

**Meeting of Highways Maintenance Ad-Hoc Scrutiny  
Committee – 24 October 2007**

Questions from Cllr Merrett

1. In terms of the internal management of the Highways Maintenance Procurement process, how was it managed (e.g. was there a designated lead officer, was there a continuously maintained and periodically updated programme for implementation, who monitored the outcomes, and how were the delays in implementation handled)?
2. We were advised that there was no permanent Head in Highways infrastructure from Feb 2002 to June 2003 and this led to a lot of delay. Were there not temporary cover or head arrangements, and what attempts were made to cover the CSIP/Procurement exercise during that period?
3. The June 2003 report was clearly a significant reappraisal of the project, and is stated to have been in line with the requirements of performance management. Progress had been made, yet it still took another 2 1/2 years to get to a then aborted tender, against what had originally been expected to be a 1 1/2 year for the whole process up to tender. The subsequent record given to us at our last meeting described decisions over who did what, and what was to be in the tender and what was not still being made as late as March 2005. On the surface this suggests a lack of clarity and strategic thinking up front. Was this the case, or were there other reasons for the post 2003 difficulties? How much were the acknowledged differences between the DEDES and commercial services department which have been mentioned a problem? What are your views now on how this type of cross departmental project should be handled, and what lessons and measures we could take to try and avoid such difficulties in future?

Questions from Cllr Healey

1. When funding of the dedicated Project Manager was declined in 2007/2008? How did the Officers/Executive still reasonably expect to realise the saving identified and subsequently used to pay for the setup of the Street Environment Service.
2. Please detail how long it has taken to repay the venture fund compared to original estimates?
3. Given the past, present and expected backlog of maintenance (Para 7.3 Highway Services Contract Report 2-May-06) was it prudent to use efficiencies in Highway Maintenance in another area instead of tackling the backlog.