

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION
15 SEPTEMBER 2011**

**REVIEW OF HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE – INTERIM REPORT
(Working Group Lead Member)**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To record that the interim report of the review of Highway Maintenance by a working group of the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Panel was adopted by the O&S Commission and dispatched, since the last meeting of the Commission.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission note that the interim report of review of Highway Maintenance by a working group of the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Panel was adopted by the O&S Commission and dispatched, since the last meeting of the Commission.**

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 A working group of the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Panel has been undertaking a review of Highway Maintenance. The Working Group decided to produce an interim report of their work, and that report was considered and agreed by the Panel at its meeting on 21 June.
- 3.2 With the agreement of the Chairmen of the O&S Commission and the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Panel, it was decided to seek the agreement of the O&S Commission members by email, rather than delay adoption of the report to the next meeting of the O&S Commission in September. No changes to the report were suggested by members, consequently the report was finalised and sent to the Executive Member on 20 July. A copy of the transmittal letter, and the opening pages of the report are attached; the full version of the report can be viewed with the agenda for the meeting of the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Panel on 21 June.
- 3.3 The response of the Executive to this report is awaited.

Background Papers

Minutes of the meeting of the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Panel, 21 June 2011.

Contact for further information

Councillor Robert McLean – 01344 311418

Richard Beaumont – 01344 352283

e-mail: richard.beaumont@bracknell-forest.gov.uk



Councillor Mrs Ballin
Executive Member for Planning, Transport and Economic Development
Bracknell Forest Council
Easthampstead House
Town Square
Bracknell
Berkshire
RG12 1AQ

Date: 20/07/2011

Dear Councillor Mrs Ballin,

REVIEW OF HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE – INTERIM REPORT FROM A WORKING GROUP OF THE ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

The Overview and Scrutiny Commission has considered and adopted the attached report from the Overview and Scrutiny Working Group on Highway Maintenance.

I would be grateful if you would consider recommendations 5.1 - 5.13 in the report and give me the Executive's written response to these, together with any other comments the Executive may wish to make, within two months of the date of this letter, as required in the Constitution.

Under the arrangements agreed by the Chairman of the Executive, an Overview and Scrutiny Member will be pleased to present this report to a forthcoming briefing meeting of the Council's Executive.

I would also like to invite you to attend the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission on 24th November 2011 to present the Executive's response and answer any questions from Members. Can you please confirm that you will be able to attend?

With best wishes,

Councillor Bob Angell
Vice Chairman, Overview & Scrutiny Commission

Copies to: Councillors Leake and McLean; Chief Executive; Director of Environment, Culture and Communities

Highway Maintenance

Interim report of a review of Highway Maintenance by a
Working Group of the Environment, Culture and Communities
Overview & Scrutiny Panel



July 2011

Table of Contents

	Page No.
1. Executive Summary	1
2. Background	2
3. Investigation, Information Gathering and Analysis to Date	4
4. Interim Conclusions	15
5. Interim Recommendations	18
6. Glossary	20
Appendix 1 – Scoping Document	21
Appendix 2 – Accounting Arrangements and Funding Streams	25

Acknowledgements

The Working Group would like to express its thanks and appreciation to the following people for their co-operation and time. All those who have participated in the review have been thanked for their contribution and received a copy of this report if wished.

Brian Moss Term Services Operations Director, Ringway

The following officers from Bracknell Forest Council:

Steve Loudoun	Chief Officer: Environment and Public Protection
Anthony Radford-Foley	Head of Highways Asset Management
Phil Moir	Principal Engineer
Alan Nash	Chief Officer: Financial Services
Richard Beaumont	Head of Overview and Scrutiny
Andrea Carr	Policy Officer (Overview and Scrutiny)

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Bracknell Forest Council (the Council) has a statutory duty to manage and maintain the (public) highway network within the Borough (the Department for Transport is responsible for motorways and trunk roads and town/parish councils for some footpaths). The network is the single most important and valuable asset managed by the Council. Well maintained highways are essential places where residents and visitors live, work and travel upon. The network contributes to delivery of the Council's strategic objectives, to the shared priorities of national and local government and to the character and environment of the Borough.
- 1.2 Efficient transport links are vital for a thriving population and economy, providing access to employment, education, healthcare, retail outlets, leisure and to all the other services and supplies relied upon to support people's needs. Maintenance of the network is vital to ensure it can continue to provide the principal element of the overall transport network.
- 1.3 Being mindful of the importance of maintaining the Borough's highway network and the associated significant investment, a working group of the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel was established to undertake a review of the plans and performance of highway maintenance and to determine whether improvements could be made, within a realistic understanding of the constraints on the Council's resources.
- 1.4 The Working Group has met on five occasions to date, having been suspended for a period of time until staffing resources became available to resume the review, and has produced this interim report to summarise work carried out to date and proposed for the future following the Borough Election in May 2011.
- 1.5 During its meetings the Working Group received presentations from Council officers concerning management of the highway asset and from a representative of the Council's highway maintenance contractor. It has also considered the reported condition of the Borough's roads, highway maintenance performance and funding arrangements.
- 1.6 This report describes the work of the Working Group to date and sets out its interim findings as a basis for continued work in the future.
- 1.7 The Working Group comprised:
 - Borough Councillor McLean (Lead Member)
 - Borough Councillor Beadsley
 - Borough Councillor Brossard
 - Borough Councillor Leake
 - Town Councillor Mrs Cupper
 - Parish Councillor Edwards
 - Town Councillor Kensall
 - Parish Councillor Withers
 - Parish Councillor Young