

Summary of the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee recommendations and the executive responses

The Public Ream Services Future Operating Model

On 13 February 2023, the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee, having received a report on 'The Public Ream Services Future Operating Model', made the following recommendations to the executive.

Recommendation a)	Herefordshire Council (HC) / Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) strengthen the publicity campaign to raise awareness of where/how residents of Herefordshire can report pot-holes.			
Executive response	This is already promoted by HC and BBLP, however this will be enhanced with a greater emphasis around digital communication.			
Action	Owner	By when	Target / success criteria	Progress
Reporting of potholes publicity campaign to be developed and rolled out with BBLP within existing contract and model	Interim Service Director Highways & Transport- Mark Averill	Summer 2023	Greater awareness by Members and residents	Engagement with Contract Management Team and awareness of request by BBLP
Recommendation b)	Clarification is given on how contracts are awarded and arrangements do not tie the council in to using just one supplier for major infrastructure projects.			
Executive response	The existing and future operating model and contract allow for HC to award major infrastructure works via existing frameworks or via an independent procurement process. Delivery of projects and project timelines, where possible need time for HC to choose the appropriate procurement route, which includes enhancing awareness and resources within HC which will be delivered by the new operating model.			
Action	Owner	By when	Target / success criteria	Progress
Enhance awareness within HC via Contract Management Team and service leads, and incorporate into HC programme and project planning along with design and implementation of new model	Interim Service Director Highways & Transport- Mark Averill	With new model from April 2025	Higher proportion of large infrastructure projects are awarded outside of Public Realm Services Contract	Engagement underway with Project Implementation Group
Recommendation c)	Considerations are built in to the new model for the in-house element of the council's operations to generate commercial income streams.			

Executive response	This will be incorporated by the Project Implementation Group's "Service Review" workstream, and ongoing engagement with the cross party Member Working Group while the Future Operating Model is being developed. And utilising the experience of BBLP working with other local authorities.			
Action	Owner	By when	Target / success criteria	Progress
Opportunities to be identified by Project Implementation Group and BBLP are incorporated into new model and ways of working.	Interim Service Director Highways & Transport- Mark Averill	With new model from April 2025	HC and BBLP increase commercial income associated with the Public Realm Services contract and new model.	Engagement with Contract Management Team and awareness of request by BBLP

Actions	<p>In addition to the recommendations above, the committee requested that the following actions be undertaken:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HC/BBLP more clearly communicate the opportunities for volunteers to support the work of HC/BBLP on, for example, litter picking, maintenance and improved access to local footpaths. 2. Paragraphs 18 to 19 of the scrutiny report be clarified to explain that budgetary pressures on contract delivery are 'future' pressures. 3. Assurances are given to the committee that internal expertise will be factored in to the new model that enables HC to assess the quality of major infrastructure and locality works to quality assure the work of our contractors. 4. Evidence is given to the committee that if the 'two year' no fault termination clause – if enacted – would enable HC to move in to new and adequate contractual arrangements within that two year period. 5. Assurances are given that corporate memory is built in to transition arrangements (from interim to permanent arrangements). 6. That a note be made highlighting the progress toward the establishing the details of the new operating model post-election.
Executive response	<p><i>1) HC/BBLP more clearly communicate the opportunities for volunteers to support the work of HC/BBLP on, for example, litter picking, maintenance and improved access to local footpaths.</i></p> <p>Response- Volunteering and community engagement will be covered by the "Service Review" workstream, and where possible incorporated into the new model.</p> <p><i>2) Paragraphs 18 to 19 of the scrutiny report be clarified to explain that budgetary pressures on contract delivery are 'future' pressures.</i></p> <p>Response- The cabinet report was amended in relation to this requirement.</p> <p><i>3) Assurances are given to the committee that internal expertise will be factored in to the new model that enables HC to assess the quality of major infrastructure and locality works to quality assure the work of our contractors.</i></p> <p>Response- This requirement will be provided, and is a key factor, to the future operating model.</p>

	<p><i>4) Evidence is given to the committee that if the ‘two year’ no fault termination clause – if enacted – would enable HC to move in to new and adequate contractual arrangements within that two year period.</i></p> <p>Response- Contract re-procurement has been programme checked, and is deliverable within the two year period, including a demobilisation and mobilisation transition to a new contractor.</p> <p><i>5) Assurances are given that corporate memory is built in to transition arrangements (from interim to permanent arrangements).</i></p> <p>Response- The consultant Major Contract Improvement Specialist who has supported with development of the future operating model is committed to working with HC, and developing the model further, aligned with the implementation programme in the report. The interim Service Director Highways and Transport occupies an existing establishment post, this will be permanently recruited into going forward. However the interim is committed to continuing in the role until on an interim basis until a suitable permanent replacement is found, and a suitable handover period has been undertaken ensuing corporate continuity is provided.</p> <p><i>6) That a note be made highlighting the progress toward the establishing the details of the new operating model post-election.</i></p> <p>Response- This will be delivered by the Future Operating Model Board, the Member Working Group, scrutiny recommendations and the Cabinet Decisions proposed on 2 March 2023.</p>			
Action	Owner	By when	Target / success criteria	Progress
The various matters will be addressed by the Project Implementation Group, and incorporated into the new model.	Interim Service Director Highways & Transport- Mark Averill	Ongoing and complete along with new model from April 2025	Requirements will be designed and delivered with new model.	Some matters are closed out, some underway and some will be addressed in future operating model.