

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 11TH APRIL, 2024

REFERENCE FROM ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE: 12TH MARCH, 2024

“931 HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE INSPECTION REGIME (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet on 6th February, 2024 was presented by the Neighbourhood Manager Highway Maintenance.

The Council had a duty maintain the highway at public expense under Section 41 of the Highways Act (1980). The report sought the approval of Cabinet for Highway Condition Inspection Regime changes including amendments to the Council's Highway Network Hierarchy, Inspection Regime and Repair Regime following the initial Highway Risk Review with the County Surveyors Society Wales (CSSW) in October 2019.

The report proposed that the Highway Maintenance Manual 2021 (attached at Appendix 1 to the report) superseded the Highway Safety Manual 2014 (Appendix 2 to the report referred).

Councillor M. Hooper raised a series of questions beginning with the cost implications around road resurfacing work given the financial challenges facing the Council. In addition, Councillor Hooper queried the level of consideration within the regime for cyclists. Councillor Hooper's final query was how did the Council's regime compare with the neighbouring Authorities. In reply, the Neighbourhood Manager advised that in terms of cost variations, there was opportunity to save money from following a more regular inspection regime in order to potentially identify more defects earlier. Once identified, the Council would be able to carry out increased monitoring. With regard to cyclists, the officer stated that the Council was mindful and there were close links with the Council's Active Travel Officer. Therefore, when patching work was being considered, liaison would take place with the Active Travel Officers and also other stakeholders such as local cyclist groups and organisations. With regard to a comparison of neighbouring Authorities, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Bridgend Councils both had the same inspection regime as the Vale of Glamorgan and only Cardiff Council would be undertaking weekly inspections, but only for certain roads.

Councillor I. Perry queried whether the changes to the inspection regime were likely to result in more repairs being carried out. In reply, the Officer referred to challenges as resources were limited. There were currently 606 carriageway defects identified as backlog works that required attention, which was in comparison to over 1,200 defects the same period last year. The issues last year being because of adverse

weather conditions. It was important to recognise that roads were not designed to handle the level of traffic, so more investment was required.

In response to a query regarding gullies, the Committee was advised that there was a cleansing regime, which generally operated at intervals ranging between 12 and 15 months.

The Committee discussed the reporting of issues and defects through the Council's C1V app with some Members expressing the view that the app could be more user friendly. Therefore, it was recommended that Cabinet be asked to look at ways to improve the reporting process for carriageway defects.

Subsequently, it was

RECOMMENDED – T H A T Cabinet be advised of the view of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee that consideration should be given to improving the online reporting process for carriageway defects to ensure it was easier to use.

Reason for recommendation

Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.”