



SOUTH EAST AREA ROADS AUTHORITIES & UTILITIES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the QUARTERLY MEETING held on 09th FEBRUARY, 2021

This meeting was convened via MS Teams – 28 joined the meeting remotely.

Jason Halliday(Chair)

Fiona McInnes
Alan Heatley
Kevin Hamilton
Carol-Ann Dodd
Gerry Cullen
Adrian Henzler
John Henderson
Hugh Randall
Craig McQueen
Ruth Scott
Katrina Hardy
Graham Milne
Kevin Douglas
Scott Donnan
Jim Forbes
Andrew Matheson
Iain Ross
Alistair Douglas
Michael Casey
Stuart Harding
Liz Jack
Elaine Stewart
Caroline Auld
Kat Quane
Eleni Gigourtaki
David Ross

JHa

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West Lothian Council

Scottish Water
Midlothian Council
Scottish Road Works Commissioner
Midlothian Council
Traffic Scotland
Openreach
Scottish Borders Council
Telefonica
Scottish Water
SSE
INEOS
OSRWC
SGN
MBNL-EE/3
Cityfibre
Virgin Media
OSRWC
National Grid
Royal Mail
City of Edinburgh Council
Transport Scotland
SPEN
Network Rail
Transport Scotland
East Lothian Council
BEARScotland

In attendance:

Brian Cooper

BC

Secretarial Support

Apologies: Thomas Flaherty, Robert McFarlane, Alistair Wales, Clark Findlay, Karyn Davidson, Chris Murray

1. Welcome, attendance and apologies

Jason Halliday, West Lothian Council, welcomed everyone who had joined the meeting to his first meeting as Chair, including Scottish Road Works Commissioner Kevin Hamilton - Attendance and apologies as recorded above.

2. Minutes of previous meeting held on 10th November, 2020

The draft Minute circulated by the Secretary prior to the meeting was agreed as a true record. There were no outstanding actions.

3. RAUCS Meeting on 2nd December, 2020 – Update/Matters Arising

The Chair provided background information in relation to the following matters:

- RAUCS decided another Coring Programme should be implemented on reinstatements carried out during the period 1st January to 31st December, 2021
- The WG reviewing Advice Note 8, Temporary Traffic Signals, had produced a draft which would be circulated for comment
- The HAUC UK Conference would be held on 20th May, 2021
- The Safety at Street Works and Road Works Code of Practice is to be reviewed during 2021 and will include requirements for active travel plans for pedestrians and cyclists
- The Diversionary Code is also to be reviewed – a Scottish version is being considered
- It is likely to be April 2022 before the Commissioner's review of the SROR will be published
- The commencement of the Transport Scotland Act 2019 may be affected by the SG Elections in May, Brexit and the pandemic
- The COP26 in November is the biggest event ever held in Scotland and will involve a significant numbers of embargoes on roads affecting routes right across Scotland.
- The Inspections WG will carry out a review of Advice Note 4 – Inspections, Defects and other Charges
- The User Community will be consulted on the Review of Future Meeting Arrangements/ changes in Areas etc.

4. National Coring Update

CMcQ advised the WG had met in January, 2021, with another meeting planned later in February. He reminded the meeting that we are now in the Sample period. Coring will take place from January 2022.

He stressed the need for a Lead Authority for SERAUC from the RAs as soon as possible.

ACTION: JHa

RAs would also be expected to accept more Internal Coring Programme results. He confirmed that the poor results for the SERAUC in the most recent Programme is being investigated

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5. SRWC Report and Performance

5(a) The SRWC issued a statement on materials on 14 January 2021. The statement is available on the SRWC website at the following location : <https://roadworks.scot/news>.

The most recent communication from the SRWC has requested the following:

- All requests for alternative reinstatements (in line with the SROR and the guidance given) are considered favourably – this means all requests from all utility companies, not just water, power and gas.
- The statement applies to all geographical areas in Scotland. The guidance from the Scottish Government is to reduce interactions which means requests are appropriate no matter where the work is being carried out. The practice should be the same for all roads authority areas.
- Please update the works description as requested. IR is working with certain sectors of the community to try and improve the way this change is identified however at present the request is to include this in the works description.

Having been in post for 12 weeks now the Commissioner outlined the office priorities for 2021/22:

Noticing Works

- Roads authorities continue to show significant variation in the numbers of works being notified through the Scottish Road Works Register (SRWR). The SRWC intends to examine this issue closely over the coming year. The office will continue to measure notices per 100 km of road length and encourage all roads authorities to make full use of the SRWR for notifying their works.

Inspections

- The performance of statutory undertakers works is measured through inspections undertaken by roads authorities. The SRWC has become concerned that there may be some inconsistencies in how roads authorities are undertaking inspections. Further scrutiny and monitoring will be undertaken over the coming year.

Safety

- Safety at road works should be paramount for all organisations. It is unacceptable for any road works to fail to comply with safety standards and it is expected that all organisations will take a zero tolerance approach to sub-standard traffic management. This includes making adequate provision for the most vulnerable road users in society and ensuring equality of access for people with mobility challenges. The SRWC is engaging, and will continue to engage, with stakeholders representing these road users and to promote best practice within the industry to make sure that their needs are well understood.
- **General Performance**
In addition to the above comments and the paper provided by GM, the performance framework is being reviewed. The SRWC is making changes to a number of targets and indicators going forward. Changes are expected to take effect in 2021/22 and further information will be provided as soon as possible.

5b – Performance:

Dashboard – GM referred to the previously circulated 2020/21 Q3 quarterly dashboard and commented that, in general organisations are continuing to deal with the effects of Covid with most organisations now returning to “Business as Usual” – Organisations continue to re-programme works to deliver yearly budgetary targets.

The Commissioner has published ‘Monitoring and Compliance Bulletin No. 3’ to clarify recent changes to the dashboard to reflect the continuing improvements delivered by all sectors.

Non-compliance and questions regarding your organisation’s performance should be directed to graham.milne@srwc.gov.scot

2020/21 Performance Reviews – The office is currently reviewing several options to provide an appropriate response in relation to organisations delivering their works during the Pandemic and the restrictions required by the Scottish Government. The process will be shared with the community prior to the next round of RAUC meetings, with the probability that Q1/Q2 performance will be ignored.

Feedback from the community on this item would be welcomed by the oSRWC.

2021/22 Performance – The office are also reviewing a number of indicators in light of the continuing improvements with any probable changes being related to standardising performance across all sectors. Again the community will be given the opportunity to comment prior to publication.

Improvement Plans - All organisations currently under review have submitted their Q3 2020/21 plans with the oSRWC having completed any required follow up review meetings. Organisations are being reviewed quarterly. Currently one RA and four Undertakers are on improvement plans with the likelihood that a further two organisations will have their plans closed before April 2021.

Submission date for Q4 2020/21 is Friday 16 April 2021.

New SRWR Reporting Group (chair JG – SGN – Loss of reporting functionality) - Progress has been made with outstanding issues categorised for review. The next meeting is mid-February where the group will develop the required statement for submission to Symology

6. Improvement Notices

SH advised that the City of Edinburgh Council had “wiped the slate clean” and terminated all IPs.

AH advised that there had been a significant improvement in VM’s performance in Midlothian during the last Quarter which could mean the IP is lifted by April

7. Local RAUCS reports/Programmes of major works/Proposed Changes to Road Designations/Local Coring/Events

Under this Item the Chair asked each of the organisations represented to provide a short update report on their current situation, incorporating the Item headings as above, where applicable:

Transport Scotland:

KQ advised that Robert Young had retired from his Digital Scotland role. BT had been awarded the R100 Contract. New contact person is Duncan Nesbitt. The SG plans to have Area Managers in place.

She confirmed no further updates on Covid-19 had been issued by the SG. She referred to the possible PDG timetable for the TSA commencement she had circulated previously. Plain English is the aim. Please contact Kat is any queries.

Roads Authorities:

All RAs - Works ongoing on the Register, including continuing Spaces for People on-site works at numerous locations. Also 20mph implementation in SBC. Winter weather(in some areas 100mm of snow today) affecting works on site.

Some roads will be affected by TTROs/traffic management/signing for Vaccination Centres as well, with embargoes possibly for some locations.

No local coring in any RA area and no events planned.

CEC is holding local co-ordination meetings fortnightly. There is an ongoing issue in Edinburgh with non-excavation cable-pulling works – meeting with telecom organisations planned.

RAs raised issues and concerns regarding loading VAULT data and the deadline set by the Improvement Service for Gazetteer submission.

Statutory Undertakers:

SUs confirmed where works are being undertaken are on the Register. Works on-site are risk - assessed and Covid-compliant. Delays caused by winter weather. Freezing conditions will result in increased number of reactive works. Extensions to works requests will be requested from RAs.

Scottish Water starting next six-year major capital contracts – until 2028.

SGN appreciated the help and co-operation of the RAs. No internal coring meantime.

Openreach has appointed a new coring contractor. Cityfibre is setting up an internal coring programme using AN3 and SW example.

8. Management and Operation of the SRWR (including any matters/items of note relating to the Gazetteer, the SAT and the Community Apparatus VAULT) –

IR advised that the Prescribed Fees & Amounts Figure for 2021 has increased by £4K – all organisations will know how much they have to pay early March with Invoices issued on 1st April.

He also advised that any issues with the system should be reported to the Symology Support Desk in the first instance.

Symology are planning more Webinars in place of the user forums held previously.

Two new Undertakers have access to the Register: The Electricity Network Company Ltd., and Open Fibre Networks Ltd., (both part of the same group as GTC).

The SAT has resumed reviewing ongoing Change Requests.

RAUCS will be asked to agree to change the requirement to supply data to Vault once every two months instead of every quarter.

Each organization has been asked to confirm their contact details held by the SRWC as soon as possible.

In response to the RAs being unhappy about last-minute changes by the Improvement Service, the Commissioner's view is that the Gazetteer is fundamental to the Register.

9. Any Other Competent Business

- a) CMcQ asked if non-attendance at the meeting(s) is being monitored – GM replied in the affirmative. JHa suggested weather shouldn't have such a marked effect on attendance when meeting online.
- b) JF referred to Reinstatement Quality Plans for RAs – possibly Section 109s? KH suggested although not mandatory it should be seen as best practice. Noted that David Capon(JAG UK) is involved in the RQP Working Group

10. Date of next meeting: 11th May, 2021 (by MS Teams)

(Note dates of remaining SERAUC Meetings in 2021: 10/08/21 and 9/11/21)

BC – February, 2021;

