescribed costs. The money generated from utility inspections and subsequent fines is diverted into the Technical Services Department to pay on budgeted salaries in the Traffic and Transport Division.

8.13 The income generated in 2006 / 2007 was £42,257 and in 2007 / 2008 was £50,717. In 2007 / 2008 the income was made up of, £20,376 from agreed inspections; £16,091 from additional revenue raised from defective works and additional inspections; and £14,250 from charges raised when utilities over stay the agreed time period. The amount varies from year to year and it is anticipated that with the new legislation introduced from April this year, the income will drop significantly in future years. The Department are limited to what one inspector can achieve in a working week and hence cannot generate an increase in income without extra resources but it is likely

that an additional inspector would only generate enough to pay for his own time.

Financial / Funding Issues in relation to Highways Maintenance

8.14 The Forum were presented with a table (as shown below) which outlined the contribution of the highways service to the insurance fund along with the claims paid to date.

Table 2 – Insurance Fund

Financial Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Highways Contribution	£201	£201	£351	£501	£501	£516	£532	£547	£564	£581
Claims Paid to date (£000's)	£273	£279	£344	£417	£253	£278	£183	£103	£72	£8
Reserves outstanding (£000's)	£7	£0	£8	£0	£0	£69	£37	£206	£389	£556
Claims Handling – External (£000's)	£18	£20	£25	£30	£25	£35	£24	£19	£24	£24
Claims Handling – Internal (£000's)	£25	£26	£26	£29	£20	£32	£35	£36	£39	£39
Highways Inspector funding (£000's)				£42	£42	£42	£43	£44	£45	£46
Policy Premium Costs (£000's)	£19	£21	£21	£26	£30	£76	£92	£94	£67	£61
Broker Costs (£000's)	£11	£12	£12	£16	£15	£15	£18	£17	£22	£20
Deficit - Surplus (£000's)	£152	£124	£52	£59	£116	£31	£100	£28	£94	£173

8.15 The Forum was informed by the Neighbourhood Services Department that the first £100K on each and every claim is paid from the Insurance Fund. The role of the fund is to smooth risks across service areas and to not only cover Public Liability but all other categories of policy cover that the Council purchase. The process enables risks to be smoothed over a period of time and not just on an annual basis. The main cause of highway claims still lies with the flagged paving, between 1998-2008 the Council received 731 claims that cost £1.3M, with a further £440K in reserves outstanding. The cost of settling claims that relate to pothole repairs since 1998 is £430K (344 claims), however a further £308K still remains outstanding. It is evident that this represents a growing problem with pot hole repairs and the deterioration of the carriageway network.

- 8.16 The Forum were very interested to draw comparisons between the cost of maintenance work delivered in-house compared to externally. The Neighbourhood Services department highlighted that this was difficult to establish due to the variable nature of private sector pricing. As an illustration, three quotes received for two coat carriageway patching were:-

Table 3 – External Costs of Maintenance Work

Contractor	Cost
1	£42.00/m ²
2	£38.29/m ²
3	£87.19/m ²

- 8.17 This is comparable with an in-house rate of £57.54. It was suggested by the Forum that one option to reduce the tender price could be to use recycled materials for certain schemes, although due to the size of Hartlepool, it may not be economic to run the scheme alone.
- 8.18 Members of the Forum requested details from the department on the actual length of highways assets versus budget provision for the last 10 years, as shown in the table below:

Table 4 – Budget Provision

Year	Spend	Length	Spend per Km	Depreciated Spend per Km
2008/2009	£1,070,847	419.7	£2,551.46	£1,955.48
2007/2008	£1,060,935	419.5	£2,529.05	£1,996.45
2006/2007	£1,174,319	411.5	£2,853.75	£2,320.36
2005/2006	£929,622	408.6	£2,275.14	£1,905.39
2004/2005	£996,550	407.9	£2,443.12	£2,107.46
2003/2004	£832,262	387.6	£2,147.22	£1,907.78
2002/2003	£810,183	378.9	£2,138.25	£1,956.80
2001/2002	£1,197,894	377.3	£3,174.91	£2,992.66
2000/2001	£1,005,011	362.3	£2,773.97	£2,693.18
1999/2000	£1,121,686	357.6	£3,136.71	£3,136.71

- 8.19 In addition to the above, the Forum were interested in linking the budget provisions to the specific costs for the use of different materials for roads and pavements along with the life span of the material. The Neighbourhood Services Department calculated this by using the same length of road / pavement.
- 8.20 The Department explained that due to the variable widths of road, direct comparisons are more easily achieved by expressing the costs in terms of square metres as opposed to the length of the road. Also, roads will deteriorate faster if more highly trafficked, hence a figure of 6,000 vehicles per day was used to ensure that the direct comparison is appropriate. The busiest road in the town, the A689, carries in excess of 20,000 vehicles per day.

6,000 vehicles would be the equivalent of for example, Shrewsbury Street, Arncliffe Gardens. The costs are outlined below:

Table 5 – Costs and Lifespan of Variable Types of Road

Type of Road	Cost Per Square Metre	Life Span
30mm thick DBM Carriageway	£5.90/m ²	10 year life
40mm thick HRA Carriageway	£10.82/m ²	25 year life
40mm thick SMA Carriageway	£8.79/m ²	20 year life

8.21 The following figures were also provided for footways:

Table 6 - Costs and Lifespan of Variable Types of Pavement

Type of Footway	Cost Per Square Metre	Life Span
DBM footway	£23.04/m ²	20 year life
Flagged footway	£22.70/m ²	25 year life

Hartlepool's Local Transport Plan

8.22 The Council's Local Transport Plan sets out how the Council intends to develop a high quality, integrated and safe transport system that supports Hartlepool's continued growth and regeneration. The total 5 year budget is £11.35M. £4.75M is for structural highway maintenance and is delegated to Highway Services to supplement the revenue budget and the remaining £5.526M is for highway development schemes.

8.23 The Forum explored the idea of redirecting monies and targeting them elsewhere. However, any change to the Local Transport Plan needs to be approved by the Government Office and currently Hartlepool's Local Transport Plan is rated as excellent.

Evidence from the Highways Agency

8.24 The Highways Agency clarified to Members that their primary responsibility was for the operation and stewardship of the strategic road network (trunk roads and motorways) in England on behalf of the Secretary of State.

8.25 The primary functions of the Agency are to manage traffic, tackle congestion, provide information to road users and improve safety and journey time reliability, whilst respecting and minimising the environment.

8.26 The Agency's road network ranges from motorways to single carriageway trunk roads (the major A roads) and is valued at over £81 billion. The A19, the trunk road which is the responsibility of the agency near to Hartlepool is

managed under a 30 year Design, Build Finance and Operate contract awarded to Autolink Concessionaries (A19) Limited in 1996.

- 8.27 Autolink are responsible for the operation and maintenance of the project road, they carry out all the routine cyclic and winter maintenance works and have delegated responsibilities for other functions including litter clearance.
- 8.28 The Agency also funds improvement schemes on the route, ranging from small scale improvements to signing and lining, to technology schemes and major projects.

Evidence from the Neighbourhood Consultative Forums / Neighbourhood Managers

- 8.29 A consultation exercise was carried out with the three Hartlepool Neighbourhood Consultative Forums, the North, Central and South to encourage their involvement in the investigation.
- 8.30 The main concerns which were highlighted at each of these Forums were:
- (a) The positioning of drop kerbs / tactile pavements;
 - (b) Limited access for wheelchairs;
 - (c) Moving pavements are a danger; and
 - (d) How are response times publicised.
- 8.31 The Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum requested statistics to indicate the level of enquiries from members of the public which were directed to the Council. The table below was presented to the Forum by the Director of Neighbourhood Services for the financial year 2007/2008. The enquiries are not all necessarily actionable defects, as some enquiries are often made about issues that are not actionable. In these cases, the issue is recorded as closed down with no action taken.

Table 7 – Level of Enquiries from Members of the Public

Service Name	Subject Name	Enquiries	Completed
North Forum Issues	Bollard Defects	16	15
North Forum Issues	Bus stop Defects	2	2
North Forum Issues	Contractor Issues	4	4
North Forum Issues	Damage to Fencing	5	5
North Forum Issues	Damage to Verge	10	10
North Forum Issues	Damaged defective Flags	85	83
North Forum Issues	Damaged Manholes	17	13
North Forum Issues	Damaged Pedestrian Barrier	2	2
North Forum Issues	Flooding Problems	10	10
North Forum Issues	Footpath Obstruction	6	6
North Forum Issues	Gulley Issues	121	100

North Forum Issues	Miscellaneous Issues	77	74
North Forum Issues	Overhanging Tree Branches	20	20
North Forum Issues	Pothole in Carriageway	79	75
North Forum Issues	Pothole in footway	10	9
North Forum Issues	Road Sign Defects	10	10
North Forum Issues	Street Name Plate Defect	11	11
North Forum Issues	Winter Maintenance	1	1
Totals for North Area		486	450

Service Name	Subject Name	Enquiries	Completed
Central Forum Issues	Alleygates	2	2
Central Forum Issues	Bollard Defects	28	28
Central Forum Issues	Bus stop defects	2	2
Central Forum Issues	Contractor Issues	9	8
Central Forum Issues	Damage to Fencing	7	7
Central Forum Issues	Damage to Verge	14	14
Central Forum Issues	Damaged defective flags	143	143
Central Forum Issues	Damaged manholes	17	17
Central Forum Issues	Damaged pedestrian barrier	2	2
Central Forum Issues	Flooding Problems	16	16
Central Forum Issues	Footpath Obstruction	9	9
Central Forum Issues	Gulley Issues	200	197
Central Forum Issues	Miscellaneous Issues	85	84
Central Forum Issues	Overhanging Tree Branches	24	23
Central Forum Issues	Pothole in Carriageway	138	138
Central Forum Issues	Pothole in footway	13	13
Central Forum Issues	Road Lining Defects	4	4
Central Forum Issues	Road Sign defects	17	17
Central Forum Issues	Street Name Plate Defect	10	10
Central Forum Issues	Tree Damage	1	1
Central Forum Issues	Winter Service	2	2
Totals for Central Area		743	737

Service Name	Subject Name	Enquiries	Completed
South Forum Issues	Bollard Defects	5	5
South Forum Issues	Contractor Issues	5	5
South Forum Issues	Damage To Fencing	5	4
South Forum Issues	Damage To Verge	65	62
South Forum Issues	Damaged Defective Flags	126	125
South Forum Issues	Damaged Manholes	14	13
South Forum Issues	Damaged Pedestrian Barriers	3	3
South Forum Issues	Flooding Problems	8	8
South Forum Issues	Footpath Obstruction	6	6
South Forum Issues	Gulley Issues	58	37
South Forum Issues	Miscellaneous Issues	112	105
South Forum Issues	Overhanging Tree Branches	14	14
South Forum Issues	Pothole in Carriageway	109	106
South Forum Issues	Pothole in footway	15	14
South Forum Issues	Road Lining Defects	2	1
South Forum Issues	Road Sign Defects	7	6
South Forum Issues	Street Name Plate Defect	12	11
South Forum Issues	Tree Damage	1	1
Totals for South Area		567	526

8.32 The Neighbourhood Managers also provided written evidence to the Forum outlining the issues/complaints that they had received in relation to the condition of the highways in Hartlepool. The issues/complaints fell into two main categories, which were general issues regarding the service delivered that members of the public were dissatisfied with and issues specific to an area where problems had occurred and remained unresolved.

8.33 Some of the more general issues include:

- (a) The Authority tries to patch roads beyond the point that they can be reasonably patched;
- (b) There is not enough resurfacing;
- (c) Work is marked up, then nothing seems to happen;
- (d) New schemes deteriorating too quickly due to poor quality construction;
- (e) Public utility reinstatements are poor quality;
- (f) Damage caused to footways by inconsiderate motorists (including council vehicles i.e. bin wagons);
- (g) Not enough parking provision;
- (h) Poor general enforcement;
- (i) Poor parking provision in estates (grass verge removal);
- (j) Maintenance of unadopted Council assets;
- (k) Drainage issues;
- (l) Lack of availability of maintenance materials used for maintenance on the larger capital funded schemes (SRB);
- (m) Damage to footpath by tree roots;
- (n) No funding for backstreet resurfacing;
- (o) Maintenance of Alley gates;
- (p) Maintenance of Highways trees;
- (q) Painting and upkeep of pedestrian barriers; and
- (r) Length of time to get scheduled & unscheduled Maintenance completed.

8.34 The area specific issues include:

- (a) Footways in the Park Road to Victoria Road section of York Road have been very poor since shortly after they were constructed;
- (b) Brenda Road floods frequently, particularly at the Power Station roundabout;
- (c) Murray Street floods regularly;
- (d) No maintenance of Central Estate linear park (unadopted);
- (e) Poor footways in Rossmere;
- (f) Deteriorating tarmac verges in Sinclair & Eskdale Rd;
- (g) Water flooding across road near Bank Top Cottage in Greatham;
- (h) Reconstruction of Catcote road from Oxford road to Brierton Lane;
- (i) Flooding in Durham Street; and
- (j) Unadopted parking areas – Throston Estate;

Reporting Arrangements for Highway Defects

8.35 The Chair of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum attended a meeting with the Council's Central Services Manager and the Council's Contact Centre Manager to clarify the process for reporting highway defects including how the enquiry is filtered from the customer to the appropriate department / officer along with any feedback arrangements which are in place.

8.36 The Chair was informed that all enquires are logged directly through the highways software system 'Confirm' by Hartlepool Connect, where all the relevant information relating to the defect is recorded. This information is then processed and actioned by the Highways Department who also provide the feedback to the customer if requested.

8.37 As a result of the meeting, the Chair was informed that the current system used by Hartlepool Connect, the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system is not integrated to Confirm, therefore Hartlepool Connect are unable to report on the status of outstanding customer enquiries. On that basis, client departments are responsible for ensuring that customer enquiries are monitored and fed back when requested. Hartlepool Connect would be able to take on this role if all enquiries were recorded in the CRM system. The relevant information from the CRM could then be fed to other council systems via a 'middleware' product. This product operates by populating information from the CRM to back office systems without having to re-enter information again making the service more accurate and efficient.

9. SUSTAINABILITY / ASSET MANAGEMENT – HOW CAN THIS IMPROVE HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE

- 9.1 Arising from the Asphalt Industry Alliance Conference ‘Journey to the Perfect Road’ attended by the Chair of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum on 22 October 2008, it was suggested that asset management and sustainability could be the key to the perfect road.
- 9.2 The Neighbourhood Services Department are aware that a sustained long-term programme of investment needs to be planned and managed, supported by effective technical and management plans such as the Transport Asset Management Plan, Highway Asset Management Plan, Local Transport Plan and Network Management Plan, which will provide a framework for an integrated asset management approach to the Borough’s transport assets
- 9.3 In Hartlepool an Asset Management Working Group has already been established by the Tees Valley Engineers and has been preparing generic Tees Valley base documents to ensure a consistent approach to Highway Asset Management across the region. The intention is to populate the documents with local content once a region wide approach has been agreed. The completed plans will enable systems to be established to manage all transportation assets on a long-term basis using whole life costing within a framework of statutory requirements, customer expectations and sustainable funding.

10. CONCLUSIONS

- 10.1 The Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum concluded:-
- (a) That the condition of the highways in Hartlepool is reflective of the current budget provision which is allocated to the highways maintenance service;
 - (b) That budget pressures are arising from the increase in reactive maintenance which is resulting in a reduction of planned maintenance, therefore adding to the maintenance backlog;
 - (c) It was evident from members of the public that they were not fully aware of the reporting arrangements available to them when reporting a highway defect and some people felt as though their complaint was disregarded as they did not receive any feedback;
 - (d) That highway defects did not only affect people physically but also psychologically, causing long term health problems;
 - (e) It was crucial that all partners involved in the maintenance of the highways in Hartlepool were kept informed and involved at an early

stage in the process to ensure that the most efficient and effective service was provided;

- (f) It was evident from visiting Bamsley Metropolitan Council that in order to decrease reactive maintenance, the following factors needed to be achieved: better co-ordination of works, greater partnership working, engagement with the public and effective monitoring and performance management;
- (g) That the introduction of the Integrated Transport Unit will increase the efficiency of the service; and
- (h) That the Highways Team within the Council are dedicated to their role and the Forum acknowledges their hard work and commitment despite the budgetary constraints.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 The Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum has taken evidence from a wide range of sources to assist in the formulation of a balanced range of recommendations. The Forum's key recommendations to the Cabinet are as outlined below:

- (a) That the Council develops a strategy to achieve a planned approach to highways maintenance as opposed to a reactive approach;
- (b) That the Council strengthens existing working relations with the Utility Companies and continues to facilitate regular meetings to focus on common objectives aimed at improving standards;
- (c) That the Council develops a formal working arrangement with contactors to involve them at an earlier stage in the design, planning and preparation processes for future highway maintenance and scheme works;
- (d) That the Council explores the possibility of using re-cycled materials in schemes to reduce tender prices and to minimise the environmental impact;
- (e) That the Council explores opportunities to further promote / publicise the future maintenance works of both the Council and the Utility Companies to raise public awareness including the distribution of the Planned Maintenance Programme to Public Libraries / Buildings;
- (f) That Ward Councillors are provided with advance notification of any future maintenance and utility works due to be carried out in their respective Wards;

- (g) That the Council consults with local support groups and the public at set times of the year to improve the positioning of drop kerbs / tactile pavements;
- (h) That the income generated from the charges imposed on the Utility Companies be redirected into the highways maintenance budget;
- (i) That the Council reviews the 2009 / 2010 financial contribution from the Highways Service to the Insurance Fund and any reduction in such contribution be redirected to the highways maintenance budget; and
- (j) That the Council integrates the highways software system, 'Confirm' with the Customer Relationship Management System in order to improve the accuracy and efficiency of the monitoring and feed back arrangements for customer enquiries relating to highways maintenance.

12. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 12.1 The Forum is grateful to all those who have presented evidence during the course of the Scrutiny Inquiry. We would like to place on record our appreciation for all those witnesses who attended the Forum. In particular the Forum would like to thank the following for their co-operation during the Scrutiny Investigation:-

Hartlepool Borough Council:

Councillor Peter Jackson – Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities.

Dave Stubbs – Director of Neighbourhood Services

Alastair Smith – Head of Technical Services

Denise Ogden – Head of Neighbourhood Management

Paul Mitchinson – Highways Services Manager

Mike Blair – Traffic and Transportation Manager

Jon Wright – Neighbourhood Co-ordinating Manager

Karen Oliver - Neighbourhood Manager (North)

David Frame – Neighbourhood Manager (South)

Clare Clark – Neighbourhood Manager (Central)

Paul Hamilton – Insurance and Risk Management Manager

The Highways Team

Christine Armstrong – Central Services Manager

Julie Howard – Contact Centre Manager

Resident Representatives

External Representatives:

Iain Wright, MP for Hartlepool

Nicholas Adshead, Route Performance Manager for the Highways Agency

Members of Hartlepool Special Needs Group

Members of the 50 + Forum

Members of the Access Audit Group

Members of the Headland Conservation Area Advisory Committee

Members of the Public

Hartlepool Mail – ‘Plot the Pots’ Campaign

Blind Welfare Association

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

**COUNCILLOR STEPHEN AKERS-BELCHER
CHAIR OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in preparation of this report:-

- (a) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Scrutiny Investigation into the Condition of the Highways in Hartlepool – Scoping Paper' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 11 July 2008.
- (b) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Condition of the Highways in Hartlepool – Setting the Scene Presentation – Covering Report' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 18 August 2008.
- (c) Presentation of the Director of Neighbourhood Services / the Highway Services Manager / the Transportation and Traffic Manager and the Insurance and Risk Management Manager entitled 'The Condition of the Highways in Hartlepool' delivered to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 18 August 2008.
- (d) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Condition of the Highways in Hartlepool – Verbal Evidence from the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities – Covering Report' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 18 August 2008.
- (e) Documented Issues Arising from the Focus Group Session held with the general public on 15 September 2008.
- (f) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Condition of the Highways in Hartlepool – Feedback from the Neighbourhood Consultative Forums – Covering Report' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 29 September 2008.
- (g) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Condition of the Highways in Hartlepool – Feedback from Site Visit – Covering Report' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 29 September 2008.
- (h) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Condition of the Highways in Hartlepool – Feedback from Focus Group – Covering Report' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 29 September 2008.
- (i) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Condition of the Highways in Hartlepool – Evidence from the Neighbourhood Services Department – Covering Report' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 29 September 2008.
- (j) Report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services entitled 'Condition of the Highways in Hartlepool' presented to Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 29 September 2008.
- (k) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Condition of the Highways in Hartlepool - Feedback from Site Visit to Barnsley Metropolitan Council –

Covering Report' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 27 October 2008.

- (l) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Condition of the Highways in Hartlepool – Feedback from Support Groups – Covering Report' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 27 October 2008.
- (m) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Condition of the Highways in Hartlepool – Evidence from the Neighbourhood Services Department' presented to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 27 October 2008.
- (n) Hartlepool Borough Council's Transport Strategy entitled 'Local Transport Plan'.
- (o) Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council – Street and Highway Works – Beacons Leaflet, "Delivering Excellence 2003/2004".
- (p) Minutes of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum of 11 July 2008, 18 August 2008; 29 September 2008, 27 October 2008, and 24 November 2008.