

Summary of Recommendations and Executive Responses [Task and Finish Group Report: Balfour Beatty Living Places – Public Realm Services]

Recommendation No. 1	The group is encouraged by the level of active and robust contract management in place for management of the BBLP contract. It is recommended that the council maintains this in order to ensure that there is no slippage in the quality of delivery to the people of the county.			
Executive Response	ACCEPTED – Ensuring effective contract management is in place is important, we will maintain and continually develop the effective capability of the client management team.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Monitor and periodically review effectiveness of the contract management team.	RB	Ongoing	Annual Plan is in place and appropriate contract mechanisms being used to manage the contract successfully.	n/a

Recommendation No. 2	It was noted that the BBLP Public Realm contract contains appropriate terms and conditions requiring them to provide applicable information in good time at the end of the contact in order to support effective TUPE transfer. The group recommends that similar terms are used for other suitable future contracts and that an effective exit strategy is embedded which includes provision for a comprehensive transition to the new contract.			
Executive Response	ACCEPTED – The executive welcomes the acknowledgement that this improvement is already included in the BBLP contract and supports the inclusion of such provision in future procurements.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Develop standard terms for inclusion in future contracts.	WW	Apr 15	Model terms are in place and available for future use.	n/a

Recommendation No. 3	It is recommended that as part of any decommissioning / commissioning process the council should undertake an assessment of any key dependencies required to ensure safe and efficient transfer of responsibilities from one contractor to another. To support this requirement it is recommended that contract managers should maintain a clear asset register and business continuity plan.			
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Executive Response	ACCEPTED – It is important to properly plan the decommissioning and commissioning of contracts. Such plans were in place for transfer of the previous contract to BBLP. The BBLP contract includes commitments to properly plan for decommissioning and we will ensure this approach is applied to future contracts.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Contract Management training includes guidance on maintaining an asset register and business continuity plan.	WW	April 15	Appropriate contract management training in place	Completed, programme of contract management training in place

Recommendation No. 4	That the council and BBLP continues to work together to keep citizens informed of contract changes and manage citizen's service expectations. Regular online updates on council websites, and newsletters are options to achieve this.			
Executive Response	ACCEPTED – Good communications with stakeholders is a key component of the BBLP contract requirements and this recommendation is accepted.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Regular online updates will continue to be provided as applicable	WL/BBLP	Ongoing	Regular communications in place	Complete / ongoing

Recommendation No. 5	That the council and BBLP continues to work together to host a 'members seminar/member briefing' every six months, or earlier if circumstances dictate, to keep members up to date on contract performance and any potential service changes. These sessions to be chaired by the Chair of the General Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for the BBLP contract present. In addition, any major issues should be reported to the chair of the GOSC immediately.			
Executive Response	ACCEPTED – Regular briefings for all members, including GOSC, is a key expectation of the BBLP contract and these will continue to be held on a regular basis.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Continue to hold regular seminars and	WL	On going	Member seminars are delivered	Programme of seminars currently being planned in line with

briefings at a minimum of every 6 months.			every six months.	development of annual and forward plans
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Recommendation No. 6	The group notes the recent changes by the council to transfer customer contact to Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) for areas of service for which they are responsible for. The group is supportive of this approach and recommends these changes are kept under review to monitor its effectiveness. In addition, it was recommended that BBLP communications were aligned with council policy, e.g. a 10 day deadline to provide a response.			
Executive Response	ACCEPTED – The proposed transfer of the contact centre has now happened and went operational 05 March. Operationally BBLP are expected to deliver in such a way to ensure they improve customer satisfaction through effective response to enquiries.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Complete	BBLP	March 15	New customer contact arrangements in place	Completed March 15

Recommendation No. 7	That when receiving an insurance claim as a result of a potential road defect, the complainant receives an acknowledgement to the claim and be advised of the process and anticipated response times. In addition, it is recommended that a clear definition with regards to categorisation of road defects is also provided. It is noted that a number of key dependencies apply to such cases, not least that the details received include clear information of the location of the road defect, that the defect is on a council maintained road, etc.			
Executive Response	ACCEPTED – Customers should receive a clear response as suggested. The highways maintenance plan clearly sets out definitions of defects on the highway. A review of the plan is scheduled for 2015 to ensure it is up to date and consistent with industry best practice,			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
The acknowledgement of claims is already in place with clear guidance on the process.	BBLP	Apr 15	Customers receiving acknowledgements	Complete

Recommendation No. 8	The group is highly supportive of the locality steward approach. The group recommends that all applicable BBLP staff have handheld tablets to support communication and maximise the effectiveness of the CONFIRM system. The work of the locality stewards should be monitored closely for signs of slippage in programmes and, if this occurs, that BBLP and Herefordshire Council should discuss a way of reducing the pressure on locality stewards to enable programmes to proceed.			
Executive Response	ACCEPTED – All applicable staff have tablets and access to CONFIRM. BBLP issue appropriate ICT to staff on the basis of a clear business case.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
The effectiveness of locality stewards and their ICT needs will continue to be monitored and if necessary improvements made.	BBLP	Ongoing	Continued effectiveness of Locality Stewards	n/a

Recommendation No. 9	Where member's requests are raised with locality stewards the group recommends that members are kept informed of status, particularly where schemes are not to be delivered or are to be delayed. In the event a decision is made not to undertake a particular request then the member is provided with a brief on the reasons and a transparent appeal process is introduced if necessary.			
Executive Response	ACCEPTED – Locality stewards have significantly improved the process of keeping members informed. In addition, the customer services team will continue to pick up reactive requests from members and the public. The escalation of problems or explanations can be made to the Locality Manager. Where the works are not feasibility in the present year they will be considered as part of the next Annual Plan planning stage.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Processes are in place	BBLP	ongoing	process in place	Complete

Recommendation No. 10	The group is highly supportive of the council's recommendation to roll out the use of the Enhanced Lengthsman Scheme and recommends that as many parish councils as possible takes up this option.			
Executive Response	ACCEPTED – The executive welcomes the support. The new lengthsman scheme has been launched to provide positive engagement to all parish councils.			

Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Regular briefings with parish councils are organised by BBLP.	BBLP/AB	ongoing	Regular briefings in place	Programme of briefings in included in the Annual Plan

Recommendation No. 11	The council to work with BBLP to make it easier for small, local organisations to engage with BBLP and bid for sub-contractor opportunities. To support this it is recommended that the council adds a forwarding note to its eTendering portal, providing BBLP contact details for interested sub-contractor organisations.			
Executive Response	ACCEPTED – The BBLP contract requires positive support for sub-contractors such as speedy payments and the provision of training.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
A forwarding note has been added to the council's eTendering Portal providing contact details for any potential subcontractor interested in working with BBLP	BBLP/WW	Done	Amendments in place	Complete

Recommendation No. 12	As a general recommendation, the group also noted that typically reports detail distances in kilometres, it is recommended that BBLP include miles as well.			
Executive Response	ACCEPTED – It is important for reports to be in plain English and be really			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Ensure reports use miles as well as kilometres	BBLP	On going	Actioned	Complete / ongoing

Recommendation No. 13	That a formal report be made to the committee during the next administration to capture learning from recent experiences in relation to grass cutting and grounds maintenance.			
Executive Response	ACCEPTED – The public realm service covers a wide range of services and it is acknowledged that it is appropriate for GOSC to receive regular updates. As in Autumn 2014, it would be appropriate for an annual update on the service to be provided in Autumn 2015.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Annual progress report on Public Realm service to GOSC.	BBLP	Autumn 2015	Report submitted to GOSC	n/a
