



Glasgow City Council
City Administration Committee

Item 5

4th April 2019

Report by Councillor Anna Richardson, City Convener for Sustainability and Carbon Reduction

Contact: Christine Francis Ext: 78086

ROAD SAFETY INSPECTION AND REPAIR POLICY

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to present the Road Safety Inspection and Repair Policy.

Recommendations:

The City Administration Committee is asked to approve the new Road Safety Inspection and Repair Policy.

Ward No(s):

Citywide:

Local member(s) advised: Yes No consulted: Yes No

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents the revised policy on road safety inspections to comply with the 'Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure - A Code of Practice' (October 2016).
- 1.2 The Road Safety Inspection and Repair Policy was considered by the Environment, Sustainability and Carbon Reduction City Policy Committee on Tuesday 19th March 2019 (see undernoted link). The Committee noted and recommended the policy to the City Administration Committee for approval.

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/councillorsandcommittees/viewPack.asp?c=P62AFQ0GZ3DXDNDXB253YXYXQAJ5I77DJ52AFQDNZ3T12U0G>
- 1.3 The 'policy' for approval refers to the suite of guidance documents provided by the Society of Chief Officers for Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) for the management and implementation of road safety inspections. These are:
 - Road Safety Inspections Strategy: November 2018 (version 1.1)
 - Safety Inspector Operations Manual: November 2018 (version 1.1)
- 1.4 These have been revised to accommodate the local context of Glasgow City Council. Implementation of the policy is also supported by a SCOTS Training toolkit.
- 1.5 SCOTS has also provided a reference document: SCOTS Rationale for guidance on a Risk Based Approach to Asset Management. This document outlines the approach and rationale for specific content within the guidance. It also details the experience and expertise of those involved in its development.
- 1.6 The full Road Safety Inspection and Repair Manual for Glasgow City Council is attached in Appendix 1.

2. Background

- 2.1 Currently, the Council has an adopted road length of 1,984km and over 3,272km of footways/footpaths and cycleways and 199km of cycle track.
- 2.2 Road safety inspection, recording and response is an important and highly visible demonstration of a Road Authority's commitment to its customers and the delivery of its statutory obligations.
- 2.3 Glasgow City Council, as the Roads Authority, has duties under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 to keep a register of all public roads within the council boundary, and to maintain and manage them. These are commonly referred to as 'adopted roads' and the Road Safety Inspection and Repair Policy referred to in this paper applies only to these.
- 2.4 The policy does not apply to Trunk Roads, which are the responsibility of the Scottish Ministers.

- 2.5 The Council's current inspection policy, approved in October 2012, (see undernoted link) was prepared in accordance with the previous guidance contained in "Well-Maintained Highways' the Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management"¹. The current policy is not fully compliant with the new 2016 Code of Practice.

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/councillorsandcommittees/submissiondocuments.asp?submissionid=57649>

- 2.6 The new 'Well Managed Highway Infrastructure – A Code of Practice' (October 2016) recommends a risk based approach to managing all aspects of the road network which includes inspection and repair.
- 2.7 Recommendation 7 in the 'Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice'² is that roads authorities should adopt a risk based approach to all aspects of road maintenance. This policy specifically relates to a risk based procedure for conducting road safety inspections – the area of service that results in our greatest number of claims.
- 2.8 A Risk Based Approach is also recommended by the Institute of Highway Engineers in their guidance on managing risk and liability, 'Well Managed Highway Liability Risk'³.

2.9 About SCOTS

- 2.10 SCOTS is a strategic body comprising of transportation professionals from all the 32 councils and the seven regional transport partnerships in Scotland.
- 2.11 The society's role includes improving operational performance through such means as providing guidance and training to promote best practice; providing advice to local authorities on legislation as it is developed; and through partnership working. One such example of this is the SCOTS Road Asset Management (RAM) Project, which developed the SCOTS guidance on a Risk Based Approach to Safety Defects.
- 2.12 The RAM Project is a collaboration of all 32 authorities, established in 2008 to develop a standard framework that would allow authorities to implement Road Asset Management Planning. The project is supported by procured external consulting expertise to develop tools and guidance on asset management and facilitate practitioner development through the provision of training. It takes a task-based pragmatic approach focusing on clear, concise practical methods. The project also provides a platform for engagement with increasing collaboration among practitioners in developing good practice and knowledge sharing.
- 2.13 The current consultancy supporting the SCOTS RAM Project is Atkins Ltd who were directly involved in the development of the revised code of practice

¹ 'Well-Maintained Highways, the Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management', UKRLG, July 2005.

² 'Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice', UKRLG, October 2016

³ 'Well Managed Highway Liability Risk', IHE, March 2017

for road asset management: 'Well Managed Highway Infrastructure (WMHI): A code of Practice' (2016).

- 2.14 The SCOTS Steering Group comprises of the Chair, from Glasgow City Council, who administers the project on behalf of the 32 authorities and representatives from key SCOTS functional groups of Roads (carriageways and footways), Street Lighting and Structures. The project is governed by a Board, also chaired by Glasgow City Council.
- 2.15 It should also be noted that the SCOTS '*Road Safety Inspection Strategy*' has been reviewed and informed by the main local authority insurers, Zurich and Gallagher Basset and legal firm Clyde and Co.

3. Key aspects of the Policy

Safety

- 3.1 Road safety inspections are designed to identify and repair defects to minimise, as far as reasonably practicable, the exposure to danger or serious inconvenience to users of the road network or the wider community. Such defects include those that require immediate attention, as well as those where the defect locations and nature are such that longer periods of response are possible. Having a robust process for prioritising responses to identified defects is therefore crucial.

Efficiency

- 3.2 The Council has finite resources for managing and maintaining the road network. As well as its critical safeguarding purpose, the implementation of this risk based approach will improve efficiency and provide greater value for money through more appropriate categorisation of defects and responses based on the risk to road users that is likely to lead to a reduction in the number of temporary repairs and an increase in permanent programmed work.
- 3.3 As well as being more cost effective, this policy should have a positive impact on network road condition in the longer term, assuming current levels of investment are retained.

Procedural

- 3.4 A risk based approach is a major move away from the prescriptive descriptions of defects (such as pothole depth < 40mm) in previous codes and the tendency for 'worst case scenario' thinking used in assigning categories of response.
- 3.5 The revised policy includes a risk assessment process whereby a defect is analysed with regard to the context in which it exists. Using a risk matrix tool to evaluate the hazard in terms of likelihood and most probable consequence, the risk posed is objectively categorised and the corresponding required level of response determined.

- 3.6 An effective inspection regime requires having an appropriate hierarchy to which the local network assets are categorised. Guidance on the appropriate hierarchy for carriageways, footways and cycleways/cycletracks is given in the Code of Practice which this policy adopts. Inspection frequencies are then set for each level of the hierarchy and, as a result, a programme of inspections is developed for the stated asset types.

Risk Management

- 3.7 The Road Safety Inspection methodology allows Councils to demonstrate that legal responsibilities with regard to the inspection and maintenance of adopted roads are fulfilled. While the number of claims made against the Council may not necessarily be reduced, through the implementation of this risk based policy, the Council will be better placed to defend them.

Training and Consistency

- 3.8 The Road Authority must ensure that all Road Asset Safety Inspectors are competent in carrying out safety defect inspections. The policy adopts the SCOTS 'Risk-based Approach to Safety Defect Inspections Training and Assessment' provision for this purpose.

Performance

- 3.9 Performance against set standards for repairing defects is currently reported to the Annual Service Plan and Improvement Report. This will continue after the implementation of this policy.

4. Implementation of Policy

- 4.1 Planned, cyclic safety inspections are carried out to identify defects which are hazardous. All information obtained from safety inspections, together with the nature of response, shall be recorded consistently. It shall be stored electronically in the Council's Roads Management System, allowing records to be used for reference at later dates.
- 4.2 The appropriate response to a particular risk is identified in the form of a risk management response from table 11 of the Road Safety Inspection and Repair Manual (Appendix 1). These response times are the SCOTS recommended 'safe' level of response to a particular defect category. Defect categorisation and response times are detailed within section 6.0 of the Road Safety Inspection and Repair Manual.
- 4.3 The adoption of this policy is expected to reduce the number of temporary repairs carried out and the increase the number of more durable, first time permanent repairs. Budget and operational resources will be re-aligned to manage the additional demand of permanent first time repair programmes.
- 4.4 Neighbourhood and Sustainability is in the process of introducing a new digital asset management system across the department over the next couple of years. In the interim, our current systems will require to be updated to reflect

new response time categories and ensure there is effective management control. During the transition period, a phased system implementation plan will be drawn up to ensure compliance with this policy. The new response times will apply, however manual processes will be used to manage and monitor the safety defect repair processes.

- 4.5 If approved by the City Administration Committee, risk management response times will apply immediately, however, a minimum period of 3 months is required following approval of this policy to undertake appropriate training and introduce manual processes to manage the delivery of the new policy.

5. Opportunities

- 5.1 There is currently poor public perception of roads maintenance evidenced in the results of the Household Survey. Much of that perception comes from dissatisfaction with the repeated temporary repairs that are currently being used to repair safety defects and as a consequence of this a poor perception that funds are not well managed. The new policy will replace many of those temporary repairs with high quality durable repairs thereby, improving the quality of the road network condition in the medium to long term.
- 5.2 Our current process aims to treat all safety defects within one day or five days. During the winter months when defects are more numerous, these targets are extremely challenging and as a result dangerous defects can be missed while low risk defects are treated. The proposed policy will clearly prioritise dangerous defects and ensure that they are treated first.
- 5.3 Appropriate training is needed to ensure that personnel responsible for managing and carrying out safety inspections understand the reasons and importance of these inspections. These reasons include public safety and the council's need to defend liability claims. Training workshops will improve the competency of our inspectorate and result in more consistent categorisation on safety defects.
- 5.4 Further training is also required for our operational and technical support teams to understand changes to response times, the type of repair required (i.e. temporary/permanent) and the realignment of resources needed to implement a programme of first time permanent repairs to comply with this policy.

Key Risks and Issues

- 5.5 To allow safety defects that represent a medium to low risk to road users to be included in planned programmes of first time permanent repairs, defects of this nature are likely to remain visible for longer (i.e. 60 days). As a result, there is likely to be a short term negative public perception. An effective public engagement and communication strategy will be required to promote this new policy, highlighting its key benefits and how it represents better value than existing arrangements.

6 Conclusions

6.1 The conclusions from the new national Code of Practice and guidance produced by SCOTS enables the Glasgow City Council to implement a risk based approach for road safety inspections and categorise any necessary repairs identified. As a result there are a number of benefits that this new policy will deliver. It is anticipated that it will:

- Minimise the exposure of danger or serious inconvenience to users of the network or the wider community through a robust safety inspection regime which identifies and treats the most dangerous defects first;
- Increase efficiency and best value by reducing the number of defects allocated to the incorrect category/priority, allowing increased investment in durable, first time permanent repairs rather than repetitive, ineffective and short term temporary repairs;
- Improve the condition of the road network by undertaking permanent repair solutions;
- Improve public perception of quality of repairs;
- Ensure compliance with statutory requirements and the new national Code of Practice;
- Improve engagement with local communities through public engagement and communication strategies;
- Reduce the Council's carbon footprint through the reduction in waste caused by undertaking repetitive temporary repairs;
- Mitigate the Council's exposure to risk and enable a robust defence to claims of loss.

7. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: The financial resources required, both revenue and capital, are covered by agreed budgets.

Legal: The approval of the Road Safety Inspection and Repair Manual meets the requirements of guidance set out in the 'Well Managed Highway Infrastructure – A Code of Practice 2016'.

Personnel: Realignment of existing resources.

Procurement: No relevant procurement issues.

Council Strategic Plan: The report aligns to the following cross cutting themes in the Council Strategic Plan 2017 to 2022:

A Sustainable and Low Carbon City (Priority 54)

- We have a low carbon footprint as a council

and as a city.

- We have more sustainable, integrated transport networks across the city and less congestion.
- Citizens use active travel including walking and cycling.

Resilient and Empowered Neighbourhoods

- Citizen satisfaction with services is maintained or improved.

A Well Governed City that listens and responds

- We listen to citizens and respond.
- We take account of equality issues and the impact of poverty in our decision making.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2017-22

Yes, the policy improves economic outcomes for people with protected characteristics.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?

The increase in the number of first time permanent repairs and improved quality of road condition, will help manage the difficulties and barriers that Glasgow's vulnerable citizens encounter. An EQIA screening was undertaken and can be viewed via the following link:
<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=44580&p=0>

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio economic disadvantage.

Improving the road network condition through first time permanent repairs will have a positive impact on quality of life and encourage healthier living, having a positive impact on socio economic disadvantage.

Sustainability Impacts:

Environmental:

Potential impact on existing grey (urban) space by reducing the number of temporary repairs on the road network and potentially increasing the number of first time permanent repairs.

Social, including Article 19 opportunities:

The content of the report has a positive impact upon local communities and the citizens of

Glasgow by providing improved quality in the type of pothole repairs carried out across the city.

Economic:

The potential increase in first time permanent repairs and reduction in temporary repairs would have a positive effect on the local economy.

**Privacy and Data
Protection impacts:**

No data protection impacts identified.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 The City Administration Committee is asked approve the new Road Safety Inspection and Repair Policy.