

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 REPORT

To: PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE		Subject: Review of Maintenance Practices
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT & DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES		
Date: 1 May 2002	Ref: N/TM/03/02	

1. Purpose of Report

This report details the steps that have been taken since local government reorganisation to develop co-ordinated services for the Departments of Planning and Environment and Community Services and describes proposals for a more integrated delivery of maintenance services.

2. Background

Following local government reorganisation in 1996 all Council departments had to address the issue of integration of services because of the different maintenance regimes operated by the former authorities. Within the Planning and Environment Department this issue was not a significant problem, because the maintenance of adopted roads and footpaths was previously carried out by a single authority, albeit that there was a variation of practices within the two Area offices which made up the North Lanarkshire Council area. However, specific difficulties were identified in regard to those roads, footpaths and hardstanding areas previously maintained by Cumbernauld New Town because of the enhanced maintenance regimes operated by the New Town and the complex land ownership issues generated with the wind up of the Corporation.

To try and address these problems within the Planning and Environment Department the following steps were taken:-

- Regular divisional meetings were held within all functions of the Transportation service to discuss issues relating to the capital and revenue programmes, and to develop common policies and practices.
- The issue of a Roads Maintenance Contract. The issue of this contract, while primarily designed to meet the requirements of the CCT legislation, assisted in the development of common work practices throughout the Council area.
- The introduction of the Northline freephone fault reporting system. This system was developed as part of the contract management system for the Roads Maintenance Contract mentioned above. The system was introduced with the dual aim of dealing with all roads defects in a more co-ordinated and responsive manner and to generate a sense of community ownership in regard to the fault identification and repair process.

3. Current Initiatives

The above processes developed a more responsive and co-ordinated approach to service delivery within specific departments but did not tackle the problems in relation to integration of service delivery between departments. This situation has been addressed, to some extent, by further initiatives including:-

- The Open Space Maintenance Working Group. This Group was set up to examine and determine departmental roles and responsibilities and to develop a simplified approach to the maintenance and management of open spaces within Council ownership, in a manner which took account of the departments core work specialities. The Group, which was set up three

years ago, has clarified responsibilities within departments and has generated a greater understanding and sense of co-operation between departments.

- Community Services assistance with winter emergencies. A working group was established in the Spring of 2001 to examine how Community Service could assist the Planning and Environment department with winter emergencies. To maximise the resources provided by Community Services, footway gritting routes were developed radiating outwards from depots, snow ploughs were purchased for a number of grass cutting machines, and salt stocks were established at all Community Services depots. In addition 12 Community Services drivers were trained in winter gritting and snow clearing to augment ARNL driver resources during a prolonged snow event.
- The introduction of search and repair squads for street lighting repairs on main roads. This initiative was introduced in January of this year to improve dark lamp repair on main routes and address the problems caused by regular vandalism to traffic sign bollards.
- Fly Tipping Initiative with SEPA. Community Services are currently working with SEPA on measures to control fly tipping, and are planning joint surveillance operations.
- Trunk Road de-littering. Community Services liaise with Amey Highways, on the use of joint temporary traffic management arrangements on Trunk Roads, to minimise costs and delays to the travelling public.
- Recycling initiatives. Community Services works with various groups including Education Department, TESCO, and Community Woodland Trust in regard to recycling of Christmas cards and trees.
- Co-operation with Community Groups. Community Services provide skips, sacks etc. for collection and disposal of waste collected by community groups undertaking clean ups of back court and neighbourhood areas.
- Spring/Autumn Clean-ups. Following the environmental success of the spring and autumn litter clean-ups established 2000/2001 and their popularity especially with elected members and the residents of the authority, it is proposed to reintroduce these initiatives as a permanent annual feature. The spring event will be carried out annually in April and autumn clean-up will take place in September.
- Hit Squads. Hit squads were established by Community Services within the financial year 2000/2001 as a rapid reaction force capable of dealing with incidence of heavy littering and or discriminatory dumping. Hit squads currently working in town centres have proven extremely popular and react to request within a time span of 24 hours.

4. New Initiatives

The success of the above initiatives, and the greater spirit of co-operation developed between departments through the Open Space Working Group, has paved the way for greater integration of service delivery. Rather than each department individually determining the standards to be applied to their service responsibilities, the maintenance of areas should be carried out in a holistic manner with departments determining maintenance regimes through consultation, and carrying works in an integrated manner for maximum efficiency. However, because of the extent of the problems that currently exist in certain key areas, the introduction of improved maintenance alone will not address the situation. An action plan needs to be developed which will address those immediate concerns and also put in place the required enhanced maintenance regimes. It is proposed that this action plan should concentrate resources in town centres and the main routes through the Council area (A73, A723, A71, A721, A725, A89 and A803) by the following:-

- Carry out an audit or survey during April of all main routes and town centres, to identify what maintenance works need to be carried out to bring the areas up to standard.
- Develop a programme of works to be implemented over the summer months.
- Develop and implement enhanced maintenance regimes to ensure that the above key areas continue to be maintained to a higher standard.

In addition, a Council wide "Spring/Autumn Clean-up" operation will be carried during April and September. This will include a publicity campaign to highlight environmental issues relating to litter pollution, thus reinforcing the efforts of Council staff during the clean up operation. In addition, publicity material will be produced for distribution to all schools to try and influence the attitude of young people.

Community Services, Planning and Environment and the Education Department have combined resources in order to produce an educational curriculum pack for use in North Lanarkshire Council primary schools. The objective of the pack is to highlight the important issues associated with litter control and its negative impact on environmental issues across the authority. It is proposed that this pack will be produced and prepared for use within the next academic year.

An example of what will be identified in the audit or survey of the key areas is shown in Appendix 1. The A73 was chosen for this exercise because it is a route that is subject to an abnormally high level of HGV movement due to the presence of adjacent landfill and mineral extraction sites. The combination of such land uses and high HGV movement causes significant deterioration of the road infrastructure and also produces high levels of material deposits and litter on the road and adjacent landscaped areas. Because of these factors the A73 will be the first route to be tackled and the maintenance works identified in the surveys will be carried out during March/April. Thereafter, the other routes mentioned, will be placed in a programme of works that will be implemented over the summer months. The routes will be tackled in a priority basis determined by the results of the surveys carried out in April.

The primary departments involved in this operation, namely the Departments of Planning and Environment and Community Services, will integrate their efforts, particularly with relation to temporary traffic management arrangements, to minimise costs and disruption to the travelling public. The A8, A80 and A725 Trunk Roads have not been included on the list of main routes to be tackled because they are the responsibility of the Scottish Executive. Maintenance of these routes has been the subject of criticism since Amey Highway took over the Trunk Road Unit contracts in April of last year. The Scottish Executive has sought to address this concern by establishing quarterly maintenance forum meetings with the relevant local authorities in each Trunk Road Unit. At the latest of these meetings representatives of the Scottish Executive undertook to examine whether the current maintenance standards contained within the contracts are contributing to the apparent reduction in the maintenance of Trunk Roads.

To ensure that the key areas identified are maintained to a higher standard an enhanced and integrated maintenance regime will be put in place in the new financial year. Appendix 2 shows the changes that are proposed to the standard maintenance operations. Again, the departments involved will co-operate in regard to works programmes and temporary traffic arrangements. The success of this enhanced maintenance regime, will not only depend on increased frequency of cyclic maintenance operations, but will also require appropriate inspection levels being put in place to identify and repair faults at an early stage. In regard to such inspections, departments will co-operate in relation to the timing and frequency of inspection regimes. In addition, inspections will be carried out on a corporate basis, with departments identifying matters of concern outside their particular remit and passing them onto the appropriate department for action.

Regular liaison between departments at operational level is essential for the success of these proposals. As the Departments of Community Services and Planning and Environment are the key players in the proposed measures they will take a lead role in this, and in co-ordinating the efforts of other departments when they need to be involved. As both departments concerned are structured on an area basis, area teams will be established to take forward this initiative. The area teams will ensure that maintenance efforts are effectively co-ordinated and examine ways of carrying out maintenance operations in a more integrated way. The area teams will do this by:-

- Developing co-ordinated ways of maintaining the key areas identified.
- Ensuring that other departments work within the established framework.
- Developing more integrated ways of providing maintenance services in the key areas.

It will also be necessary to take a more strategic look at service delivery to examine how the experience of the area teams and the Better Neighbourhood projects can be developed to produce a more holistic approach to maintenance operations throughout the Council area. It is proposed that the Open Space Working Group should be remitted to carry forward this initiative.

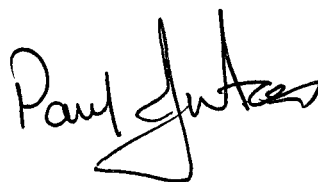
5. Recommendations

It is recommended that the following proposals are implemented:-

- a) A survey of key areas is carried out during March/April and a programme of works identified for implementation over the summer months.
- b) The enhanced maintenance regimes listed in Appendix 2 to be implemented from 1 April 2002.
- c) A spring clean up campaign is carried out during April and September and publicity material developed for distribution to all schools.
- d) Local area teams are set up to ensure co-ordination of maintenance efforts.
- e) The Open Space Working Group is remitted to consider and develop a strategic approach to the delivery of maintenance services.
- f) This report be referred to Community Services Committee for action as appropriate.



David M. Porch
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT



Paul Jukes
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

16 April 2002

For further information please contact Jim Watson on 01236 616401.

APPENDIX 1 (PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT WORKS)

A73 Inspection 8 March 2002

From	To	Requirements
Bogside Roundabout	Newmains Roundabout	The north side of the carriageway from Bogside has a number of areas where patching is required in the nearside wheel tracks. Approaching Newmains cross, there is a 500m section of the road needing patched in the nearside wheel tracks. Newmains roundabout may require resurfacing. The road needs swept and all gullies cleaned
Newmains Roundabout	Westwood Roundabout	From Newmains north on both sides of the carriageway there are signs of deterioration due to utility tracking works. Potholes are in evidence with patching required for a few hundred metres north of the roundabout. The bus lay-by to the south of Westwood roundabout on the west side of the road has an area of block paving which requires relaying.
Westwood Roundabout	Newhouse Roundabout (S)	This section of road requires the footway to the east of the carriageway to have the vegetation cut back to ensure that the maximum width of footway is available to pedestrian traffic. Along this section of road a number of defects were noted in the nearside wheeltracks. Patching required. Some signs of carriageway pot-holing. The carriageway needs swept with build up of detritus in channel causing water to be retained on the carriageway rather than entering the gullies. Some gullies need cleaned. Broken gully cover needs replaced at Bellside Bridge. South of Bellside Bridge there is section of the centre of the carriageway leading to the split for the dual carriageway section which is hatched with a central drain block. Much of this is blocked and many grill covers are missing. Water is issuing onto the carriageway from the east verge and continuing to flow on the carriageway due to blocked gullies. carriageway needs swept and gullies cleaned.
Newhouse Roundabout (S)	Newhouse Roundabout (L)	There are a number of potholes and carriageway defects on both sides of this section of dual carriageway. The lining at the give ways needs renewed.
Newhouse Roundabout (L)	Bailside Farm R/bt	This section of carriageway has recently been resurfaced
Bailside Farm R/bt	Clark Street	Again this section of carriageway shows signs of deterioration with various sections of the road showing signs of distress. Potholes and carriageway defects require attention. A section of pedestrian guard-rail need repair. Missing toby covers / ironwork in carriageway. South of Brownsburn Road water is issuing onto carriageway - drainage investigation required. This length of carriageway needs swept and all gullies cleaned.
Clark Street	Stirling Road Roundabout	South of B803 Roundabout there are a number of locations where potholing and patching are required. A number of defective gullies have also been identified. Missing ironwork needs replacing.
Stirling Rd Roundabout	B803 Roundabout	From the roundabout to Stand there are a number of potholes and other carriageway defects. There is water issuing onto carriageway from the east verge in the village of Stand. Between Stand and Raebog Road a number of blocked gullies need cleaning. From Dalmacoultier Tip to Airdrie the carriageway needs patching at a number of locations. On passing the Airdrie sign there is a sunken manhole which requires action.
B803 Roundabout	Auchenkiln Roundabout	Dual Carriageway S/B - This section of carriageway has a number of gullies which require cleaning and jetting. There are a number of gully frames and covers which need replacing. There is some ponding in nearside channel. Carriageway patching is required at a number of locations and possible resurfacing on section near Pollokshole overbridge. There are a number of damaged signs on this section of road. N/B - This carriageway shows similar signs of deterioration with a number of potholes requiring attention north of Riggend. There are a number of failed gullies on this section of the carriageway which will require replacing. There are also areas of defective carriageway which will require patching. Carriageway resurfacing may be required at A8011 overbridge. A drainage investigation should remove the cause of carriageway deterioration at this location. On the single carriageway section to Stirling Road Roundabout from Riggend, there are a number of carriageway defects at Riggend Services and at Riggend Stables. The whole length of the carriageway from Auchenkilns to Stirling Road Roundabout needs sweeping. All gullies need cleaning

APPENDIX 1 (COMMUNITY SERVICES WORKS)

Road Name	From	To	Grounds Resp	Audit	Proposals for improvement	Litter is it clear, moderate, heavy
A73	Bogside Roundabout	Newmains Roundabout	DCS	Grass verge's adjacent to roadside and footpath, supplemented by mature hedgerow, shrub bed at Cooper's Garage, flower bed at Newmain's Cross, 4 planter's situated on roundabout on Newmain's cross. Landscaped area at Newmain's cross designated as Prime Site.	Grass edge's require re/defining adjacent to footpath from Bogside Roundabout to Newmain's cross, Grass verge's adjacent to Bogside roundabout increase cutting frequency to 14 occasion's (no traffic management required). Gap up shrub bed at Cooper's garage, remove soil build up on Newmain's Main Street, infill tyre rut's on grassed verge's on Newmain's main Street.	Light population of litter at this locus.
A73	Newmains Roundabout	Westwood Roundabout	DCS	Grass verge opposite Newton Drive, classed as Medium amenity grass, receive's 14 cut's per season, Medium amenity shrub bed at Northwood Drive, Grassed Verge's at entrance to Eastwood Drive, Red Chipped central reservation, Screen planting to the rear of Murdoustoun View, Grassed o/s adjacent to The Outer Limit's, Shrub bed bordered by concrete trip rail.	Shrub bed at Northwood Drive to be gapped up, and re/classified to High Amenity bed, grassed verge's at entrance to Eastwood Drive to be increased to 14 cut's per season (currently receive 4), o/s at Outer Limit's to be utilised in a more positive manner, installation of shrub bed, Screen planting to be included on maintenance schedule, Concrete trip rail to be maintained, painted annually.	Litter at shrub bed tend's on occasion's to be heavy, however we work in partnership with cleansing to address this problem.
A73	Westwood Roundabout	Newhouse (S) Roundabout	DCS	Red chipped central reservation, weedkilled 2 occasion's per year, dual carriageway bordered by grassed verge's and mature screen planting, tarmacadam pathway's, and mature hedgerow's.	Grass edge's adjacent to hedgerow's and footpath's require edge's to be re/defined, grassed verge's adjacent to Newhouse roundabout increase cutting frequency to 14 occasion's per season, (no traffic management required) triangular area at Newarthill cut/off increase cutting frequency to 7 cut's per season, remove grass from Newhouse roundabout and replace with Decor/chip, remove broken tree from roundabout, apply residual granular herbicide to central reservation as opposed to two liquid spray's..	Litter is heavily populated on both the central reservation's and grassed verge's, in particular on the stretch of dual carriageway between Newmain's and Cleland.
A73	Newhouse (S) Roundabout	Newhouse (L) Roundabout	DCS	Red chipped central reservation, weedkilled on 2 occasion's per season, grassed verge's adjacent to main road, and large expanse of grass on Roundabout at M8, footpath adjacent to roadside.	Red chipped area's to have residual granular herbicide applied, grass verge's to have cutting frequency increased to 14 cut's, (no traffic management required) grass edge to be re/defined adjacent to pathway.	Litter moderately light.
A73	Bellside Roundabout	Bailside Farm Roundabout	DCS	Grass verge's, grassed central reservation, pathway adjacent to one side of carriageway. Grassed roundabout.	Grass edge adjacent to footpath to be re/defined, grassed roundabout to be replaced with Décor/chip.	Litter moderately light.
A73	Bailside Farm Roundabout	Clark Street Roundabout	DCS	The roundabout at Clark Street is pavior block and requires to be sprayed twice yearly. Grass verges within the Airdrie area to Clark Street are cut 14 times.	Path edges need redefined.	Moderate
A73	Clark Street Roundabout	Stirling Road Roundabout	DCS	From Clark Street to Stirling Road no grass verges, footpaths on either side. Roundabout at Stirling Road is grass and cut 14 times., includes shrub bed and hanging baskets. Maintained as per Ground Maintenance schedule	None at present	Moderate
A73	Stirling Road Roundabout	B803 Roundabout	DCS	Grass verges which exist in the Airdrie town boundary are cut 14 times. Outwith town grass is currently 150mm high.	None at present	Moderate to heavy
A73	B803 Roundabout	Auchenkilns Roundabout	DCS	Red chipped central reservation, weedkilled 2 occasion's per year, dual carriageway bordered by grassed verge's and mature screen planting. Grass verge cut with side arm flail. (Traffic Management costs approx £450.00 a day)	Grass could be cut more frequently .	Litter is very heavy particularly on the grass verges .
A80	Cumbernauld Road Stepps	M80 Roundabout	DCS	Grass verge's, grassed central reservation, pathway adjacent to both sides of carriageway. (Traffic management costs approx £ 350.00 a day)	Area should be cut on at least three occasions for sight lines . Recommend that this area rec six cuts due to all the Hotels boarding this road .	Litter moderately light.

APPENDIX 2

REVISED MAINTENANCE SCHEDULES

	Current Annual Schedule	New Annual Schedule
Grass Cutting	2 cuts	4 cuts
Weed Killing	twice a year	4 times a year
Litter Picking	twice a year	4 times a year
Sweeping	once a year	4 times a year
Sign Cleaning	nil	once
Gulley Cleaning	twice	three times
Roads Inspections	monthly	monthly
Cleansing Inspections		