

Scrutiny Review of Highways Maintenance – Pothole Repairs – March 2019

Appendices

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Herefordshire Council

General Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Title of review	Highways maintenance – pothole repairs
Scope	
Reason for enquiry	To consider the highway maintenance plan and seek to address concerns expressed within the community about the potential mismatch between policy and practice on pothole repairs.
Links to the corporate plan	<p>The review contributes to the following objectives contained in the Herefordshire corporate plan and other key plans and strategies:</p> <p>Corporate Plan 2016-2020</p> <p>Priority: Supporting the growth of our economy.</p> <p>Measure: Overall satisfaction with the condition of highways.</p> <p>Support economic growth and connectivity (including broadband, local infrastructure, transport and economic development)</p> <p>Corporate Delivery Plan 2017/18</p> <p>Priority: Support the Growth of the Economy</p> <p>Support economic growth and connectivity (including broadband, local infrastructure, transport and economic development)</p> <p>Deliver the LTP Programme, providing an enhanced, accessible, safe and integrated transport network supporting economic growth</p>

	<p>Measure: Condition of Principal; Non-Principal Roads (B/C roads); and Unclassified Roads</p> <table><tr><th>Road Class</th><th>2013</th><th>2017</th></tr><tr><td>A Road Red</td><td>9%</td><td>6%</td></tr><tr><td>A Road Amber</td><td>36%</td><td>38%</td></tr><tr><td>B Road Red</td><td>8%</td><td>7%</td></tr><tr><td>B Road Amber</td><td>34%</td><td>33%</td></tr><tr><td>C Road Red</td><td>11%</td><td>8%</td></tr><tr><td>C Road Amber</td><td>36%</td><td>36%</td></tr><tr><td>U Road Red</td><td>32%</td><td>26%</td></tr></table> <p>Priority: Secure better services, quality of life and value for money</p> <p>2 Ensure our essential assets, including schools, other buildings, roads and ICT, are in the right condition for the long- term, cost-effective delivery of services</p>	Road Class	2013	2017	A Road Red	9%	6%	A Road Amber	36%	38%	B Road Red	8%	7%	B Road Amber	34%	33%	C Road Red	11%	8%	C Road Amber	36%	36%	U Road Red	32%	26%
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Summary of the review and terms of reference	<p>Summary: To consider the highway maintenance plan and seek to address concerns expressed within the community about the potential mismatch between policy and practice on pothole repairs.</p> <p>Terms of Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To consider the strategy in context including the approach to maintaining the highway asset, the level of maintenance and repair that the plan caters for, and budget constraints.• To review a sample of the work undertaken – seeing examples of repairs (in the context of the plan) and,• To understand the rationale for prioritisation of repairs and the nature of repairs and consistency of approach.																								
What will NOT be included	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Other aspects of the BBPLP public realm contract																								
Potential outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To confirm that the highway maintenance plan is fit for purpose or identify improvements.• To establish whether the highway maintenance plan is operating as efficiently as resources allow and serves the needs of the whole county.																								

Key Questions	<p>To consider:</p> <p>What is the current policy?</p> <p>How effective is it?</p> <p>What improvements can be recommended?</p>
Cabinet Member	Councillor Durkin – Transport Roads and Regulatory Services
Key stakeholders / Consultees	<p>Balfour Beatty – living places</p> <p>Herefordshire Council Councillors</p> <p>Town and Parish Councils</p> <p>Director Environment and Place/Head of Highways and Community Services</p> <p>External Highways Maintenance Expert</p>
Potential witnesses	<p>Director for Economy and Place</p> <p>BBLP</p>
Research Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Policy • Council Policy (The LTP Policy documents and the first section of that document on Asset management. the Highway Maintenance Plan and the code of practice 'Well managed Highway Infrastructure'. <p>https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200136/travel_and_transport/220/local_transport_plan/1</p> <p>https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200196/roads/707/highways/2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance information • Comparative Information • Customer satisfaction data (including information on level of insurance claims) • Best practice locally, regionally and nationally
Potential Visits	To see good example of repairs (in the context of the plan) and inferior examples.
Publicity Requirements	No advance publicity/wider public information gathering is proposed. Together with the communication team, a plan should be put in place to ensure awareness of meeting at which final report is to be discussed and that findings are disseminated clearly.

Outline Timetable (following decision by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to commission the Review)	
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Timescale</i>
Confirm approach, Terms of Reference, programme of consultation/research/provisional witnesses/meeting dates	By 17 October 2018
Collect current data available for circulation to Group for first meeting of the Group	
Analysis of data/Interviews/survey of Parish Councils	
Carry out stakeholder meetings (Spotlight meeting)	n/a
Final analysis of data and stakeholder evidence	n/a
Prepare options/recommendations	?
Present final report to General Overview & Scrutiny Committee	January 2019
Prepare cabinet report	2019
Present options/recommendation to Cabinet	2019
Cabinet response/decision	?
Monitoring of implementation of agreed recommendations	?

Group Members	Cllrs Baker, Bowen, (Chair) Chowns, Jinman and Williams
Support Officers	J Coleman T Brown

Legal Background

1. The legal foundation for this area of work is in legislation found in The Highways Act 1980. The two sections of this Act which are most relevant when considering the approach to highway defects, they are Section 41 and Section 58 (both are reproduced below):

Section 41 – Duty to Maintain Highways Maintainable at Public Expense

1. *The authority who are for the time being the highway authority for a highway maintainable at the public expense are under a duty, subject to subsections (2) and (4) below, to maintain the highway. [F1(1A)In particular, a highway authority are under a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice.]*
2. *An order made by the Minister under section 10 above directing that a highway proposed to be constructed by him shall become a trunk road may, as regards:*
 - a) *a highway to which this subsection applies which becomes a trunk road by virtue of the order, or*
 - b) *a part of a highway to which this subsection applies, being a part which crosses the route of the highway to be so constructed, contain such a direction as is specified in subsection (4) below.*
3. *Subsection (2) above applies to:*
 - a) *any highway maintainable at the public expense by a local highway authority, and*
 - b) *any highway other than a highway falling within paragraph (a) above or a highway maintainable under a special enactment or by reason of tenure, enclosure or prescription.*
4. *The direction referred to in subsection (2) above is:*
 - a) *a highway to which this subsection applies which becomes a trunk road by virtue of the order, or*
 - b) *in a case where the highway or part of a highway falls within subsection (3)(a) above, a highway authority for that highway until such date, not being later than the date on which the new route is opened for the purposes of through traffic, as may be specified in a notice given by the Minister to that authority; and*
5. *In a case where the highway or part of a highway falls within subsection (3)(b) above,*

a direction that, notwithstanding subsection (1) above, the Minister is to be under no duty to maintain it until such date as aforesaid.

Where an order under section 10 above contains a direction made in pursuance of subsections (2) to (4) above, then, until the date specified in the notice given by the Minister pursuant to the direction, in accordance with subsection (4) above, the powers of a highway authority under sections 97, 98, 270 and 301 below as respects the highway to which the direction relates are exercisable by the highway authority to whom the notice is required to be given, as well as by the Minister.

Section 58 – Special Defence in Action Against a Highway Authority for Damages for Non-repair of Highway

- 1. In an action against a highway authority in respect of damage resulting from their failure to maintain a highway maintainable at the public expense it is a defence (without prejudice to any other defence or the application of the law relating to contributory negligence) to prove that the authority had taken such care as in all the circumstances was reasonably required to secure that the part of the highway to which the action relates was not dangerous for traffic.*
- 2. For the purposes of a defence under subsection (1) above, the court shall in particular have regard to the following matters:*
 - a) the character of the highway, and the traffic which was reasonably to be expected to use it;*
 - b) the standard of maintenance appropriate for a highway of that character and used by such traffic;*
 - c) the state of repair in which a reasonable person would have expected to find the highway;*
 - d) whether the highway authority knew, or could reasonably have been expected to know, that the condition of the part of the highway to which the action relates was likely to cause danger to users of the highway;*
 - e) where the highway authority could not reasonably have been expected to repair that part of the highway before the cause of action arose, what warning notices of its condition had been displayed; but for the purposes of such a defence it is not relevant to prove that the highway authority had arranged for a competent person to carry out or supervise the maintenance of the part of the highway to which the action relates unless it is also proved that the authority had given him proper instructions with regard to the maintenance of the highway and that he had carried out the instructions.*

3. *This section binds the Crown.*
4. Section 41 places an absolute duty on highways authorities and so gives no scope for interpretation in terms of approach.
5. Section 58 is the special defence and is important when developing an approach to response times because it introduces the concept that it is a defence "*to prove that the authority had taken such care as in all the circumstances was reasonably required to secure that the part of the highway to which the action relates was not dangerous for traffic*".
6. This piece of legislation is key in terms of justifying any kind of defence but will also be the foundation of changes to response times because the authority will have to prove that the systems it have put in place are considered as having *taken such care as in all the circumstances was reasonably required to secure that the part of the highway to which the action relates was not dangerous for traffic*. Sections 58 (a), (b), (c), (d), and (e) can be used to support approaches such as response times based on hierarchy or possibly differing intervention levels based on hierarchy.

Information on distinction between Revenue and Capital Expenditure

1. Funding for the maintenance of the highway asset comes in two forms revenue and capital. Revenue funds are typically those generated by the council itself through council tax, (and whilst it is set to diminish) central government grant and other income generating activities. Capital funds are typically provided to the council through central government grants for roads or via council borrowing.
2. In terms of accounting requirements councils are free to invest its revenue funding in any form of works on or to the highway asset. However, there are two criteria that have to be met for highways expenditure to be met from capital budgets. Those criteria are:
 - It is probable that the future economic benefits or service potential associated with the item will flow to the authority; and
 - The cost of the item can be measured reliably.
3. In order to capitalise any works to the highway asset the council must evidence that those works provide enhancement in a way that it is probable that future economic benefits or service potential associated with the expenditure will flow. Expenditure that extends the useful life or increases the level of performance of an asset (or increases the fair value of the asset in some other way) would be capital
4. Works that simply maintain asset value and/or life are typically initiated as a reaction to a failure that results in a significant loss of functionality or has rendered that component of the asset (locally) unsafe. Where the council is driven to simply correct the failure on safety grounds its intervention cannot be funded from capital as, by definition, the assets value or life has simply been restored to its rightful place on its deterioration curve.
5. Currently the capital maintenance grants from central government are composed of three components, they are:
 - The Formula Grant Allocation;
 - The Incentive Fund;
 - The Challenge Fund.
6. Other funding opportunities may also exist in addition to those set out above. In particular the council has taken a lead in developing its approach to locality working in a way that can enable Town and Parish Councils to invest in the management of the highway asset locally. This through a well-established lengthsman scheme and also a community commissioning model.
7. The ability to deliver a good return on the investment made in local roads will be enhanced by two things that are sadly lacking in the current funding environment:
 - First, the visibility (and security) of the intended investment curve. Asset managers plan on the basis of the asset lifecycle and uncertainty over levels of forward investment curtail the ability to take investment decisions that will reduce whole life cost to a minimum;

- Secondly, overall the scale of funding must be sufficient to effect a substantial change in the quality of the asset. If not then it is inevitable that the demand for reactive maintenance will increase further. This will not only put further unsustainable pressure on local authorities and the revenue funds they generate locally, but to deliver such repair costs approximately four to five times that of planned (capital) maintenance and for no (at best) improvement in the overall quality of the asset, in terms of its anticipated deterioration and life.

Responses received from Parish and Town Councils

All Parish and Town Councils were invited to comment on the matters identified within the scope of this review. The full responses are attached.

Views were also sought on other aspects of the Public Realm contract with BBLP to inform future scrutiny work as appropriate. Whilst this does not form part of this review it is included in the appendix for completeness.

The principal areas of concern were: repairs being carried out to some potholes in a cluster leaving others nearby unrepaired; quality of repairs and auditing of Repairs including those carried out by statutory undertakers; speed of repair; value for money; working practices (numbers of employees/use of surplus materials); and pothole prevention.

Responses received from Parish and Town Councils – Autumn 2018

Acton Beauchamp	<p>The Parish Council would like to high light certain areas that need particular attention but request that a survey is carried out in each parish; Acton Beauchamp, Evesbatch and Stanford Bishop as there is alot of work needed.</p> <p>In particular can you please look at the lane from Stanford Bishop Church to Lower House (on the brow of the bank) where there is a particularly dangerous area - the road has subsided. Also Hooks Lane going down to Evesbatch has been partly re-surfaced but needs to complete the rest of the lane which is full of potholes and very poor.</p> <p>With regard to the work of Balfour Beatty, can you please survey the three parishes again with regard to salt bins. Many have been damaged beyond repair and we would like to request their replacement a.s.a.p. as the winter is approaching.</p>
Ashperton	<p>It was felt that verge cutting is done too fast and sometimes looked “chewed” rather than cut, also the rubbish exposed after cutting needs to be cleared. It questions whether verge cutting is inspected at all. Pothole repairs – it was felt that by only repairing large potholes and not nearby smaller ones at the same time was not cost effective as they would be returning to the same area within weeks. If Herefordshire Council did one stretch at a time it was felt that they would receive greater public support and understanding.</p>
Bartestree and lugwardine	<p>The white marker paint has usually worn off before the pot hole gets filled.</p> <p>Some large potholes take ages to be filled.</p> <p>The quality of the filling could be vastly improved.</p>
Belmont Rural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The repair to potholes takes too long to be completed when reported. • Repairs being done ignores neighbouring potholes. • The current procedures do not represent value for money
Border Group	<p>This was discussed at our Sept meeting and Cllrs were very pleased with the level of work carried out on pothole /carriageway repairs over the last year. There has been a noticeable improvement across our Parish giving rise to positive comments from residents. It was felt imperative that PC’s are notified before work is done so they can have input e.g recent white lining in Adforton when by chance we were able to get the whites lines re-instated on the side of the road following resurfacing. The issue of duplication of work by the Lengthsman and Balfour Beatty was also raised e.g. clearing a ditch – we ask Lengthsman to do it then BB come along a few days later so perhaps better communication?</p>

	No comments on other PR services
Brampton Abbots and Foy Parish Council	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Speed of pothole repair: The Parish Council are concerned about the time taken to survey and carry out repairs to potholes on roads in the Parish. 2. Workmanship of repairs carried out: The parish council are concerned about the quality of workmanship in repairs to potholes carried out and if the repairs carried out will last. The same pot holes seem to be re-occurring 3. The parish council would like to have a better understanding of the contractual obligations of Balfour Beatty under the Councils highways maintenance contract. Do Balfour Beatty have a time frame to carry out identified repairs and how long should these repairs last. We believe there could be a mismatch between policy and practise.
Breinton	<p>Councillors consider that the Locality Steward scheme introduced by Balfour Beatty works extremely well for our parish, as we have a very active and experienced steward in Mike Gill.</p> <p>The overriding concern with the potholes and general condition of the roads and lanes around Breinton parish and Herefordshire in general is that the delays in repairing roads lead to damage to vehicles, and especially cyclists, as well as injuries to pedestrians - even more so with the shorter daylight hours of autumn and winter.</p> <p>There was an incident in Breinton a couple of years ago, when a cyclist was thrown off his bike on hitting a pothole. The bike was irreparably damaged and the cyclist suffered a broken shoulder. He was lucky not to have come off any worse.</p> <p>The push is for sustainable transport, which obviously includes cycling, but the state of the roads is obviously putting people off from cycling.</p> <p>Please ensure that your teams take a more proactive approach to road repairs. For example if they repair a pothole, and there is another close by, surely it is much more efficient to repair the 2nd one at the same time, rather than attending to it on another occasion.</p>
Brilley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no money to be spent in Powys as recent event, know where the boundaries are, be responsible for correct maintenance; • look at complete stretch of road, record with photos any work done not previously identified by Locality Steward; • reduce waste of few potholes filled in many places and others left unfilled for another visit.
Bromyard and Winslow	<p>Apart from the obvious concern that there are potholes and serious road surface damage that is not considered to be a pothole, Members' main gripe is with the Reporting Map on the Herefordshire Website.</p>

	<p>Previously the map showed the location of a reported pothole and if you hovered over the pin it would give you information about when it was reported, when it was expected to be repaired, or indeed whether it had been repaired. Now, all you get when you hover over a pin is "Existing Incident". This lack of information is considered to be a backward step; there is no way of knowing whether the incident you are reporting is the same one and causes uncertainty for the person reporting.</p> <p>Members felt that whilst the new Mobile Reporting App is a bit 'clunky', it is a good mechanism for reporting on the go rather than having to wait until you get home. However, one member reported that the pothole he had reported several days ago is not showing on the Pothole Map.</p> <p>Finally, some of the pothole repairs are so precise, that they cut through road surface damage not considered a pothole, and repair just the edge which is part of the pothole. Surely this is a false economy.</p>
Dorstone	<p><input type="checkbox"/> What works well Within Golden Valley North there is a very proactive Locality Steward, he has identified issues & sought hard to resolve them, in particular drainage. Reporting system is improved & the standard of pothole repair improved recently</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What areas for improvement you consider there are. Council understand that surface water, which subsequently freezes, is one of the main contributing factors creating potholes, better communication is required to land owners on responsibilities on drainage</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Any questions you would like the Committee to explore. What independent checks are carried out on the effectiveness of the work undertaken</p> <p>B. PUBLIC REALM SERVICES</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What works well</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What areas for improvement you consider there are. Lengthsman scheme, as one of the parishes retaining a lengthsman through parish funding he is not allowed to work on the B roads. Utility companies employ staff to carry out their work on B roads, what qualifications do they hold? Could specified work carried out by the lengthsman (cleaning grips etc) be covered under insurance of the council/Balfour Beatty provided suitable training had been undertaken?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Any questions you would like the Committee to explore.</p>

	<p>Council understand roads have a life of 30 years; What checks are independently carried out when roads are resurfaced? What guarantee is given on the work carried out? What checks are independently carried out on the effectiveness of material used & possible claim for any subsequent defects? When any work is carried out on the highway, (utility company, developer, householder) what check is carried out on the work & subsequent follow up to ensure there are no unnecessary costs to Herefordshire residents ?</p>
Eardisland	<p>Eardisland Parish Council would like the Committee to consider a better use of resources by Balfour Beatty in the following aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repair of a complete stretch of road, not leaving some potholes but using photos to record extra potholes filled but not previously identified by Locality Steward. The public are bewildered by some potholes being left while others are filled on the same stretch of road – this is very bad publicity for Herefordshire and Balfour Beatty • Connection between the repair of potholes and utility company works is not being followed up – is Balfour Beatty repairing potholes in utility works because the utility company works have not been inspected correctly to ensure suitable making good has been undertaken? • The Locality Steward system works well with the parish, our Steward does regular driverounds with councillors, contractors and the Clerk to identify suitable work for contractors using parish funding and/or defects/work that should be undertaken by Balfour Beatty • The online reporting system works well, though the agreed response time is far too long – leading to the situation of some potholes on a stretch of road being repaired while others are left until near the end of the response time – see the first point • The Senior Accident Investigator was very helpful to the parish • The pothole fixing is now of better quality.
Eardisley	<p>Eardisley Group Parish Council wishes to make the following feedback in relation to the Pothole Repairs scrutiny. The response is shaped around the objectives in the public realm contract for service provision stated on the Herefordshire Council web site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring our roads, public open spaces and streets are accessible, safe, clean and well-maintained: The fact that so many pot holes remain on very many roads of all categories throughout the county infers this objective is not being met. Funding constraints aside, EGPC believes more could be done, better. Whilst it is appreciated that some positive, focused effort during the previous year was targeted at accelerating pothole repairs (i.e. the Velocity Patcher programme), the high number of potholes remaining on Herefordshire roads is evident to all road users on a daily basis. The condition of many roads throughout the country resemble those in what were historically believed to be 'poorer' countries, with patches and potholes making driving conditions hazardous either from

	<p>driving over them or the consequences of motorists trying to avoid them.</p> <p>Based on recent pot holes that have been filled in its own Parish, EGPC's view is that:</p> <p>a) The quality of work is very questionable; pot holes appear to have been 'patched' rather than properly repaired.</p> <p>b) Poor quality materials have been used to perform repairs that certainly do not look as if they will last.</p> <p>c) It appears sealing of pot hole repairs is not being done properly, meaning water will be able to penetrate the patches and erode the hole again within a short space of time. Observations have also been made that holes were filled with water already in them and that other agencies, in particular Welsh Water, appear to be doing work to a higher standard when they are responsible for a repair.</p> <p>d) Lack of QA by the commissioner agency, i.e. BBLP on behalf of HC. The poor standard of work experienced recently in Eardisley Parish (much of which was presumably undertaken by sub-contractors) was fed back to BBLP, but there is no evidence that there was any QA by them of the works carried out or any follow-up to the negative feedback provided.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining the delivery of essential services The condition of roads in Herefordshire generally and with specific regard to pot holes does not assist in the delivery of services to road users. In particular, damage to vehicles caused by driving over pot holes must be significant. It would be interesting to submit a Freedom of Information request for statistics on the number of claims submitted to HC and any monies paid out in respect of punctures and other damage potentially linked to this issue, which could otherwise be diverted to the repair programme. • Achieving value for money, facilitated by process improvement and transparency through open book accounting EGPC questions the achievement of value for money and the policy deployed in respect of pot hole repairs. It is recognised the facility for on-line reporting and a 24 hour assistance line for the most severe pot holes is positive and has resulted in an improvement service delivery. However, the policy of contractors being deployed to repair only one or two pot holes in a cluster because others are not deemed 'deep enough' is not considered an economical or strategic way of tackling the issue. From an efficiency perspective, a works repair programme conducted on this basis is ad hoc and fragmented in nature and, as such, cannot make the best use of resources, fuel and materials. At the same time, a negative public perception results. Better co-ordination of areas being repaired would surely result in better value for money, particularly when sub-contractors may be travelling a considerable distance from out of county to undertake the work. <p>In terms of transparency on costs, it is proving extremely difficult to obtain information on the cost of recent repairs to a crash barrier</p>
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	<p>near Whitney Toll Bridge. EGPC is advised the costs (which included a specialist environmental survey due to proximity to the River Wye and an extended period of time when traffic control with traffic lights was in place) are the subject of an insurance claim. However, there is no confirmation about whether all costs will be met from the claim or how much money is involved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving service delivery which is efficient and responsive to local needs and priorities Despite the perception of some improvement on the issue reporting tools and action taken on so-called Priority 1 pothole maintenance, it is still considered by EGPC as a recipient of the service that time from reporting to action is too long; this especially applies to potholes that are not considered Priority 1 at the time of reporting, but which deteriorate further in the interim. Use of the current categorisation criteria also appears to ignore the objective of being responsive to local needs and priorities. For example, a cluster of pot holes outside a row of bungalows in Whitney on Wye was drawn to the attention of BBLP during a recent drive round with the locality steward. As per the grading based on depth, only one of the potholes was marked for attention and was subsequently repaired (although to a poor standard!). This appears not to take into account the fact that residents of these properties are mostly elderly and the multiple remaining pot holes pose a threat to their safety when entering and exiting their properties. • Contributing to the regeneration of the economy and social capital in Herefordshire Poor road infrastructure in general, not complimented by roads plagued by pot holes, does not assist in achievement of this objective. To a large extent, it is recognised this is dependent on government funding and constraints are placed on local agencies in this regard.
Eastnor and Donnington	As Ashperton.
Eaton Bishop	<p>In Eaton Bishop Parish we have in past been very critical of the BBLP system and indeed quality of repairs. We must comment that since Paul Norris has been our Locality Steward communication and repairs has improved dramatically and we have together achieved some improvement but we still feel there is still scope for a better delivery of repairs when funding is so limited.</p> <p>We suggest that targeting of individual rural Parishes and completing all reasonably sized potholes rather than passing through just target filling the worst would be far more efficient. We have experienced periods when gangs have passed through and filled just a few holes and then been through again in a very short time period. Surely the cost is incurred in transport, manpower and time spent working is better than time spent traveling around.</p> <p>Another issue that we have experienced is that it appears that in the afternoon when the time arrives for the gangs to return to base in Hereford, surplus tarmac is just used up filling farm gateways rather than spending</p>

	<p>the extra hour and using up the tarmac on potholes. We have experienced this waste of tarmac several times in the past with inappropriate use of tarmac off the highway.</p> <p>Some areas within the Parish, just off the C class do not appear to get potholes filled, and when this is the main route to homes for residents this causes much concern for the residents affected. This is particularly apparent and of concern in Ruckhall and Lower Eaton.</p> <p>It must be said that in certain areas the concept of pothole filling in areas where the whole surface has broken down just makes an area of random tarmac circles surrounded by a broken surface of gravel and stone.</p> <p>Touring the Parish with a locality Steward gives Parish Councillors an opportunity to discuss the problems and identify the priority areas. We are sure better communication as we have established with Paul Norris should be encouraged across the whole County.</p>
Fownhope	<p>A. Highways Maintenance – Pothole Repairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What works well – The on line reporting system is easy to use and our Locality Steward (Maynard Smith) makes timely and regular inspections. He is responsive to direct inquiries made by the PC and is easy to communicate with. □ Areas for improvement - The matrix system of determining which potholes are scheduled for repair is complex and appears to involve a degree of subjective assessment. While we appreciate that limited resources demand prioritisation, it is often difficult to understand why one pothole is repaired while others, close by, are left unrepaired. □ Questions you would like the Committee to explore. – Clearly, financial resources are limited. Can the committee please explore additional funding options from Central Government as well as local resources such as sponsorship from private enterprise? Perhaps individual stretches of road could be sponsored in the same way that urban roundabouts are maintained under sponsorship? <p>B. PUBLIC REALM SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What works well – The telephone reporting service operated by BBLP is staffed by helpful and polite operators. Our Locality Steward (Maynard Smith) makes timely and regular inspections. He is responsive to direct inquiries made by the PC and is easy to communicate with. The regular update meetings held by BBLP are useful and informative. □ Areas for improvement – Again, funding seems to be the problem. We have an ongoing problem with flooding in Fownhope. BBLP make regular visits to clear the gullies, but there are underlying issues that are

	<p>still to be addressed. Joel Hockenbunrg, Senior Engineer, conducted an extensive assessment in 2015 and agreed that remedial action was required, but no further action has been taken.</p> <p>□ Questions you would like the Committee to explore. – Again, the committee should be pushing Central Government for funding to maintain basic infrastructure such as drainage and flood defence.</p>
Holmer	<p>The largest issue that they had concerned the coordination of pothole repairs which was considered inadequate. It is reported that the maintenance gangs attending to repair the highway often ignore any nearby potholes.</p>
Kingsland	<p>Kingsland Parish Council considered the invitation to comment on pothole repairs and other public realm services at the last meeting. It was felt that a strategic view needs to be taken to resurface sections where the number of potholes means further repairs will just make the road surface too rough for vehicles to use safely. Also, all potholes in a given area should be repaired at the same time, which saves making multiple trips to the same location. The quality of pothole repairs can vary from the very good to the very poor. White lining needs to be replaced urgently, particularly on junctions such as the Corners crossroads, and on the sharp corner at Cobnash.</p> <p>Since the PC meeting, there has been a tour of the parish roads with the enhanced lengthsman and locality steward, and the roads in the parish have improved noticeably since the Spring. In fact, there were no potholes identified for the enhanced lengthsman to repair. It appears that after many years, the general condition of the roads – with the notable and urgent exception of Longford in Kingsland – are much improved.</p>
Leominster TC	<p>HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE - POTHOLE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What works well? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 The Lengthsman scheme was a useful mechanism to deal with potholes in C and U roads in the parish as well as addressing season work such as grip clearance, cutting back junctions to improve sight lines, and weed control. 1.2 The loss of funding from this scheme has, and will continue to have, a detrimental effect on the ongoing maintenance of these roads, and increase the pressure on Herefordshire Council to meet the inevitable additional works. The investment made through town and parish councils to oversee this work, and to deliver local maintenance through a local Lengthsman, ensures that local needs are met and reacted to speedily. 1.3 The Locality Stewards are an integral part of ensuring that issues and concerns are raised and dealt with. The direct communication between the parishes and the Locality Steward keeps things simple and easy.

	<p>1.4 The continued investment in the Locality Stewards will help towards further development of the response to local issues</p> <p>2. What areas for improvement are recommended?</p> <p>2.1 Increase the role and responsibility of the Locality Steward to help meet the concerns of local residents expressed through the town and parish councils.</p> <p>2.2 Reinstate Lengthsman funding, and expand the remit of this initiative to enable better, reactive and proactive responses to local issues. An increased remit could include a small budget for renewing white lines, carrying out interim pothole repairs on B roads, footpath repairs and weed spraying.</p> <p>3. Questions for the Committee to explore?</p> <p>3.1 Review the reinstatement of funding for the Lengthsman scheme.</p> <p>3.2 Investigate expanding the remit of the Lengthsman scheme subject to additional funding being provided.</p> <p>3.3 Carry out a Best Value assessment to ensure that the Lengthsman scheme is providing value for money and a responsive, local service.</p> <p>3.4 Consult with town and parish councils in the County to assess who would be willing to continue with the enhanced Lengthsman Scheme especially if a level of funding was reinstated.</p> <p>3.5 Carry out an assessment of works no longer being carried out by town and parish councils due to the discontinuation of the Lengthsman scheme.</p> <p>3.6 Carry out an assessment on the effect the withdrawal of funding has had on local Lengthsmen and their businesses, as the scheme potentially invested in local employment.</p> <p>PUBLIC REALM SERVICES</p> <p>1. What works well?</p> <p>1.1 The maintenance of the public realm in Leominster is poor and leaves much to be desired. This is not the entire fault of the Contractor as the current infrastructure is well past its sell-by date and requires significant investment.</p> <p>1.2 The major issue currently being experienced is quality control. Repairs are undertaken but there appears to be no quality control once completed to ensure that it is fit for purpose.</p> <p>1.3 The use of cheaper, non-compatible materials to repair damaged and broken public realm surfaces is unacceptable and has left Leominster looking like a patchwork quilt of poorly carried out repair work that creates a sense that no one really cares about the public realm.</p>
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	<p>1.4 Street furniture is removed annually each year to enable the May Fair to take place. The reinstallation of this sometimes sees seats and benches being removed and never being reinstated.</p> <p>1.5 Leominster Town Council supports the street cleaning service in the town centre by providing street cleaning services three times a week under a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Balfour Beatty (BBLP) at no cost to either BBLP or Herefordshire Council. The quid pro quo was that BBLP would focus on more regular cleaning and maintenance of the public realm outside the town centre. There is a lack of evidence that this has been delivered.</p> <p>1.6 Litter removal in the town centre is carried out by BBLP, although the SLA has been slightly revised to enable the Town Council to undertake this task especially when the bins are overflowing.</p> <p>1.7 The issue, which has never been properly addressed, is that despite there being a waste collection site in the town the Town Council's Environmental Team has never been allowed to dispose of rubbish here. Instead it has to be collected through a third party, the Town Council has to house large 1,100 litre wheelie bins on its main site, and pay a significantly higher price for the collection and disposal of that rubbish because it is commercial.</p> <p>1.8 Among the issues raised with BBLP and Herefordshire Council over the past few years with regard to the maintenance of the public realm are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fading white lines throughout the town which have not been repainted; • A town centre public realm that is a hazard to pedestrians, especially when the weather is inclement; • Poor quality running repairs using materials that are not in keeping with the existing public realm; • Loss of various pieces of street furniture; • Poor signage; • Extremely poor road surfaces especially in Etnam Street, Worcester Road (especially on the roundabout), High Street, West Street, Dishley Street, Cursnew Road, Rainbow Street, New Street, Burgess Street, Church Street, Pinsley Road and Hereford Road. <p>2. What areas for improvement are recommended?</p> <p>2.1 Improved communication between BBLP, Herefordshire Council and Leominster Town Council.</p> <p>2.2 Post-repair quality control regime to be fully developed, funded and implemented.</p> <p>2.3 Reintroduction of funding for town and parish councils for the Lengthsman scheme to help deliver reactive maintenance and repairs.</p>
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	<p>2.4 Provide an opportunity for the Town Council to input into the Annual Maintenance Plan and be consulted on what the priorities are for the area.</p> <p>2.5 Improved maintenance planning, in consultation with the Town Council.</p> <p>3. Questions for the Committee to explore?</p> <p>3.1 Consider delegating authority to discharge these functions to town and parish councils willing to take responsibility for their area. They would be responsible for carrying out everyday maintenance and repairs of the public realm using a contract similar to that entered into between Herefordshire Council, the parish council and BBLP for the Lengthsman scheme. This could be implemented using the delegated authority power contained within the Local Government Act 1972 (s101). An adequate funding agreement would need to be put in place in order for town and parish councils to be in a position to take on this responsibility. A pilot scheme could be developed using a market town such as Leominster that is in a position to deliver such a service. Section 101 of the LGA 1972 is outlined below:</p> <p>s101 - Arrangements for discharge of functions by local authorities.</p> <p>(1) Subject to any express provision contained in this Act or any Act passed after this Act, a local authority may arrange for the discharge of any of their functions—</p> <p>(a) by a committee, a sub-committee or an officer of the authority; or</p> <p>(b) by any other local authority.</p> <p>3.2 Consider the reintroduction of funding for the Lengthsman and P3 schemes.</p>
Linton (s)	<p>The matter of Highways Maintenance was discussed by Parish Councillors at a recent meeting. I am asked to respond as follows:</p> <p>Generally road maintenance appears to be too low down the priorities for expenditure despite being of vital importance to the infrastructure of the County. Many have noticed that despite white marks being placed around certain potholes and other road disrepair spots, these are frequently not included in eventual work carried out. A pothole on Linton Ridge road last winter was reported repeatedly and became impassible, but was missed whilst work nearby was undertaken.</p>
Llangarron	<p>We have been asked by Anthony Bush of Herefordshire Council (HC) to complete a local review of the way highway maintenance is conducted within our parish. In so doing, we have to assess any mismatches between policy and practice. Our review also addresses mismatches between policy/practice and the needs of our largest community (Llangrove) within the Parish. The road we have chosen as a 'sample' to show the current illogical approach to road repairs, is the U71224 running through Llangrove. Our contention is that the U71224 is largely being ignored by Balfour Beatty (BB) because it is an unclassified road.</p> <p>Executive Summary</p>

	<p>A summary of our recommendations is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BB to work with the parish council through the appointed roads officer in setting priorities for pothole and other urgent road repairs. • Upgrade the classification of the U71224 to at least a 'C' class road. (See the justification below). • Declassify the C1250 if there is a need for a compensating reduction for financial reasons for the upgrading of the U71224. • Place urgent repairs on the U71224 at Hilltop and Treduchan Farms as the highest priority within Llangarron Parish. • The request for a 20 mph limit within the Llangrove Village boundary be given urgent consideration by Herefordshire Council. This road is the main artery of the parish, which includes a school, thriving village hall, church and busy pub. There is no pavement, no lighting and all age groups and families have to walk this narrow road. There must be no hiding behind HC processes as there is an urgent need to make this a safe 20mph zone. We ask that HC do the right thing and immediately seek this change. • HC Highways, Planning and NDP Departments should work in a more coordinated way when it comes to upgrading and maintaining roads to support the development of substantial new housing caused by the Housing Needs allocation. • Llangarron Parish Council to nominate a permanent Roads Officer who will become to point of contact for all highways related matters. • The Locality Steward should meet quarterly and as required with the appointed PC Roads Officer and attend periodic general Parish Council Meetings to brief on recent and future work. <p>Detailed Explanation</p> <p>Llangarron Parish has only 2 classified roads within its boundary, but many unclassified roads. One can only speculate about the reasons for this, but it is probably historical and reflects previous precedence of communities within the Parish. It is logical that the A466 and A4137 are joined through our area by another classified road, the C1248, which runs through Llangarron. The reason for the existence of the other classified road, the C1250 seems to have little logic to support its existence as a classified road and earlier this year planning for 8 new houses just off this road was turned down in Llangarron Village for road safety reasons! Undoubtedly, the busiest road in the parish (we can produce recent traffic surveys) is the U71224 which links our largest community (Llangrove) to the A40 and C1248, but probably for financial constraint reasons has remained unclassified despite Herefordshire Council knowing that Llangrove housing has grown considerably in recent years. The largest proportion of new housing envisaged under the Core Strategy and the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) will also come to Llangrove. One could be forgiven for thinking that the Planning/NDP and Highways Departments at Herefordshire County Council work in isolation from one another. Some joined up thinking is much needed at Hereford!</p> <p>Our road maintenance concerns with regard to BB are well known to them, but their view is that funding is limited and urgent health and safety needs drive a very limited budget along with the HCC Risk Based Approach</p>
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(RBA). They use a template that for the U71224 ensures that potholes eventually get marked and at some stage in the future (this can be months) are then filled. This is hardly reasonable where the largest number of road users within the parish have to contend with a very poor road, the highest volume of traffic and with the worst rate of repair; inevitable because this is such a busy road and it is maintained to the lowest standards. Last year, 2 Councillors walked this road with our BB Locality Steward, but nothing came of the specific issues raised. Not only is the road single track over much of its length, many of its passing places are mud and potholed verges and at 2 locations there are severe water table/sub-base issues that result in a mass of potholes for much of the year. At these 2 locations nothing will really improve unless the underlying issues are permanently resolved and this remains an urgent issue.

As stated above, Llangrove is growing rapidly with a probable further 30 new houses due to appear in the next few years, having already seen considerable growth in the last 20 years. The U71224 will have to take its existing traffic plus that needed to support new housing and the interim construction traffic. The school, pub, church and village hall all bring considerable additional traffic into the community on a daily basis from outside the parish. Additionally, this road is used as a rat run when the A40 is congested or blocked at the Dixon Roundabout at Monmouth and backs up to Whitchurch, particularly on a Friday afternoon. A simple traffic survey will verify that this is the most used road in the whole parish, but currently gets no regular maintenance.

A request for a 20 mph limit in Llangrove remains an urgent aspiration, particularly as we have a local primary school, volume of traffic has increased and Llangrove is a village where there are no pavements. There is clearly a need for the U71224 to be re-classified or logic to prevail and the road be given a higher priority when it comes to the urgency of repairs. The 2 small sections of road mentioned above and needing urgent repairs are opposite the entrance to Hilltop Farm and next to Treduchan Farm. Photographs of both locations are attached.

We watched with interest as BB repaired potholes and the verges on the C1248 earlier this month, using their new rapid repair system. The repair team came within 50 metres of the worst potholed area in the Parish on the busy U71224 next to Treduchan Farm and yet completely ignored the problem due to preference going to the much less used C1250 classified road. A much more intelligent approach to pothole filling is requested by this Parish. If Herefordshire Council and BB are unable to see what the priorities are, then the Parish Council should have a say in the process of prioritising the urgency of repairs. It would also be useful to know in advance what work BB intend to undertake in the future in our parish. We also should be able to have a stronger voice in demanding substantial repairs rather than patching where there are long term problems on busy roads.

Under the HC/BB Living Places Contract (222 pages), Llangarron PC sees little evidence of BB working with us in developing the Forward Programme or Annual Plan in relation to planning work on road repairs and understanding our priorities. We believe that BB should have a much closer relationship with the PC and that the Locality Steward should periodically attend PC meetings. We in turn as a PC should appoint a Roads Officer as

	<p>a principal point of contact and these 2 people should meet at least quarterly.</p> <p>Also under the HC/BB Living Places Contract it is noted that formal surveys on unclassified roads take place once every 4 years, whereas for C classified roads it is every 2 years. Even Category 1 – 4 footways are surveyed every 2 years. This cannot be acceptable with regard to the busiest road in the Parish, the U71224. Interestingly this road is included as a ‘Secondary Route’ for winter gritting – so at least someone at HC is switched on enough to know to the needs of the Llangrove community!</p>
Longtown	<p>HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE - POTHoles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What works well? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Liaison with the Locality Steward locally. Accessible, responsive, knowledgeable. 1.2 Good response from Locality Steward regarding works that are requested by the Parish Council. 2. What areas for improvement are recommended? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 The inconsistent quality of work undertaken and level of repair made. 2.2 Review the way potholes are repaired. There is a frustration that potholes are filled separately when patching would be so much more efficient. 2.3 The allocation of a larger budget. 2.4 Focus repairs and maintenance geographically to achieve greater efficiency. 2.5 Provide Parish Councils with information on the location of assets so that the use of Lengthsmen can be used more efficiently by those parishes that are still investing in this scheme. 2.6 The Parish Council welcomed the discontinuation of using the slurry seal method of road repairs. 2.7 Greater investment in keeping drains clear. This will reduce damage to the highways. 2.8 Ditches need to be more regularly maintained. 2.9 Ditching works need to be better prioritised. 2.10 Provision of contact numbers to enable better communications when emergencies occur, especially during inclement weather/flooding. 3. Questions for the Committee to explore? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Review the reinstatement of funding for the Lengthsman scheme.

	<p>3.2 Obtain information from Herefordshire Parishes on which Councils will continue to support the scheme and how much budget is being allocated.</p>
<p>Lyonshall</p>	<p>Pot Hole repairs</p> <p>What works well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The website recording facility. • Relationship and liaison with Balfour Beatty Steward Lara Edwards. <p>Areas for improvement you consider there are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some services of Balfour Beatty are somewhat disorganised, with inefficient working and poor quality of work. It is often evident that large numbers of workforce attend repairs and that some are surplus to the needs of the work, standing or sitting around whilst work is carried out. <p>Example: When work was carried out on the A480 road outside the Royal George</p> <p>The person came to collect the traffic lights, but the road had not been filled in. The hole was filled in and then the traffic light team returned on another day to remove the traffic lights. Later the same day different traffic lights were erected further along the A480 road towards The Close.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There appears to be an unreasonable delay in repairing potholes specially where they may result in injury to road users (particularly those on two wheels) and serious damage to vehicles of whatever description. • There appears to be a lack of flexibility when repair staff attend to reported potholes when they will repair specific holes but ignore other damage nearby which could be quickly and effectively remedied at the same time. • The quality of repairs seems to be lacking and the materials used do not last as long as could be anticipated and often potholes have a return visit to refill. <p>Any questions you would like the Committee to explore.</p> <p>Public realm services</p> <p>What works well</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship and liaison with Balfour Beatty Steward Lara Edwards. • Support from Balfour Beatty Steward Lara Edwards to attend problematic land owners. • Invoice submission to Balfour Beatty and prompt payment.
<p>Marstow (joint response with Whitchurch and Ganarew PC)</p>	<p>The Council members have confirmed how very satisfied they are with the Balfour Beatty organisation and the relationship they have developed with these two Parish Councils.</p> <p>The concept of the Locality Steward is a brilliant idea and we have both an outstanding relationship and assistance from them.</p> <p>Site meetings are always positive in that we know what can be achieved and what is not possible.</p> <p>Timings are always realistic.</p> <p>We are very pleased with the level of help and advice and service assistance.</p>
<p>Middleton on the Hill & Leysters</p>	<p>The Middleton on the Hill & Leysters Parish Council met last night and one of the agenda items was the consideration of the delivery of pothole repairs etc.</p> <p>The parish council thinks the key point is to encourage reporting of problems so that they are dealt with promptly. We have a very good Locality Steward who is very proactive, this has improved the situation. We also now receive weekly emails with a report of work undertaken, this is a definite plus point.</p>

	As a long term plan the Parish Council would like to see more preventative work undertaken ie ditch and culvert clearance so that problems aren't created through lack of routine maintenance.
Orcop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The standard of pothole filling is poor, not consistent and did not represent Value for money • Rather than fill by category use common sense and fill potholes as required.
Orleton	The parish council agreed to ask that Herefordshire Council consider adopting the approach taken by Worcestershire which is believed to have borrowed funds to bring the county roads up to standard, and then use the annual savings made from doing fewer pothole and other repairs to pay the annual loan charges.
Pembridge	<p>Pembridge Parish Council response for General Scrutiny Committee regarding pot hole repairs and public realm services</p> <p>Pot holes:</p> <p>What works well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting System. • Balfour Beatty Steward liaison. • When large area resurfacing is undertaken an excellent job is done. <p>Improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When potholes are reported on a particular highway & marked, repair those & others in the vicinity. Cheaper to do one hit than constantly returning to same area, increasing manpower & time constraints. <p>Example- C1032 Bridge St., Pembridge, to Kingspan corner. BB records will show that this road has received multiple repeat returns to correct small potholes & trenches over the last two years at vast costs for labour & plant usage. Additional potholes & defects are often within metres of those being repaired.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repair all pot holes in a reported area together. • Change the pothole classification so that badly sunken road edge drain covers, sunken & protruding service manhole covers & historical, sunken utility trenches are included in road surveys & covered under 'pothole' reports from the public. These classifications are as dangerous as potholes. • Ensure utilities repair the road and manhole covers properly and introduce a penalty for poor workmanship or late return to repair. • Many potholes/defects are white marked & left so long that the markings disappear completely. Poor continuity in administration? Priority is understood, but this seems lax. <p>Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If "What improvements" cannot happen why not ? <p>Public Realm:</p> <p>What works well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not much. Set up is too Bureaucratic. • Good locality steward.

	<p>Areas for improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBLP take advantage of their position to provide uncompetitive prices for extra work that they have the exclusive right to perform under the terms of contract and where Herefordshire Council is not Paying. Parish Councils and other third parties commissioning and paying for work to be done should be able to put work out to competitive tender and BBLP must not be permitted to charge exorbitant prices for approving and signing off such work. Permission to do the work must be granted unless BBLP can prove a good reason why not. <p>Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What financial guarantees does Herefordshire Council have in place in the event that BBLP fails financially? Are those guarantees provided by financially robust Third Parties?
Pencombe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of the filing machine in the past was good and potholes filled in were still ok. • More use of the pothole filling machine, with machine operator having more discretion to fill potholes as necessary.
Pixley and District	As Ashperton
Pyons Group	"Based on the recent experience of repairs in 2018, the parish council is pleased with both the standard and speed of response to fix potholes. Please keep going for the future and maintain the higher standard of pothole repairs which have presumably been achieved through the deployment of the velocity patcher."
Richards Castle	Richards Castle Parish Council agreed to comment on the poor quality of pothole repairs in the parish. The outside edges of the potholes are not sealed meaning water will get in and shorten the life of the repair. Where there are multiple potholes more use should be made of patching. Potholes are often left for too long before being repaired, for example on Castle Road.
ROSS TC	<p>Response awaited post 14 nov</p> <p>A. Highways Maintenance – Pothole Repairs</p> <p>What works well? Response from the Locality Steward is helpful and positive, without making unrealistic promises.</p> <p>Anecdotal evidence suggests response to emergency highway defects is good. However general responses from BBLP in terms of actually repairing potholes are less encouraging, with few instances reported to or witnessed by Town Councillors to suggest the pothole repair service is working well.</p> <p>Whilst this does not mean the service is failing, Councillors and residents perceive it is and are generally dissatisfied with the service.</p> <p>Potential improvements Customer responses are generally perceived to be slow and often require chasing. There appears to be no published response times for responding</p>

	<p>to customer requests for potholes repairs. We therefore suggest the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All customers must receive a response to their initial request within 5 working days, stating when the reported problem will be assessed and when a full response will be sent. This full response must be received within 10 working days. • If for any reason that date slips, the customer must be informed why and given a revised date without having to chase. • Once inspected, the customer must be informed what action will be taken, by whom and when. If no action is proposed a full explanation must be given. • For most potholes it is not necessary to inform the customer when a repair has been carried out as this will be self-evident. <p>Responses must also state whether the repair will be a full one, where the pothole is cut out before filling or a 'Jetpatcher' type repair where the pothole is repaired without cutting it out first.</p> <p>We note from the most recent monitoring report that it is intended to develop more meaningful customer satisfaction performance indicators. We therefore request that one is developed which relates specifically to Town and Parish Council views of pothole repair services.</p> <p>Herefordshire Council also needs to identify the mechanism by which BBLP will be incentivised to achieve the KPIs described here, as well as measures to tackle under performance by BBLP.</p> <p>Areas to explore</p> <p>It appears that town centre highway defects are unlikely to be deemed a priority for 7-day repair due to factors such as speed restriction and street lighting. We believe therefore that the current repair criteria are ineffective as they do not appear to reflect the high usage and visibility of many roads in Ross. The Town Council therefore requests an urgent review of the current prioritization matrix, in full consultation with town & Parish Councils.</p> <p>A new and simplified measure of customer confidence in pothole repair services must also be developed with direct input from Town & Parish Councils.</p> <p>Any changes to service levels or specifications which have been agreed with the contractor since the BBLP contract started must be clearly identified and accessible on Herefordshire Council's website, showing when they were agreed and what cost saving or service improvement they delivered.</p> <p>Town and Parish Councils must be consulted not less than 40 working days prior to any future changes in specification being agreed.</p> <p>This Council notes that there has been significantly less spent in Ross recently than in other market towns on planned maintenance but recognises that this is based on the need to prioritise funding. The Town Council therefore requests that an annual planned highway maintenance programme is published no later than 1st March each year, following full consultation with Town & Parish Councils. This must also include a draft</p>
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	<p>programme for the subsequent year to act as a reserve list in the event of additional funding becoming available.</p> <p>Whilst the Town Council accepts the Planned Maintenance Programme must reflect network condition, this is neither absolute nor fixed, so we ask that the County Council with BBLP develops a mechanism to ensure future expenditure is equitable.</p> <p>B. PUBLIC REALM SERVICES</p> <p>What works well?</p> <p>Response from the Locality Steward is helpful and positive, without making unrealistic promises.</p> <p>Issues relating to vegetation overhanging the highway are generally dealt with effectively.</p> <p>The highway grass cutting service has been more effective this year than previously.</p> <p>The highway weed spraying service was effective when it eventually commenced. This needs to occur much earlier in future, details of this must also be communicated with Town and Parish Councils.</p> <p>Responses from BBLP for other public realm services such as street cleansing and grounds maintenance are less encouraging.</p> <p>Whilst this does not mean services are failing, Councillors and residents are generally dissatisfied with standards.</p> <p>Potential improvements</p> <p>Customer responses are generally perceived to be slow and often require chasing. There appears to be no published response times for responding to customer requests for public realm services. We therefore suggest the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All customers must receive a response to their initial request within 5 working days, stating when the reported problem will be assessed and when a full response will be sent. This full response must be received within 10 working days. • If for any reason that date slips, the customer must be informed why and given a revised date without having to chase. • Once inspected, the customer must be informed what action will be taken, by whom and when. If no action is proposed a full explanation must be given.
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	<p>We note from the most recent monitoring report that it is intended to develop more meaningful customer satisfaction performance indicators. We therefore request that one is developed which relates specifically to Town and Parish Council views of BBLP services.</p> <p>Herefordshire Council also needs to identify the mechanism by which BBLP will be incentivised to achieve the KPIs described here, as well as measures to tackle under performance by BBLP.</p> <p>Areas to explore</p> <p>A new and simplified measure of customer confidence in BBLP services should be developed with input from Town & Parish Councils.</p> <p>Any changes to service levels or specifications which have been agreed with the contractor since the BBLP contract started must be clearly identified and accessible on Herefordshire Council's website, showing when they were agreed and what cost saving they have delivered.</p> <p>Town and Parish Councils must be consulted not less than 28 working days prior to any future changes in specification being agreed.</p> <p>The current arrangement where Locality Stewards are employed by Balfour Beatty may be perceived to reduce duplication and double checking, but the perception of the Town Council and residents of a contractor policing itself means trust will always be limited. This is no criticism of the stewards who do an excellent job.</p> <p>The Town Council therefore requests a full review of the costs and benefits of transferring all Locality Stewards to the County Council and Ross Town Council would be agreeable to assist with a pilot scheme. This would be based on a TUPE transfer to the new host organisation of the existing steward, along with all equipment software licenses, etc. and the full budget for that post.</p> <p>The Town Council also requests a full review of the costs and benefits of transferring the Locality Stewards the Town Councils, on the same financial basis as the foregoing paragraph, using Ross Town Council as a pilot scheme.</p> <p>We believe these reviews must be completed no later than 31st March 2019, including full consultation with the Town and Parish Councils.</p>
	<p>From a Ross Town Councillor:</p> <p>I am responding to the General Scrutiny Committee's invitation for comments on -</p> <p>B. Public Realm Services</p> <p>What works well ? - sad to say, very little at the moment</p> <p>What areas for improvement are there ? – plenty !</p> <p>I'll go through one very recent request for service to Balfour Beatty. That may encapsulate what is going wrong.</p> <p>On 23/8/2018, I used the online reporting tool to ask what had happened to several benches in an area in Ross-on-Wye which is owned by the County</p>

	<p>of Herefordshire District Council (CHDC) and notionally maintained by Balfour Beatty (BB). (they had disappeared.)</p> <p>Hearing nothing, I rang BB on 31/10/2018. I was told that area was maintained by Ross Town Council. My request for service had apparently been closed down in view of this. I told the BB employee that this area was not and has never been owned by the Town Council and that it was owned by CHDC. BB should therefore be maintaining it and were responsible for it.</p> <p>So:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) After a 68 day delay, the customer (me) had received no communication whatsoever from BB or CHDC. 2) The request for service had been shut down or marked as having been dealt with, without any reference to the customer, explanation or response. 3) An incorrect assumption was made – by whom, I do not know – that this area was not the responsibility of BB. An enquiry of BB's or CHDC's assets record would have shown – or should have shown - different. How is this error possible ? 4) The assumption that the area was not part of BB's responsibilities gives rise to the question: how long has this been assumed or presumed and for how long have BB neglected this area ? Presumably an admittedly small part of their annual payment from CHDC relates to the cost of maintaining this area, something which was not being done. What is CHDC doing to monitor the contract and how many times is this same scenario being acted out in other areas in Herefordshire ? 5) I tend to follow up on my requests for service. However other customers have busy lives. They don't have the time to follow up. How many times are customer requests closed down with no action taken and no explanation to the customer of why no action has been taken ? <p>So I invite the Committee to follow up on these sorts of questions and I wish them good luck. Many residents that I talk to have given up on reporting Highways defects, as their expectations of something being done about them is next to zero.</p> <p>Perhaps I should add that yesterday I rang BB asking for sight of the 2018/19 Annual Plan agreed between them and CHDC. I did this because I cannot reasonably ask BB to do something, say replace a vandalised litter bin, if I do not know that their promised level of service includes this contractual commitment. I was told that this document was "not in the public domain" and that if I wanted sight of it, I would have to put in a Freedom of Information Act request. How is this being open and transparent with the public and Council Tax payers ? Why is this document hidden away from view ? (I can see no sign of it on the CHDC website.)</p>
	<p>From another Ross Town Cllr</p> <p><u>What works well?</u></p>

	<p>Response from the Locality Steward is generally helpful and positive, without making unrealistic promises.</p> <p>Responses from BBLP in terms of actually repairing potholes is less encouraging, with no instances reported or witnessed to suggest the pothole repair service is working well.</p> <p>Whilst this does not mean the service is failing, residents seem generally dissatisfied with the service.</p> <p><u>Potential improvements</u></p> <p>Customer responses are generally perceived to be slow and often require chasing. There appear to be no published response times for responding to customer requests for potholes repairs. I therefore suggest the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All customers must receive a response to their initial request within 1 working day, stating when the reported problem will be assessed and when a full response will be sent. This full response must be received within 10 working days. • If for any reason that date slips, the customer must be informed why & given a revised date without having to chase. • Once inspected, the customer must be informed what action will be taken, by whom and when. If no action is proposed a full explanation must be given. • For most potholes it is not necessary to inform the customer when a repair has been carried out as this will be self evident. <p>Responses must also state whether the repair will be a full one, where the pothole is cut out before filling or a 'Jetpatcher' type repair where the pothole is repaired without cutting it out first.</p> <p>I note from the most recent monitoring report that it is intended to develop more meaningful customer satisfaction performance indicators. I therefore request that one is developed which relates specifically to Town and Parish Council views of pothole repair services.</p> <p>Herefordshire Council also needs to identify the mechanism by which BB will be incentivised to achieve the KPIs described here, as well as measures to tackle under performance by BB.</p> <p><u>Areas to explore</u></p> <p>A new and simplified measure of customer confidence in pothole repair services must be developed with direct input from Town & Parish Councils.</p> <p>Any changes to service levels or specifications which have been agreed with the contractor since the BBLP contract started must be clearly identified and accessible on Herefordshire Council's website, showing when they were agreed and what cost saving or service improvement they delivered.</p>
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	<p>Town and Parish Councils must be consulted not less than 28 working days prior to any future changes in specification being agreed.</p> <p>B. PUBLIC REALM SERVICES</p> <p><u>What works well?</u></p> <p>Response from the Locality Steward is generally helpful and positive, without making unrealistic promises.</p> <p>Issues relating to vegetation overhanging the highway are generally dealt with effectively.</p> <p>The highway grass cutting service has been more effective this year than previously.</p> <p>The highway weed spraying service was effective when it eventually commenced. This needs to occur much earlier in future.</p> <p>Responses from BBLP for other public realm services such as street cleansing and grounds maintenance are less encouraging, with no instances reported or witnessed to suggest other public realm services are working well.</p> <p>Whilst this does not mean services are failing, residents seem generally dissatisfied with standards.</p> <p><u>Potential improvements</u></p> <p>Customer responses are generally perceived to be slow and often require chasing. There appear to be no published response times for responding to customer requests for public realm services. We therefore suggest the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All customers must receive a response to their initial request within 1 working day, stating when the reported problem will be assessed and when a full response will be sent. This full response must be received within 10 working days. • If for any reason that date slips, the customer must be informed why & given a revised date without having to chase. • Once inspected, the customer must be informed what action will be taken, by whom and when. If no action is proposed a full explanation must be given. • For most public realm service requests it is not necessary to inform the customer when remedial works have been carried out as this will be self evident. <p>I note from the most recent monitoring report that it is intended to develop more meaningful customer satisfaction performance indicators. I therefore</p>
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	<p>request that one is developed which relates specifically to Town and Parish Council views of BBLP services.</p> <p>Herefordshire Council also needs to identify the mechanism by which BB will be incentivised to achieve the KPIs described here, as well as measures to tackle under performance by BB.</p> <p><u>Areas to explore</u></p> <p>A new and simplified measure of customer confidence in BBLP services should be developed with input from Town & Parish Councils.</p> <p>Any changes to service levels or specifications which have been agreed with the contractor since the BBLP contract started must be clearly identified and accessible on Herefordshire Council's website, showing when they were agreed and what cost saving they have delivered.</p> <p>Town and Parish Councils must be consulted not less than 28 working days prior to any future changes in specification being agreed.</p> <p>The current arrangement where Locality Stewards are employed by Balfour Beatty may be perceived to reduce duplication and double checking, but the perception of residents of a contractor policing itself means trust will always be limited. This is no criticism of the stewards who do an excellent job.</p> <p>I therefore request a full review of the costs and benefits from transferring the Locality Steward for the Ross area a) to the County Council and b) to the Town Council. This would be based on a TUPE transfer to the new host organisation of the existing steward, along with all equipment software licenses, etc. and the full budget for that post.</p> <p>I believe this review should be completed no later than 31st March 2019, including full consultation with the Town Council.</p>
Shobdon	<p>The standard of pothole repairs is often poor with repairs needing to be redone within a year and this cannot represent value for money. When a pothole is repaired, potholes slightly further along the road are generally left until a later date when it would seem to be a more efficient use of resources to enable road crews to use their discretion to fill all potholes within a small area rather than have to return at a later date. The issuing of guidance on the 2018/19 lengthsman and PROW scheme 6 months into the year is not particularly helpful. The locality steward provides a vital and very helpful link between the Parish Council and BBLP and this role should be maintained.</p>
Sutton St Nicholas	<p>That pothole repairs should be on the basis of potholes adjacent to each other rather than the current pothole category basis, which would ensure that visits to the same location would be reduced and makes common sense, as anecdotal evidence is that a visit is made to the same location within weeks, to repair other potholes previously deemed to be a category not to be filled'</p>
Tarrington	As Ashperton

Welsh Newton and Llanrothal Group Parish Council	<p>Could a whole area of potholes be filled in one go rather than the rather piecemeal approach that happens at present?</p> <p>Could Parish Councils be asked where their key issues for repair are?</p>
Weobley	<p>HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE - POTHOLES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What works well? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Liaison with the Locality Steward locally. Accessible, responsive, knowledgeable. 1.2 Good response from Locality Steward regarding works that are requested by the Parish Council. 2. What areas for improvement are recommended? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 The inconsistent quality of work undertaken and level of repair made. 2.2 The Parish Council would like clarification on why potholes that have been reported in one area are not repaired at the same time. Better communication and clustering could save money and result in more efficient repairs being undertaken. 3. Questions for the Committee to explore? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Review the reinstatement of funding for the Lengthsman scheme. 3.2 Obtain information from Herefordshire Parishes on which Councils will continue to support the scheme and how much budget is being allocated.. <p>PUBLIC REALM SERVICES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What works well? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Good liaison with Locality Steward. 2. What areas for improvement are recommended? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Improved communication between BBLP, Herefordshire Council and Weobley Parish Council. 2.2 Improved notification regarding grass cutting, especially with regard to shared services. For example, volunteers will cut an area and a week later Balfour Beatty will attend. The volunteers could cut in-between the 6 visits per year undertaken by Balfour Beatty. 2.3 Improved notification on road sweeping visits. If the timing of the visits of the road sweeper are known in advance efforts can be made to encourage residents to remove vehicles so that an efficient

	<p>sweep is undertaken, especially during the autumn when drains frequently become blocked by falling leaves.</p> <p>3. Questions for the Committee to explore?</p> <p>3.1 The Parish Council has concerns regarding the amount of highways and other maintenance responsibilities which are being passed down without any funding.</p> <p>3.2 It would be useful to fully understand what responsibilities regarding highways, C & U roads, grip maintenance, visibility splays and other maintenance functions are now expected to be carried out by parish councils.</p>
Weston under Penyard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pothole repair is always an agenda item and every month parishioners concerns are reported • There seems to be no logical approach to the repairs and no feedback on when the repairs may take place • Perhaps a dedicated email address could be set up for parish council use only to report potholes. Photos could be included. • A timescale of when the repairs will be done. At the moment potholes are continually reported until eventually they are repaired. • An understanding on how some potholes are repaired and others in the area are not. Surely size and depth should not be the only criteria. If the team is in the area then fix them all! • A bigger budget to get the roads in a better condition. This is especially relevant for rural Herefordshire. Weston under Penyard has C and unclassified roads which are regularly used by large, heavy agriculture vehicles thus degrading the roads further. • The A40 dissects the village and to get maintenance done on this road is very difficult. An easier way to report potholes, areas of tarmac layers degrading would be welcome. With the new housing development in the village and the new enterprise park/housing at Hildersley increased traffic on the A40 will only degrade the road further. • The Public Realm contract states that it should be 'accessible, safe, clean and well-maintained'. This is not being achieved. • Road gutters are not being cleaned and the verge cutting is mineable. • The Local Steward scheme works well and our Steward (Kevin Williams) is accessible and responds to our concerns.
Whitchurch and Ganarew PC (joint Response with Marstow PC)	<p>The Council members have confirmed how very satisfied they are with the Balfour Beatty organisation and the relationship they have developed with these two Parish Councils.</p> <p>The concept of the Locality Steward is a brilliant idea and we have both an outstanding relationship and assistance from them.</p> <p>Site meetings are always positive in that we know what can be achieved and what is not possible.</p> <p>Timings are always realistic.</p> <p>We are very pleased with the level of help and advice and service assistance.</p>

Wigmore	<p>1) <u>What Works Well</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Reporting of pot holes can be done easily on line. The new reporting app should make the process even easier. The new reporting app also helps to show that BBLP are thinking about how to make the reporting of pot holes easier. ◆ The regular reports back from our locality steward are useful to show that significant work really is taking place to repair pot holes in our locality. ◆ The" Velocity Patcher" was in our Parish during May 2018 and the amount of work and the quality of the work that it did was phenomenal when compared to the standard system of repairing pot holes. Only a small number of operatives are required to operate it, many pot holes are repaired in a very short time and the repairs seem to be much more permanent. It appears to be much more efficient and effective than other existing methods. <p>2) <u>What Areas for Improvements are there</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Unless the pot holes that have been repaired can be identified more accurately than they currently are in the Locality Steward's report it is difficult to tell which holes have been repaired and why others have been left unrepaired. It is hoped that the new reporting app will help identify which have been repaired and give reasons why others have not. If the app does not and cannot be amended to do so, then an alternative way of showing this information needs to be found. ◆ Often the Locality Steward will mark pot holes on the road using white or yellow markings. These markings then slowly fade until they have disappeared altogether. Often no repair has taken place before the markings have worn away completely (which usually means that no repair takes place at all). This gives the impression that HC/BBLP are trying to fool the council tax payers into thinking that they are taking pot holes seriously, when they are not. The time period between marking out these pot holes and the subsequent carrying out of repairs needs to be reduced and pot holes that are not going to be repaired should not be marked. ◆ Unless reported pot holes are repaired quickly, it is not easy to find out whether anyone at HC/BBLP has even noted the report let alone acted on it. Hopefully, the new reporting app will keep all interested parties (i.e. at least the person reporting, the Parish Council and others that want to find out progress on any previously reported pot hole) up to date on progress. If it is not currently able to do
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	<p>this, the app needs to be improved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ It is difficult to tell what category has been given to which pot hole and why. It is often noticed that when there are 2 pot holes that look to be roughly similar in size, position in the road, etc., only 1 of these 2 holes has been repaired. Rightly or wrongly, the perception that this gives most people is that the work has been carried out inefficiently and that the work force will have to return again in the near future to fill the other hole. Given that it is common knowledge that the greatest cost of repairing a pothole is the cost of getting the work force and necessary equipment to the location, it is easy to come to the conclusion that there are inefficiencies in the system and that a lot of money is being wasted. ◆ The repair of pot holes is probably the most visible (and definitely the most discussed) public realm service that BBLP offers the citizens of Herefordshire. It is probably the area in which BBLP is judged by the public more than any other. Public perception of how the “pot hole repairing system” works is poor. Sometimes it is just a matter of making some simple changes to improve people’s perception. One example of this is in relation to the signs affixed to roadside furniture in May this year when the velocity patcher came to work on the C1019 which runs from Wigmore to Ludlow. These large warning signs stated that a 10mph speed limit applies due to “skid risk”. The signs are still in place (October!). I do not know how many times the Locality Steward or any other HC/BBLP employee travel along this road (at speeds higher than 10mph!), but they still remain. It is just the little things like this that give people a poor perception of both HC and BBLP. Any comments made about the work that the velocity patcher did do not focus any more on the good work done by filling pot holes but they do focus on these speed signs they have not removed! <p>3) <u>Questions we would like the committee to explore</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What proportion of pot holes are reported by the public compared with those reported by Locality Stewards when conducting their A, B, C and Unclassified road inspections? The answer to this should reveal whether the public are using the reporting facility as much as would be hoped, and if they are not, then does this facility need promoting more? ◆ On many occasions it has been brought to Parish Councillors attention that a ridiculously large number of BBLP employees seem to be necessary to fill a single pot hole. Again, this is seen as being very inefficient. HC/BBLP response to this is often based on Health and Safety considerations and the need to have traffic control. Has
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	<p>sufficient consideration been given to automated forms of traffic control such as simple portable traffic lights, or automated spinning “Stop/Go” signs that do not need to be manually operated?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Have all the options been examined regarding the most efficient way for the work force to cover the maximum number of pot hole repairs in a day? It is accepted that priority must be given to those pot holes in the highest (most dangerous) category and that this must therefore involve travelling from high category pot holes in one location to high category pot holes in another (sometimes far away) location rather than staying in one location/parish to repair all its pot holes. However, there is at least one suggestion for a different way of working that should still allow the necessary travelling between high category pot holes, but which does also allow the work force to make a big difference to pot holes in each of the areas it works in. This suggestion is for the work force to attend a high category pot hole and whilst there for them to repair all other pot holes <u>regardless of their category</u> within (say) 100yards of that high priority pot hole before moving on to the next location. This would necessarily mean that there would be a slight reduction in the number of high category pot holes dealt with in a day, but there would be a significant increase in the number of pot holes dealt with in each location attended. This would be of more benefit to more communities and given that the main cost of dealing with a pot hole is the cost of getting the workforce and its equipment to the pot hole, it would mean that there would be a saving in cost and an increase in efficiency. It would also help ensure that the minor pot holes do not turn into high category pot holes, so over the longer term there should be even more savings and an overall increase in safety. ◆ Has sufficient thought been given to HC/BBLP purchasing their own Velocity Patcher. Although we were told that due to its high cost HC/BBLP could only afford to rent one for a short period, surely it would be more economic in the medium to long term to own at least one. If necessary HC/BBLP could then come to a financial arrangement with individual local parishes in need of quality pot hole repairs by making a request for a (modest) financial contribution from them to be able to have use of the machine (along with operatives) for particular jobs. <p>4) <u>Further comments/suggestions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Currently, most of the public (including Parish Councillors) are frustrated with the system currently used for categorising and subsequently carrying out pot hole repairs. It is believed that the improvements mentioned above (section “A, 2” in particular) will give the public and
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	<p>the Parish Councils more confidence that HC/BBLP are tackling the problem of pot holes the best way. A lot of the frustration with the pot hole repairing system stems from perception just as much as reality, so more transparency regarding how decisions are made would also help restore confidence in the system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ The new reporting app is an improvement and it is easy to use. It has the potential to not only improve the processes involved reporting pot holes, but if used to its full potential will keep interested parties up to date on progress and help restore faith in the ability of HC/BBLP to keep our roads safe and comfortable. If it is not used to its full potential then an opportunity is being missed.
Wigmore – public realm	<p>A) Other public realm services provided by BBLP</p> <p>1) <u>What Works Well</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ The majority of public realm services provided by BBLP other than repairs to pot holes take place relatively unnoticed. Not as many complaints are made to the parish council about other services as are made in relation to pot holes. This itself could be considered as a sign that there are not many major concerns over their provision. ♦ BBLP appear (using their own figures) to meet the majority of targets set them by HC. However, there are 2 main ways to meet targets and those are to improve performance or to reduce targets. Due to imposed austerity and financial constraints it has been necessary not just to become more efficient but to also set targets lower (in order to still keep targets achievable and realistic). <p>2) <u>What Areas for Improvements are there</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Again, as is the case with pot holes repairs, BBLP does not make a good impression when it fails to complete a task. A recent example in the WGPC area is in relation to cutting back of overgrown willow trees in Kings Meadow, Wigmore. BBLP had sub contracted the job to another contractor, but of course HC/BBLP retained full responsibility for ensuring the task was performed to a satisfactory standard and any shortfall in quality of work will reflect on them rather than their sub-contractor. The cutting of trees was carried out well, but all the clippings were just left where they dropped which was either in a ditch blocking a grid that often is the cause of flooding in Kings Meadow or on the bank ready to be washed down to the same grid once there was any rain. The Mortimer Ward councillor (Carole Gandy) was

	<p>informed by a resident and had to make arrangements for the clippings to be collected and the grids cleared. This left the residents of Kings Meadow with a bad impression of the work that HC and BBLP carry out. This could have been avoided if BBLP had paid more attention to the (very important) finishing element of the task. This is yet another example of BBLP's "tunnel vision" – being too main task orientated rather than considering overall service to the taxpayer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ As the parish council is being expected to take on more of the duties and responsibilities that were previously done by BBLP, then more training and ongoing support should be provided to them by BBLP. <p>3) <u>Questions we would like the committee to explore</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Are the targets that HC set BBLP at the right level? Whenever BBLP make a presentation to councillors they seem to demonstrate that they have over-achieved all their targets by a significant margin. In many organisations this would normally result in the targets being raised to make them more challenging for the next reporting period. Does that happen as it should? ◆ BBLP has reduced many services to the level that they now only carry out statutory and safety duties, leaving parish councils to do much more. Is the balance right between the work that BBLP do and the work that has now been delegated down to parish councils to do? <p>4) <u>Further comments/suggestions</u></p> <p>The public are aware of financial constraints imposed on local councils, and over a period of time they appear to have accepted that HC can no longer afford to offer such a comprehensive public realm service as they used to. People now generally have a lower expectation of all services councils provide. This lower expectation and the belief that it will make no difference if they do complain, probably explains why relatively few complaints are made to parish councillors regarding matters other than pot holes.</p>
Yarkhill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a pothole is reported and a repair takes place, why is there no autonomy given to the work crew so that they can repair a pothole nearby rather than that having to be reported requiring them to come out again? A good example is the A4103 coming into the 40mph zone at Newtown heading east. • Why, when a pothole is reported, is the full repair not always completed. On the Monkhide Village Road last winter, an extended pothole was reported at the side of the road, but not all of it was repaired. Part of it required digging out so perhaps this was the problem? • Why, when so much has been spent in recent months on resurfacing, are there gaps between areas of resurfacing where the road is still full of potholes. Examples are on the A4103 at the junction of the road to Bromyard near the Aylestone Hill roundabout, the road in the centre of

	Stretton Grandison on the A417 and the road heading south out of Ashperton also on the A417. Even if a full resurfacing did not taken place, would it not have been sensible to at least effect some repair at the same time?
Yarpole	the standard of pothole repairs seems poor with repairs often needing to be redone within a year and this cannot represent value for money. When a pothole is repaired, potholes slightly further along the road are generally left until a later date when it would seem to be a more efficient use of resources to enable road crews to use their discretion to fill all potholes within a small area rather than have to return at a later date.

i.

Appendix 5

Detail on the overall condition of the carriageway asset showing proportion rated green amber and red.

The following table illustrates the overall condition (following the 2017 condition survey, 2018 surveys are being processed) of the carriageway asset in Herefordshire. In the table red indicates the proportion of the network that is in need of maintenance, amber indicates the proportion of the network that is in a deteriorated state, the remainder of the network is 'green', in good overall condition. Overall 323 miles or 16% of the network is rated red.

Road Class	2013	2017
A Road Red	9%	6%
A Road Amber	36%	38%
B Road Red	8%	7%
B Road Amber	34%	33%
C Road Red	11%	8%
C Road Amber	36%	36%
U Road Red	32%	26%

8.

ROAD MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL BRIEFING – FEBRUARY 2019

In 2013 55% of our A roads were in good condition (Green) with 9% deemed (Red) in need of maintenance, the remaining 36% were Amber. In 2018 (surveyed over the summer) the % that is good has increased to 59% and just under 7% of this network is in need of maintenance. Our asset management strategy sets out to 'grow the green' and is doing so.

For the B roads in 2013 58% was Green, 8% Red and in 2018 this has improved to 61% Green and just under 7% Red.

For C roads in 2013 53% of the network was Green, 11% Red this has also improved to 60% Green and 6% Red.

Herefordshire Council is awaiting the Unclassified road results (they have SCANNER results for part of this network, these are focussed on the component that is more akin to C roads in their function, but await the CVI for these roads – they also await the FNS survey results for the footways). That said in 2013 32% of this network was in need of maintenance and in

2017 this figure had fallen to 26%. The 2017/18 winter will have undoubtedly impacted on the condition of these roads and the teams are working hard, within the bounds of the available resources to address this. However, we do anticipate a decline in overall condition and note the 2018 surveys will not have picked up on all of our work to address this impact yet.

We see these results as testament to the success (so far) of our asset management strategy. Prior to 2013 there had been an unacceptable decline in the condition of the county's roads, particularly the rural C and unclassified roads. This is a consequence of decades of under-investment. In 2013, we implemented a new highway asset management strategy which has the following key components:

1. Major investment over two years (2014/15 and 2015/16) - an extra £20 million of works targeted to fix roads that were in the greatest need of repair and have the greatest value to our local communities.
2. Sustained investment over the whole life of the highway asset - an on-going programme of works that is targeted at treating roads as they are showing signs of deterioration, fixing roads before they need larger, more costly repairs (we have been achieving this through Challenge fund success, incentive fund success and investment through the Council's own capital programme).
3. Reduce the need for reactive 'temporary' pothole repairs as a response to safety defects. (We were an immediate adopter of the Risk based approach as the latest code of practice, and are evolving that approach through our current review of our Highway Maintenance Plan, this following our 'live' experience of operating a risk based approach). We will aim to deliver a high proportion of our routine pothole repairs using permanent fixes that not only make the road safe, but improve the condition of the road and extends its useful life. (Following our major investment we did see a 90% reduction in the number of third party highway claims made against the council, the largest reduction in the nation, following the 2017/18 winter we have seen an upturn in numbers, but not a return to 2013 levels (at the last look). That upturn mirrors the national picture).
4. Shift our routine resources further towards preventative activities, such as the clearance of drainage. Well-drained roads decline at a slower rate and are more resilient to damage from severe weather (we have increased our investment in drainage clearance and have a risk based regime).
5. Provide the support that enables routine maintenance work to be delivered locally so that defects on the road can be responded to locally when they are recognised as an issue by local people. This means that more defects can be fixed before they become a hazard to road users. Through our approach to locality working we will ensure that this local delivery complements our countywide programme of works (We have a well-established Parish Lengthsman scheme, that enables pothole repair and is taken up by c100 Parish Councils across the County).

Through this five point highway asset management strategy we will reduce the cost of potholes to the council and the community by over £1.6 billion. We will reduce the whole life

cost of maintenance by over £72 million and the strategy will prevent over 386,000 potholes over the 34 year lifecycle of our roads.