

**REPORT FOR: Traffic and Road Safety
Advisory Panel**

Date of Meeting:

3 October 2012

Subject:

**INFORMATION REPORT -
NETWORK MANAGEMENT DUTY
2011/12**

Responsible Officer:

John Edwards - Interim Corporate
Director, Environmental Services

Exempt:

No

Enclosures:

Appendix A: Network Management
Duty report 2011/12

Section 1 – Summary

This report sets out how the highway network is performing since the introduction of additional regulatory powers under the Traffic Management Act to control street works and other activities in Harrow such as the London Permit Scheme and Fixed Penalty Notices. The report focuses on noticing, permitting, inspections and the impact on traffic flow, congestion and delay.

FOR INFORMATION

Section 2 – Report

Introduction

- 2.1 The TMA places a duty on the Council to ensure the expeditious movement of traffic on the Harrow road network and those networks of surrounding authorities.
- 2.2 In order to know the impact of the TMA on improving the performance of the highway network, the Authority has a duty to monitor its effectiveness. The report provided in Appendix A has been produced to demonstrate the improvements in network performance and to demonstrate Harrow's successful progress in carrying out the network management duties.

Background

- 2.3 The Traffic Management Act (TMA) was introduced in 2004 to tackle congestion and disruption on the road network and provides for the creation of permit schemes under which public utility companies and highway authorities wishing to carry out certain registerable works have to apply for a permit to carry out the works and comply with any conditions attached. This has ensured improved coordination of works by both utilities and highway authorities and also ensures improved standards.
- 2.4 In September 2011 Harrow commenced operation of the London Permit Scheme (LoPS) after successfully applying to the Department of Transport, in conjunction with other London Boroughs and transport for London, to run a permit scheme. LoPS is a joint scheme that operates across London under a common policy.
- 2.5 LoPS has enabled effective works co-ordination which is dependent on accurate and timely data exchanged between works promoters and street authorities.
- 2.6 When the permit conditions attached to a permit are not adhered to, Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) are issued for a breach in the conditions. The adoption of a Fixed Penalty Notice Scheme has enabled Harrow to improve permit condition compliance as well as application data accuracy and timeliness, therefore improving performance in street works activities and improving working relationships between noticing/permitting organisations and street authorities.
- 2.7 The report in Appendix A provides a large amount of information about the performance of the network and the regulatory systems in force under the TMA. Highlights of the report show the following:
 - 40% of all works carried out on Harrow's roads are undertaken by Harrow's contractor on behalf of Harrow.

- Since Harrow began permitting for works carried out on the roads there has been an increase in minor works' permits and a slight decrease in urgent works' permits. If this continues it is likely to reduce traffic disruption.
- Since September 2011, when Harrow commenced operating a permit scheme, there has been an overall decline in FPNs for breach of permit conditions which shows a general improvement over time in the way works are notified and undertaken.
- All works' promoters improved their performance regarding working without a works' permit in the first quarter of 2012 as compared with the fourth quarter 2011.
- In the first quarter of 2012, all utility companies improved their performance regarding sending in notices to the authority to indicate when works start and when they stop. In contrast to this, Harrow's highways contractor's had worse performance.
- Inspections carried out during works taking place on the roads, show that Harrow's contractor performed worse than utility companies regarding signing and guarding during works taking place.
- Harrow's contractor received a very high number of FPNs as their contract with the Council came to an end and the contract change over process was a significant factor in this.
- Between 2007/08 and 2010/11 vehicle speeds on Harrow's roads improved both in the morning peak and in the inter-peak time periods – some of the recent improvements are likely to be as a result of improved network management.
- Average bus run times on selected roads in Harrow have decreased year on year since 2010 – some of the recent improvements are likely to be as a result of improved network management.

2.8 In general the overall performance of the network and works promoters is improving and is expected to continue to improve as the works promoters adapt to the additional controls and requirements put in place over the last year.

2.9 The poor performance by Harrow's previous highway contractor at the end of their contract (31st March 2012) is largely attributable to the contract change over process and this has had an adverse affect on the figures. The new highways contract which commenced in April 2012 has taken account of Harrow's previous performance issues during the contract procurement process in order to make future improvements.

Section 3 – Further Information

3.1 It is important that the permitting scheme continues to be monitored and that both utility companies and Harrow's contractor continue to improve their performance and minimise their impact on traffic flow.

Section 4 – Financial Implications

- 4.1 Any monies received through the issue of permits issued are used to fund the operation of the permit scheme as required under legislation and the consent given by the Department for Transport to operate the scheme.
- 4.2 Any monies received through the issue of FPNs are reinvested in the service and contribute towards developing policies to promote and encourage safe, integrated efficient and economic transport facilities and services, to, from and within the area

Section 5 - Equalities implications

- 5.1 Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? Yes.
- 5.2 An EqIA was carried out before introducing the permit scheme and fixed penalty notice scheme to the borough.

Section 6 – Corporate Priorities

- 6.1 The improved highway network management has contributed to delivering the following council's corporate priorities:

Corporate priority	Comment
Keep neighbourhoods clean, green and safe	This is addressed by the possible permit conditions placed on permits issued – particularly the permit condition regarding not to store materials on site and the prompt removal of materials / plant.
Supporting and protecting people who are most in need	This is addressed by the permit conditions placed on all permits issued – particularly regarding providing road space for vehicles and pedestrians and pedestrian access widths and ramps where appropriate.
United and involved communities: a Council that listens and leads	This is addressed by the Council requiring works promoters to engage with local communities over by providing information about works and opportunities to give input particularly where the works impact is significant.
Supporting our town centre, our local shopping centres and businesses	This is supported by better co-ordination of works which result in less disruption to the streets where shops are located as well as possible permit conditions regarding traffic orders and traffic management arrangements.

Section 7 – Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Kanta Hirani



on behalf of the
Chief Financial Officer

Date: 14/09/12

Section 8 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Ann Fine, Transport Policy Officer, 020 8424 1496

Background Papers:

November 2010 Cabinet Report - Street Works Management - London Permit Scheme and Fixed Penalty Notices