

Agenda Item No: 4

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny (Resources)

Date of Meeting: 31 May 2012

Report Title: Scrutiny Review of Influencing and Appraising the Decisions of Third Parties

Report By: Verna Connolly
Head of People & Organisational Development

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback on the findings from the Scrutiny Review of influencing and appraising the decisions of third parties which focused on the implications of utilities works undertaken throughout the Borough and the impact these may have on the community and local businesses.

Recommendation(s)

- 1. The Development of an internal process by which members can refer Highways enquiries to a nominated officer.**
- 2. Compilation of a list of streets around the Borough of special significance to Civic pride, tourism and the aesthetic quality of the town where prompt 'like for like' replacements following Highway works are essential.**
- 3. To write to the Secretary of State for Transport expressing concerns re. proposed good practice document and suggesting additions.**
- 4. The formulation of a voluntary code of conduct to increase communication between ESCC Highways Dept. and HBC.**

Reasons for Recommendations

To enable more effective communication with elected members, local businesses and members of the public regarding Highways maintenance with the aim of avoiding disruption as well as maintaining specific areas within the Town which support tourism and our local economy.

Introduction

1. Each year the scrutiny function at the Council identifies key issues to be scrutinised through a review process. Having considered concerns and issues raised by residents the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committees decided to scrutinise how HBC can influence the decisions of third parties more effectively. Due to the very large number of concerns raised about works on the Highways, the scrutiny team decided to narrow the scope of this review to focus on the Highways only.
2. In April 2011, the Highways agreement between HBC and ESCC changed. ESCC and HBC agreed that HBC will provide only those Core Services listed in Appendix 2. within the Borough of Hastings for the remainder of the contractual period (approximately 1 year) after which time all Highways functions would be taken back by ESCC.
3. However, both prior to the change in contract and subsequently, the main issue for our residents and local businesses is the perceived lack of co-ordination of road works within our District and the impact this has on the local community and businesses. These works are, in the main, undertaken on behalf of ESCC by third party contractors and utilities companies (e.g. water, gas, electricity) and their contractors. In particular, the team was concerned that some businesses had suffered losses due to the timing of road works. Whilst there is a compensation scheme to cover some business losses the review team consider it important that losses are kept to a minimum in order to protect both local businesses and jobs.
4. The purpose of the review was to consider how the Council could influence selected third party decisions more effectively than at present.

Terms of Reference for the review

Examine processes/routes for decision-making/management (HBC, ESCC, Utilities etc.).

Consider the implications of delays for HBC and residents / traders.

See Project Initiation document (Appendix 1).

Evidence

Members considered a range of evidence in relation to the terms of reference for the review which has helped them form their recommendations. These were:

Statutory Legislation - Various Documents (see background documents)

Briefing from Richard Homewood - Director of Environment (Appendix 2)

Karl Taylor - East Sussex County Council, Assistant Director, Highways (Appendix 3)

Roy Clarke - Southern Water (Appendix 4)

Communication of Street and Roadworks - HAUC Good practice Guide.(Appendix 5)

Other Utility Companies were invited to contribute but did not respond to our request.

Legislation and good practice

Highways maintenance is governed primarily by the Highways Act (1980). In addition, there is the New Roads and Street Works Act which came to being in 1991 and introduced a new system of monitoring public utilities activities on the public highway. This included a works notification system, together with a number of codes of practices for inspections, reinstatement of openings and co-ordinations of street works. This legal framework enables East Sussex County Council (ESCC) as the Highways Authority to monitor and inspect activities on the highway to agreed national standards, agree a method of payment for ESCC to undertake a limited number of inspections and the identification and the rectification of defective works. Under the Traffic management Act (2004) ESCC is also subject to a network management duty.

The review team examined two good practice guides, the "NRSWA 1991 Code of Practice 3rd Edition 2009" and "Good Practice Guide about communication of street and road works - a blue print for policy and action" which is awaiting endorsement from the current Secretary of State for Transport.

The later document is presumably intended as a replacement of the earlier document so the team concentrated its efforts on examining this. To quote from the guide:

"1.3 Scope and context of the guide

This guide applies to all organisations promoting works on the highway. Whilst there is not a statutory requirement to implement this guide, it represents a collaborative approach by utilities and highway authorities to identify good practice in communication of street and road works." ...

"This guide has been written by a working group comprised of street works industry representatives to help the industry improve the way we communicate with the public about our street and road works. The public perception is that they are not always informed enough about works on the highway which can impact on them. Informing, updating and providing the opportunity to feed back through a pro-active approach to communication of our street and road works is essential in helping us to change the public perception and reduce complaints." ...

"It is important to realise that whilst we have used the term 'public' there are key stakeholders within this generic term who have different needs and may prefer you to use different communication requirements. The following terms have been used:

Road user – residents, pedestrians, vehicle drivers
Elected members – Member of Parliament, local councillor, parish councillor
Transport operators – local and national bus companies"

Unfortunately, the guide does not identify the business community as a key stakeholder. There is only one reference to the business community in the guide:

"What do Elected Members want to know?

Prior to commencement on site

.... What has been done to inform and help people, especially vulnerable people and businesses"

However, section 3 of the guide "Good Practice Communication Commitments", if adhered to, should help to overcome some of the difficulties experienced by businesses in the past. See Appendix 5.

The earlier document "NRSWA 1991 Code of Practice 3rd Edition 2009" recommends that meetings between the street authority, undertakers (ie. ESCC and utility companies) and other interested parties are held regularly. Karl Taylor informed us that highways officers and utility representatives meet every 3 months to discuss the schedule for forthcoming road works, however he believed that attendance by "other interested parties" was unnecessary as ESCC highways officers represented the public's point of view. He also believed that these meetings would be impractical to arrange and that the newly created posts of Highways Stewards could be used to bridge the gap with "other interested parties". No information is disseminated concerning the outcome of meetings between ESCC officers and the utility companies.

Roles and Responsibilities of ESCC in relation to Highways Maintenance

Managing the Roads

In accordance with the Highways Act 1980 ESCC is the local Highways Authority for East Sussex and are responsible for:

1. Co-ordinating roadworks to minimise disruption
2. Managing the quality of the asset - including the work undertaken by the utilities.
3. They have a range of powers and duties these include the Highways Act 1980 ('the 1980 Act') principally covering the structure of the network; the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 ('the 1991 Act') covering utility street works; and the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 regulating the activities of road users.
4. The Traffic Management Act 2004 ('The TMA Act') adds to these powers. It also requires local traffic authorities to do all that is reasonably practicable to manage the network effectively to keep traffic moving. In addition, whilst the Network Management duty is framed by reference to a 'local traffic authority, this is extended to the authority exercising their powers as highway authority and street

authority under the 1980 Act and 1991 Act, and also carrying out activities under other legislation where it impacts on the operation of the road network.

How Street works are managed

Members heard that most works are carried out by public utilities. Generally, contractors carry out the work for the electricity, gas, water and telephone companies and ESCC.

ESCC is legally required to co-ordinate all works on the highway and lead-in timescales allow time for discussion with utilities on what works will take place and what conflicts there might be with its own or other utilities works.

A quarterly meeting is held between ESCC and the utilities to discuss the planning and coordination of works. It is difficult to co-ordinate emergency and unforeseen works as there will be limited information available. However, they do need to be entered onto the Electronic Transfer of Notice system (ETON).

In addition to the quarterly meetings, ESCC co-ordinates on a daily basis using their ETON system. This means that all utilities and other contractors working within the Highway Authority area are legally required to submit notices of all works to ESCC via the ETON system. If there is a breach by the utilities or contractors it could result in prosecution.

The legislation provides two alternatives for dealing with requests to undertake work on the Highway

Alternative 1 - NOTICES

Utilities send notices to ESCC via an Electronic Transfer of Notice system (ETON) telling them that they want to work in the Highway. These notices apply at various stages of the proposed works. ETON is a national standard used by the Utility Companies and highway authorities to send and receive notices. The electronic transfer of notices allows almost immediate movement of information between utilities, street authorities and other authorities with the data provided in standard format which is fully interchangeable between electronic street registers.

Types of notice

Advance notice (sct 54)

Notice of starting date (sct 55)

Immediate Works Notice (sct 55 or 57)

Actual start (sct 74 (5b) and 74 (5c))

Revised Duration Estimate (extension requests)

Works Clear (sct 74 (5c))

Works Closed (sct 74 (5c))

An average of seven notices is issued/received for each piece of work on the highway.

Alternative 2 - PERMITS

To use this alternative the Highway authority needs to apply to the Secretary of State to operate a permit scheme for or some of its roads in one of the following ways:

Permit required for all roads with each application scrutinised individually

Permit required for all roads and dealing with permit applications on minor roads on an exception basis

Permit required on main roads (category 0-2 and traffic sensitive roads) but using the revised NRSWA noticing regime on all other roads. In this case the Utility applies to the Authority for permission to work in the Highway. The Authority may then grant that permission with various criteria for the works.

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A permit scheme aims to formalise the process for utilities to carry out highway maintenance. It is felt that 'permitting' activities on the highway provides better control of activities as it should be able to control other activities apart from street works on a highway, which may inhibit the free passage of highway users. It is a proactive rather than reactive way of managing activities on the highway as road space is 'booked' in advance, through permitting at a cost. Permits can also establish conditions for individual works in advance - which will close certain loopholes in previous legislation.

ESCC has joined with Surrey and are moving towards a permit scheme. Further details will be made available as soon as ESCC and Surrey have completed their feasibility study and gone through the detailed application process.

Emergency works

A utility may undertake emergency works without submitting prior notice to the authority. However, an immediate notice must be given within an agreed period of time e.g two hours of the work starting. If the work takes place out of hours the undertaker must serve notice the following working day.

Planned Works

ESCC have a five yearly work program to allow for greater co-ordination between the utilities companies and the County Council. If works are expected to last less than ten days then a 3 day notice period is required. If works are planned to last more than ten days then 3 months notice is required.

Utility Companies seek to spread their work across the year and undertake to carry them out as efficiently and as cost effectively as possible.

Fixed Penalty Notices

ESCC can issue fixed penalty notices to utilities when works are deemed not up to standard and can demand they address the issue within a specific timescale. These fines range from £100 to £2500 for every days work over run on the agreed schedule. ESCC estimate twelve (12) prosecutions take place annually under the New Roads and Streets Act.

Inspection and Performance

The Code of practice for inspections means the utilities are responsible for maintaining sites, addressing any barriers and ensuring reinstatement is completed within specific timescales. After work has been completed ESCC take a two inch core to check the standard of reinstatement. Whilst around 75% fail to meet the minimum requirement, ESCC may only impose a maximum fine of £150. As part of their inspection protocol ESCC do make site visits whilst works are ongoing. However, as defects must be fixed in one hour, it is not always possible to use 'like for like' materials. This is currently under review following a study in Rye and ESCC hope to roll the scheme out across the County over the next twelve months.

ESCC have introduced dedicated Highways Stewards, whose responsibility is to monitor the quality of all utility company works as well as provide feedback on local issues.

Communication

ESCC provides a weekly bulletin to all County Councillors of all scheduled works - this is also made available at www.eastsussex.gov.uk and via ETE in the Hastings area.

Karl Taylor agreed to have this bulletin distributed to Borough Councillors. Information may also be circulated by the Highways Stewards.

Legal Implications

Members were advised that HBC have no legal recourse regarding the contracts between ESCC and the Utility Companies other than those delegated to us by ESCC.

Conclusions

The Overview and Scrutiny Task Group found that the services provided operated within the legislative requirements. However, members were concerned that there was no mechanism in place for consultation with the community at the stage when road works were planned. The concerns of the community which had given rise to this scrutiny review suggested that in reality ESCC officers were not representing the views of the community at those meetings where street works were planned. In part this was due to shortcomings in national legislation and good practice. Indeed, the most recent good practice guide had been written by "street works industry representatives" and it was not clear whether there had been direct input from businesses, pedestrians, residents or vehicle drivers.

The team was also concerned that reinstatements were not 'like for like' and the impact this was having on the local economy and the community.

Members believe that Highway maintenance and improvements should be seen as an integral part of civic pride - as they can give a big lift to an area or street, often making it seem cleaner, pleasant and more attractive to the local community and tourists which also impacts on our local economy.

Members were keen to show their support for the introduction of the highway stewards although there was concern at the restricted remit of the highways stewards (being confined largely to routine maintenance issues) and also their working hours which excluded evenings.

The team expressed discontent at the lack of response and co-operation from some utility companies contacted over the course of the review.

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group, the chair Cllr Cartwright, would like to thank Karl Taylor, Asst Director of Highways, ESCC, Roy Clarke of Southern Water, Richard Homewood, Director and officers for their contribution to this review.

Wards Affected

Ashdown, Baird, Braybrooke, Castle, Central St. Leonards, Conquest, Gensing, Hollington, Maze Hill, Old Hastings, Ore, Silverhill, St. Helens, Tressell, West St. Leonards, Wishing Tree

Area(s) Affected

Central Hastings, East Hastings, North St. Leonards, South St. Leonards

Policy Implications

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	Yes
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	No
Risk Management	Yes
Environmental Issues	No
Economic/Financial Implications	Yes
Human Rights Act	No
Organisational Consequences	No
Local People's Views	Yes

Background Information

Project Initiation Document - Appendix 1
Briefing from Richard Homewood - Appendix 2
Questions for Karl Taylor - Assistant Director, ESCC - Appendix 3
Questions and Answers to Roy Clarke, Southern Water - Appendix 4

New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 - Code of Practice for the coordination of street works - www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/27/contents
Utilities Act - www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/27/contents

ESCC website information - www.eastsussex.gov.uk/roadsand transport/default.htm

Officer to Contact

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APPENDIX 1

Project Initiation Document

Influencing and Appraising the Decisions of Third Parties

Date	27 July 2011
Scrutiny Review	Implementation of Decisions by Outside Bodies
Project Team	Verna Connolly (Head of People and Organisational Development), (Katrina Silverson (Scrutiny and Electoral Services Officer) – others to be advised.
Project Leader	Verna Connolly
Scrutiny Review Team Members	Cllrs Cartwright, Hodges, Pragnell, Turner, Westley, Wilson
Officer(s) to Contact	Verna Connolly (01424) 451707, vconnolly@hastings.gov.uk
Review Terms of Reference	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Examine processes/routes for initial decision-making/management (HBC, ESCC, Utilities etc.).2. Consider the implications of delays for HBC and residents / traders.
Community Strategy Target or Key HBC Investment Issue?	Community Strategy Target/ Investment by ESCC
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Consider whether, why and how delays in the process cause disruption in the community.2. Consider solutions and prescriptive measures in order to deliver optimum benefit.3. Better communication and

		understanding of process between HBC and service provider.	
Indicators of Success (how will we know if the project is achieving its purpose)		Objectives met, measured and achieved.	
Methods of Inquiry		Meetings Interviews with expert witnesses Desktop Research Legal advice	
Key Stakeholders		HBC ESCC Utilities Residents	
Documents		Highways agreement Traffic management agreement Community Strategy Statutes Relevant process documents	
Site Visits		Not Required	
Publicity Requirements		Press releases and internal communications	
Resource Requirements (Staffing and expenditure)		Utilise existing resources in People and Organisational Development and Scrutiny and Democratic Services	
Projected start date	July 2011	Reporting deadlines	To quarterly meetings of the Resources O&S Committee.
Meeting Frequency	Approximately every six weeks, more frequently if necessary/appropriate.	Projected completion date	Report to Resources O&S Committee 21.2.2012
Evaluation date		Six monthly reviews by the Resources O&S Committee of the implementation of the agreed recommendations.	
Evaluation tracking methods		Report from Officers/Lead Members advising the Committee on progress.	

Date	27 July 2011
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APPENDIX 2

Roles and Responsibilities of Hastings Borough Council in relation to Highway maintenance

On 24 March 2011 all Highway functions transferred back to ESCC with the exception of Traffic Management Orders (TMO's) functions which support the Parking Service and deal with Traffic Orders, road closures etc and a few ancillary functions. HBC retained two members of staff internally to deliver the TMO's and the ancillary functions listed below:

Asset management
 Signing scheme proposals.
 Sign design
 Budgets & Payment approvals
 Raising Works Orders & Estimating
 Maintenance of signs, lines and street furniture (as part of planned programmes or reactive)
 Temporary Traffic Orders (TTO's) [road closures etc] for works and sporting events (eg marathon) Emergency road closure orders
 Diversion routes and Traffic Management plans/ signing schedules
 TTO's for special events such as the bonfire or street parties
 General traffic enquiries/ complaints not related to disabled bays or new restrictions eg requests for traffic calming/ improvements/ pedestrian crossings etc
 Provide emergency response to complaints of damaged street furniture
 Works order queries in respect to Traffic Regulation Orders (regulatory signs & lines)
 Investigating and responding to requests for new; bollards, verge marker posts, signs (directional, warning & tourist), guard rail, motorcycle barriers, crash barriers, neighbourhood watch signs, cycle signs.
 New road markings (eg Keep Clear)
 Bus Stop Clearways
 Lockable bollards in town centre
 Requests for 'kill your speed' signs
 Requests for driveway access markings/ APM's.
 Checking and approving schedules received from the AA and other approved contractors for temporary directional signs in connection with special events.
 Signing & Lining enforcement issues (eg missing parking sign)
 Disabled bay surveys & applications
 Disabled bays in general
 Permanent Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's)
 Committee Reports
 TRO's proposals & advertisements/ requests for NEW restrictions (eg Double yellow line requests)
 Objections in respect to traffic order proposals
 New restrictions proposed in respect to scheme work/ new developments
 Hastings Traffic Order

APPENDIX 3

Scrutiny Review of Influencing and Appraising the Decisions of Third Parties

Questions to Karl Taylor, Assistant Director for Transport and Operations, East Sussex County Council

The following questions were discussed at the review meeting on 28.9.2011;

Members welcomed KT to the meeting.

KT gave the group an overview of the legislation concerning Highways maintenance. Utility companies may begin emergency works immediately, provided they serve notice on ESCC within two hours of starting work, for works expected to last less than ten days a three day notice period is required, a three month notice period for works lasting over ten days. KT explained efforts to create a working relationship between ESCC and the utility companies, including the sharing of five yearly work programs to allow for greater coordination.

How often are the penalties allowed for under legislation used?

KT estimated that twelve prosecutions take place annually under the New Roads and Streets Act, usually for unsafe working. ESCC may also impose fines of between £100 and £2500 for every day works over run the agreed schedule. KT highlighted that ESCC try to establish a working relationship with utility companies wherever possible.

Parallel work and prolonged disruption often irritate members of the public, how are these issues dealt with?

Utility companies will seek to spread works across the year and undertake them as efficiently and cost effectively as possible. ESCC utilise the same techniques across the County to ensure works are completed in a timely fashion.

How does ESCC ensure works are completed as quickly as possible and respond to substandard works?

KT explained that after works have been completed, ESCC take a two inch core to check the standard of reinstatement. Whilst around 75% fail to meet the minimum requirement, ESCC may only impose a maximum fine of £150. ESCC continue to pursue this issue with the utility companies.

KT acknowledged that night working may be used to minimise the disruption caused by works where there is no other alternative. However, the disadvantages of night working may include increased costs, noise and light intrusion and a poorer quality of workmanship.

In order to avoid substandard works, does ESCC make site visits whilst works are ongoing?

KT responded that this is a statutory duty, which ESCC fulfills by visiting sites on a random basis.

How does ESCC encourage 'joined up working'?

Meetings are held every three months between ESCC and the utility companies to discuss the work program for the County as a whole. KT highlighted the difficulties in coordinating emergency and unforeseen works, especially as there is often limited information available.

Concerns were raised as to how 'other interested parties' were represented at such meetings.

How does ESCC respond to poor standards of workmanship, especially in areas of aesthetic significance? Has consideration been given to undertaking works in a less intrusive way?

KT emphasized ESCC duty to enforce legislation. The practice of like for like replacement had recently been reviewed in Rye, and it is hoped this scheme could be rolled out across the County. Moreover, as defects must be fixed within one hour, it may not be possible to use like for like materials in the first instance. In the past, works around the Borough had been under an Agency Agreement, KT added it was ESCC intention to provide the best service possible going forward. KT explained the introduction of Highways Stewards who would represent ESCC in a designated area and provide feedback on local issues.

Members welcomed the introduction of Highways Stewards as a means of increased communication across the County. Discussion also took place regarding how information could be shared between members of the public, Borough Councillors and the Highways Stewards.

How does ESCC assess the condition of roads across the County?

An annual survey of all roads is carried out to determine the surfacing program. Roads are prioritised according to their usage and the planned works of utility companies and other organisations. KT highlighted the possibility of adopting an asset management approach which would prioritise works by whole life costs.

How does ESCC circulate information regarding scheduled works?

A weekly Bulletin is issued to County Councillors, a schedule of works is also available at www.eastsussex.gov.uk and via ETE in your area. In future, information could also be circulated via the Highways Stewards.

Can ESCC challenge works undertaken by utility companies using their emergency powers?

ESCC intends to maintain a working relationship with utility companies in order to ensure these powers are used responsibly.

The review team thanked KT for attending.

APPENDIX 4

Scrutiny Review of Influencing and Appraising the Decisions of Third Parties

Questions to Utility Companies -

Roy Clarke - Southern Water

The following questions were formulated at the review meeting on 16.12.2011:

1. How do you consider that East Sussex County Council (ESCC) co-ordinates your plan of works? Very Well. ESCC are one of the most pro-active Highway Authorities in Southern Water's Area of Operation, with regards to co-ordination of works.
2. How often does ESCC review this co-ordination? ESCC have quarterly co-ordination meetings as per the HAUC /DfT Co-ordination Code of Practice where all promoters operating in ESCC Area attend with their schedules of planned works. ESCC run through all planned works & identify clashes, trench sharing opportunities. However, ESCC will co-ordinate on a daily basis using their ETON system (all works promoters working in ESCC are legally required to submit notice of all works to ESCC via the ETON system – failure to do so could result in prosecution).
3. Do you consider any measures ESCC may have in place to be effective? Yes, very.
4. What measures do you, as a utility company, take to co-ordinate works undertaken, both in relation to your own workload and that of other utility companies? As well as attending the quarterly Co-ordination meetings with fellow Utilities, Southern Water continually liaises & works with ESCC Networks Team regarding co-ordination of works. Southern Water will act on any ETON return path comments supplied by ESCC regarding clashes, opportunities for trench sharing with other utilities. For larger planned schemes, Southern Water (e.g. Lewes High Street) Southern Water has worked with ESCC & other Utilities to carry out works at the same time, minimizing disruption to the public. Joint press releases & customer information packs are also produced with ESCC, other utilities etc.
5. How is the delivery of unforeseen works co-ordinated? As per NRSWA regulations and the HAUC Co-ordination Code of Practice all 'unforeseen' urgent /emergency works are notified via the ETON system to ESCC. If these are of long duration & are highly disruptive then Southern Water's PR team will become involved to liaise with all other stakeholders /customers as appropriate. Southern Water suppliers are also in constant contact with the Highway Authorities.

6. How do you enforce the current legislation and impose penalties which may arise from sub-contracted companies undertaking road work but not adhering to the procedures? Compliance with NRSWA and all associated codes of practice is part of every Southern Water contract with a supplier that carries out Streetworks. Southern Water takes NRSWA non compliance extremely seriously and any breach of NRSWA will be passed back & recharged to the suppliers. Additional disincentives against the supplier may also be levied under the contracts. If the breach is severe, the supplier /sub contractor may be removed from the Contract.

7. Do you have any suggestions on how to improve on current arrangements? ESCC fulfill their co-ordination duties admirably, and their Network Co-ordinator undertakes a critical role on behalf of ESCC. The improvement I would suggest would be that an additional Network Co-ordinator is employed so that there could be an East/West split.

8. How can you co-ordinate your works so that minimum disruption is achieved and public perception improved? Southern Water takes co-ordination of works and its public perception very seriously. Works are planned so that minimum disruption is achieved, and no dig techniques are used where appropriate. With regards to larger schemes, all stakeholders are notified and appraised well in advance of works taking place so that any customer / stakeholder concerns are addressed. Southern Water has to report to OFWAT on SIM (Service Improvement Mechanism) and customer perception & feedback is very much a part of this. Southern Water has also introduced 'customer information boards' (in addition to the statutory information boards as prescribed by NRSWA) which will be displayed at all major works sites to further improve customer perception by informing customers why the works is being carried out.

9. Currently what claims for compensation are being addressed by you, both in terms of absolute numbers and estimated values, particularly concerning highways issues? Not aware of any claims for compensation being processed in the ESCC area relating to street works.

APPENDIX 5: EXTRACT FROM "COMMUNICATION OF STREET AND ROAD WORKS"

3. Prior to commencement on-site

- 1) We will take a proactive rather than a reactive approach to communication.
- 2) We will plan and manage our works to minimise disruption and inform the general public of the likely impact.
- 3) We will determine the extent of the communication required based on the location and impact on the road users and community. This could range from an extensive information programme to a simple “knock on door” exercise.
- 4) We will communicate with community groups, residents and organisations directly affected by the works to understand the impact on them, and discuss possible options to mitigate this impact.
- 5) We will work with local authorities to ensure communication plans cover local views.
- 6) We will equip Elected Members with information about the works (including scope and benefits), providing the ability for them to respond to questions from the general public and to encourage a ‘bigger team’ approach.
- 7) We will ensure that all communication is kept simple, accurate, up-to date and cater for local language needs. Vulnerable road users will always be considered and appropriate communication styles used.
- 8) We will consider innovative communication solutions, for example social networking sites and the effective utilisation of an organisation’s web-site.
- 9) We will communicate and co-ordinate with other organisations to inform and work collaboratively to minimise impact on road users and the community.
- 10) We will proactively inform people what measures we are taking to mitigate the impact of works on them.

While we are present on-site

- 1) We will continually assess communication needs during the life cycle of the ongoing works as we recognise changing circumstances.
- 2) We will always be prepared to explain what we are doing and will always offer a helping hand.

- 3) We will not display or give out of date information.
- 4) We will explain “why” to road users if sites are left unoccupied.
- 5) We will always remain courteous and informative when communicating with the public.
- 6) We will ensure our customer contact personnel are aware of why works are being carried out and are up-to date with all aspects of the works.
- 7) We will ensure that any enquiries or complaints are addressed and resolved in line with our customer service standards.

After Care

- 1) We will inform the public, where practical, that the works are complete.
- 2) We will remove all visible communications (site clearance) once the works are complete.
- 3) We will effectively manage and resolve outstanding issues ensuring that the customer is regularly kept informed
- 4) We will undertake communication reviews to learn what we did well and could do better, including, where appropriate, the undertaking of customer surveys, and use this to shape our future communication procedures.
- 5) We will share our communication experiences through HAUC(UK) by submitting case studies."