

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Decision Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Executive Member for Environment and Transport
<b>Date:</b>	5 March 2013
<b>Title:</b>	Operation Restore
<b>Reference:</b>	4764
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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#### 1. Executive Summary

1.1. The purpose of this paper is to seek the approval of the Executive Member for Environment and Transport to implement an Operation Restore programme.

1.2. This paper seeks to

- highlight the impacts upon the highway associated with prolonged wet weather, snow, and sub zero temperatures during winter;
- propose an approach to addressing the damage caused by the winter weather; and
- suggest an approach to funding an Operation Restore programme.

#### 2. Contextual information

2.1. During the last 12 months the Country has seen one of the wettest years on record, which has led to saturated ground and significant surface water run-off onto the roads and footways. The recent extended winter weather of snow and sub zero temperatures has compounded the problem for roads by ice formation, which in effect causes an increase in potholes due to the freeze thaw expansion of the water in any surface defect.

2.2. The severe weather has resulted in a national increase of pothole formation on the Country's roads during the winter period, and in Hampshire there has been an increased volume of reported defects across the road network. Central Government has recognised the importance of the network to the economy and has allocated £330million nationally to help in addressing the deteriorating road condition. This allocation is over the two financial years 2013/14 and 2014/15. Hampshire County Council's allocation of this funding is £3.9million in 2013/14 and £2.3million in 2014/15.

### **3. Operation Resilience**

- 3.1. Hampshire County Council recognises that keeping the roads safe is among its most important responsibilities. As a result of previous extreme winters, Operation Resilience was introduced to make more of Hampshire's roads resilient to the effects of extreme weather as part of a long term strategy to improve the structural resilience of the network. It was a focus away from expensive reactive maintenance to more efficient and cost effective planned maintenance.
- 3.2. Operation Resilience followed on from Operation Restore, which was a highway structural repair programme that repaired the damage caused by the harsh winter of 2009/10.
- 3.3. The additional investment in Operation Resilience has delivered an extended programme of planned maintenance across the County for the last two years. It includes maintenance programmes such as surface dressing, drainage schemes, road and footway reconstruction and resurfacing. Over the two years, the resurfacing programme alone has delivered over 200km of new resurfaced road in Hampshire, and these roads have performed well in resisting the effects of the recent weather events.
- 3.4. The County has an extensive road network of over 8,500 km and although Operation Resilience is making a marked difference, there remain plenty of roads where there is potential for defects to form as a result of the recent winter weather.

### **4. Customer contact**

- 4.1. The measure of public contact, through Hantsdirect, to the Area Highway offices is an indication of the volume of requests to deal with defects on the roads and footways. Over the last 3 to 4 months the area highway units have experienced a significantly increased volume of contacts directly relating to the weather and the adverse effects to the road network. During Sept 2012, the area offices received approx 5,200 enquiries in total; this figure rose to over 6,300 enquiries in November 2012. Almost 45% of the total enquiries were focused on the west of Hampshire, which was the part of the county that was impacted most by wet conditions and high ground water levels earlier in the year. Whilst we saw a slight decrease in enquiries during December (traditionally contact decreases over the festive season), the numbers for January have had a dramatic upwards trend, with the area offices receiving over 9,000 enquiries in the month (73% increase on Sept 2012 figures), with the pressure remaining on the west of the county. Figure 1 below illustrates this.

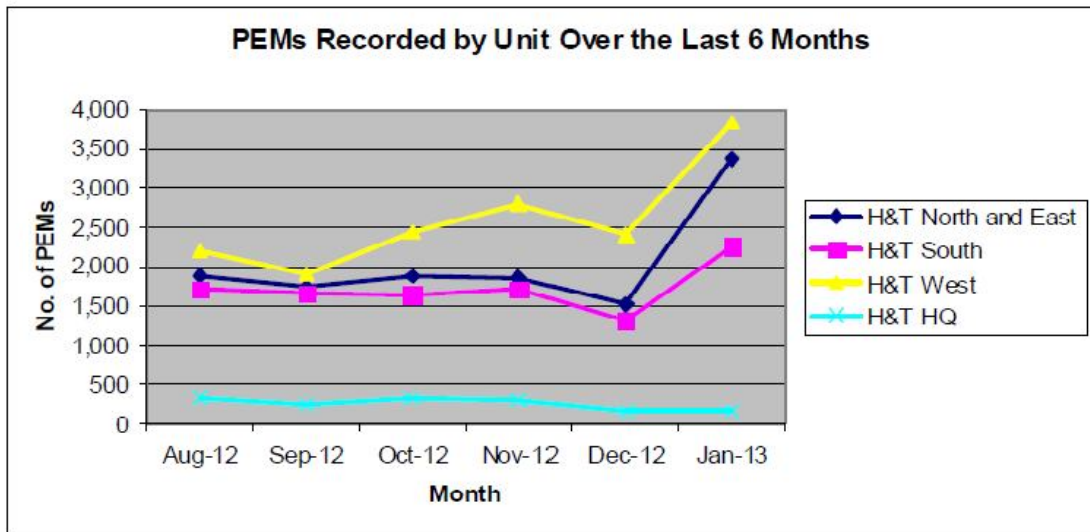


Figure 1. All enquiries received by highway area offices over the last 6 months

4.2. Over the winter weather and snow/frost period, all resources have been fully focused on maintaining an open road network to enable traffic to move freely on the county's roads. These resources are now focussed on repairing the damage caused to the roads by the winter weather. However, the effects on the roads are widespread and it will take many months to deal with these issues fully.

## 5. Funding

- 5.1. Because of the extent of the damage caused on the roads by the winter weather, and the increased need to undertake repair work, it is proposed to re-introduce the Operation Restore programme to run in parallel with the Operation Resilience Programme during 2013/14.
- 5.2. Operation Restore would be a strategy to focus on repairing the effects of the recent winter weather, and would be undertaken during Quarter 1/2 of the 2013/14 financial year, or earlier if resources allow. The type of work that would be undertaken under the Operation Restore programme would include maintenance treatments such as jetpatching (high speed patching repair), hot treatment hand patching, and machine patching repairs and haunch repairs (edge of carriageway).
- 5.3. To undertake an Operation Restore programme it will be necessary to reprioritise funding within the 2013/14 highway maintenance budget. It is therefore recommended that a sum of up to £1.5million of the County Council's highway maintenance budget for 2013/14 be reprioritised to tackle the damaging effect of the adverse weather.
- 5.4. It is proposed that the Operation Restore programme would be funded partially from the £3.9million 'one off' funding from central government and by reprioritising some of the highway maintenance revenue budget.

**6. Recommendation**

- 6.1 That, in response to the severe impact of the winter weather on the road network in Hampshire the Executive Member for Environment and Transport approves the re-introduction of Operation Restore to run alongside other Highway works in 2013/4, and agrees a reprioritisation of 2013/14 highway maintenance activities and budgets to support the Operation Restore programme.

**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:****Links to the Corporate Strategy**

<b>Hampshire safer and more secure for all:</b>	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
<b>Maximising well-being:</b>	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
<b>Enhancing our quality of place:</b>	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	

**Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents**

**The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)**

DocumentLocation

None

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

### **1. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

- 1.1 The proposals in this report have been developed with due regard to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Council's equality objectives. The website contains a summary [assessment of the impacts](#) under "Safe and Well Managed Highways in Hampshire".
- 1.2 It is considered that the issues covered by this report will not have impacts requiring further specific actions by the Council above those already established in its existing policies and working procedures.

### **2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

- 2.1. No impact on crime and disorder

### **3. Climate Change:**

- 3.1. How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

Emissions arising from the operation will be minimised by programming and optimising the routes for works.

- 3.2. How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

Operation Restore will complement the work of Operation Resilience, ensuring the County's highways are durable in the long term in spite of harsher winter weather. The treatments used for Operation Restore constitute permanent rather temporary works, and will be appropriate to each defect to ensure a long life for the repairs.