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## Meeting of Executive Members for City Strategy and Advisory Panel

2 June 2008

Report of the Director of City Strategy

### **HIGHWAY DRAINAGE – SURVEY AND REPAIR**

#### **Summary**

1. This report provides information to demonstrate how the £200k, allocated in 2008/09 for the survey and repair of drainage systems, will be spent. The intention is to gather information about highway standing water problems from a variety of sources, to identify the locations most in need of treatment and to arrange for a programme of repair works to be carried out.

#### **Background**

2. Flooding events in June 2007 have highlighted the relatively poor quality of information about the extent and condition of our drainage asset. Current revenue budgets for maintaining the extensive highway surface water drainage system are not sufficient to enable the desired level of routine maintenance to be carried out with most of the work, other than gully emptying, being done on a reactive basis.
3. A comprehensive report on the Drainage in York was presented to the Meeting of the Executive Members for City Strategy and Advisory Panel on 10 December 2007. This report indicated the possibility of a growth bid of £200k to carry out highway drainage survey and repair works.
4. This bid was approved and as shown in the Annual Highway Maintenance Report in March 2008, an additional £200k has been allocated in 2008/09 to enable some of the most persistent and troublesome highway drainage problems to be dealt with. Some of the money will be spent on survey and data recording but the majority will go on repair and rectification of problems. This funding is in addition to the £139,700 being made available in the capital drainage programme for 2008/09.

#### **Proposals**

##### **Survey Initiative 2008/09**

5. The way in which the survey element will be carried out, to assist in the removal of many persistent drainage problems, is as follows.

### Information analysis

- Analyse all relevant existing customer data
  - Obtain information from Ward Members about their priorities for improving standing water and flooding issues
  - Gather information from highway inspectors and others about persistent problems
  - Consolidate all the data into a single database
  - Use all the above information to assess the high priority drainage problems and where necessary carry out site surveys if there is also a lack of asset data
  - Attempt to locate as much information as possible about existing drainage information records from Yorkshire Water and various council sources and plot onto Exor for safe keeping
6. To date, information about flooding and drainage problems has been gathered from existing databases as well as from the reports from Ward Members. Ward Members have already provided a list of 70 locations where some form of action would be beneficial. A consolidated database, excluding any duplication, will soon be prepared but this is expected to have over 1,000 entries. Bearing in mind the size of this database and the amount of funding available, a desktop exercise will be used to apply prioritisation criteria to identify those locations most in need of some form of improvement. Any on-site survey works and/or design works required will then be undertaken prior to establishing a programme of works.
7. It may be that in some locations the survey work carried out identifies a need for large scale renewals of existing drainage systems or installation of new systems. This is likely to be outside the scope of the funding in this instance and any such work will have to be considered for inclusion in the capital drainage programme.

### Assessment of drainage priorities

8. The proposed criteria to be used to determine priorities for more detailed investigation prior to repair are:
- locations where flooding affects, or is quite likely to affect, property
  - locations adjacent to well used footways
  - locations adjacent to footways near elderly person's homes
  - locations where standing water is at a critical location for braking or turning
  - locations where flooding problems are frequent and have been persistent for some years
  - locations where flooding is particularly extensive
9. Flooding and standing water problems at locations satisfying the greatest number of the above criteria would be given highest priority. For example, at the properties most at risk from the flooding in June 2007, the actions already taken to resolve these problems will be checked to ensure that the risk of further flooding has been mitigated as much as possible.

### Site surveys in priority locations

10. In the priority locations where further investigation is required in the form of site surveys or detailed design work, the following actions will be taken:
  - Use Neighbourhood Services (NS), as required, to help locate existing drains, manholes, gullies etc, that may or may not be visible.
  - Use NS to obtain information about the condition of these assets by tracing the routes of drains using electronic detection techniques and carrying out condition surveys using cameras
  - Plot this information on Exor to ensure it is properly retained for the future
  - Clarify reasons for problems and determine solutions
  - Utilise the Engineering Consultancy as required for design works
  - Produce the detailed works programme

### Repair initiative 2008/09

11. The majority of the growth bid, at least £150k, will be used to fund the works programme targeted at the most critical and the most persistent locations of flooding and standing water, as identified in the survey initiative.
12. The works undertaken will take various forms and will not be confined to simply repairing drainage systems. Standing water problems, for example in the pedestrian zone of the city centre, can often be solved by relaying the surface paving, although in some other locations blocked gullies and damaged drains will be the cause of localised flooding. In other, perhaps more rural locations, the solution to drainage problems may include the cleaning out of manholes and catchpits, as well as the renewal of filter media in soakaway drainage systems. There will be instances where new gullies and drains need to be installed.
13. The most common forms of repair work will be:
  - Cleaning out drainage systems
  - Renewal of drainage filter material
  - Replace existing damaged or ineffective gullies
  - Install additional new gullies
  - Repair drains
  - Install new sections of drain
  - Re-shape surfacing top remove standing water

It may be that a drain is the responsibility of Yorkshire Water and some negotiation may be required to enable repair works to progress.

14. It is expected that most, if not all of these works, will be undertaken by NS.
15. As part of the repair process the improvements undertaken will be monitored to see if the repair works are effective and if this relatively small amount of expenditure has any noticeable impact on customer complaints or perceptions.

## **Options & Analysis**

16. Members can approve the proposal outlined in the report or decide to amend it. For example, the proposed financial split between the survey and repair initiatives could be reviewed, as could the criteria for prioritization of works.

## **Consultation**

17. All Members have been asked to pass on information about the drainage or standing-water problems causing most concern in their Wards. As indicated in the proposal this feedback is being pooled with other information to assist in determining priorities.

## **Corporate Priorities**

18. Maintenance of the City's highway assets has a direct impact on one of the corporate priorities for improvement, namely:
  - improvement of the actual and perceived condition and appearance of the city's streets, housing estates and publicly accessible spaces

## **Implications**

### **Financial**

19. The funding for the survey and repair of localised flooding and standing water problems has been approved for 2008/09 and there are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **Human Resources (HR)**

20. There are no HR implications identified in this report. It is likely that the repair works will be carried out by NS, helping to ease any shortfalls in their workloads, should they exist.

### **Equalities**

21. The work carried out will benefit everyone in the community, particularly those who are blind or partially sighted and who may be more at risk of being splashed by passing traffic travelling through standing water. There are no equalities implications.

### **Legal**

22. The Council has a statutory duty to carry out highway maintenance under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 and this report sets out the proposals to assist with this so far as standing water and localised flooding is concerned.

### **Crime and Disorder**

23. There are no crime and disorder issues.

### **Information Technology (IT)**

24. There are no IT implications.

### **Property**

25. There are no property implications.

### **Other**

26. There are no other implications.

### **Risk Management**

27. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy the main risks that have been identified and measured in terms of impact and likelihood the risk score have been assessed at less than 16. This means that at this point the risks need only to be monitored, as they do not provide a real threat to the achievement of the objectives of this report.

### **Recommendations**

28. The Advisory Panel is recommended to advise the Executive Member to approve the proposal in this report to enable the survey and repair works, to assist in alleviating localised highway flooding and standing water problems in 2008/09, to be completed.

Reason: To ensure delivery of highway maintenance services in an efficient and cost effective manner.

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**Report  
Approved**



**Date**

19/05/2008

**Specialist Implications Officer(s)** None

**Wards Affected**

All

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

### **Background Papers:**

Drainage in York – City Strategy EMAP on 10 December 2008  
Annual Highway Maintenance Report – City Strategy EMAP on 17 March 2008

**Annexes:** None