

TO: SWALE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD 17

DATE: 17th December 2007

SUBJECT: Drainage Cleansing – Update Report

BY: DIVISIONAL MANAGER – Mid Kent Division Kent Highway Services

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report updates Members on the highway drainage cleansing work that has been carried out during the current financial year.

Decision Required: That Members note the report.

Background

1. At a recent JTB, Members asked for a report which discussed work carried out to date in cleaning highway drainage – with particular regard to the Sheerness / Queenborough area.
2. A summary of the system in Swale:
 - approx 18,000 gullies (of which 1,000 are on the schedule to be cleaned more than once per year)
 - 500 known manholes
 - 1200 known soakaways
 - 300 metres slotted channel
 - + associated pipework, ditches, and ponds

Discussion

3. The drainage system forms a major element of the highway asset and is provided for three main purposes.
 - To ensure public safety is not compromised by the presence of hazardous surface water.
 - To prevent highway surface water flooding adjacent property.
 - To prevent accelerated deterioration to the highway due to the presence of standing water.

4. Up to the end of October 2007, 825 requests have been received by the Operations Team requesting action with regard to drainage issues in Swale. Around 10% of these related to Sheerness and Queenborough.

5. As a result of these calls and the work of the Highway Inspectors there have been 82 Drainage Gang visits made to Sheerness and 29 to Queenborough to carry out specific reactive tasks, normally clearing of blockages and investigation works.

6. As a further consequence of the site visits mentioned in 5, Construction Gangs have carried out excavation works to repair broken /severely blocked pipes at several locations, including those listed below:

Chalk Road, Minster Road, Coronation Road, New Road, Fleet Avenue, Halfway Road, Trinity Road, and Maple Street

7. The resource that is dedicated to cleansing highway drainage in Swale has clearly had to work over the summer in a manner that is far more reactive than scheduled. As there is still a backlog of this reactive work an additional gully emptier will be assigned to Swale shortly. The programme for this resource is currently around four weeks duration, of which the first two weeks will involve cleaning all the gullies along the Swale section of the A2 and the second two weeks will concentrate on Sheerness and Queenborough issues.

8. Looking to the next financial year, the reshaped structure of Kent Highway Services shows significant change in how the drainage service will be provided, with staff and resources specifically dedicated to provision of that function. Officers are currently engaged on projects of process mapping, inventory building, and data capture which will yield benefits both in terms of faster response times and increased productivity.

Decision Required

9. That Members note the report.

List of Background Documents

None

Responsible Officer

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