

# Environmental & Public Protection Scrutiny Committee Task & Finish Group 2017/18

## *Maintenance of highway hedgerows and verges*

### Draft Planning & Scoping Document

<b>Task &amp; Finish Objective(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review the current provision for the maintenance of highway hedgerows and verges and if appropriate make recommendations for service change.</li> </ul>
<b>Context</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Environmental &amp; Public Protection Scrutiny Committee has a key role to play in monitoring services, development of key policies and strategies, as well as identifying areas for improvement or development within their remit.</li> <li>The Environmental &amp; Public Protection Scrutiny Committee agreed in principal to undertake a review into the current provision for the maintenance of highway hedgerows and verges.</li> <li>The following will be included:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the number of staff carrying out the service. Has there been a detrimental impact in service due to the reduction of staff (based on previous years).</li> <li>Review the number of times roadside hedges and verges are cut with particular focus on hedges around Junctions.</li> <li>Review the requests for services process in relation to hedge cutting demands from the public.</li> <li>Environmental impact including biodiversity</li> </ul> </li> <li>Elected Members have raised this as a concern for residents living in rural areas.</li> </ul>
<b>Membership</b>	<b><u>Elected Members</u></b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be agreed at the Environmental &amp; Public Protection Scrutiny Committee scheduled to take place on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2017.</li> <li>• Up to 6 Elected Members appointed to reflect the political balance of the Council as whole.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Advisors / Support Officers</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steve Pilliner (Head of Transport &amp; Engineering)</li> <li>• Ainsley Williams (Head of Waste and Environmental Services)</li> <li>• Richard Waters, Highways and Transport Manager</li> <li>• Darren King, Highway Services Manager</li> <li>• Nicolas French, Assistant Manager</li> <li>• Gareth Howells, Assistant Manager</li> <li>• Rosie Carmichael, Rural Conservation Manager</li> <li>• Isabel Macho, Biodiversity Officer</li> <li>• Janine Owen (Democratic Services Officer)</li> </ul>
<b>The main aims of the review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the current maintenance provision and programme for County roads. Including the nature, timing and equipment used for cuts.</li> <li>• Information on the current maintenance provision and programme for Trunk roads.</li> <li>• Review the balance between in house and external services and procurement of those services.</li> <li>• Review the number of staff carrying out the service. (e.g. has there been a detrimental impact in service due to the reduction of staff (based on previous years).</li> <li>• Review the number of times roadside hedges and verges are cut with particular focus on hedges around junctions.</li> <li>• Review how much contact demand the Council receives about this issue and the request for services process for hedge cutting demands from the public. To include both requests to cut and not to cut.</li> <li>• Review the budget allocation and the impact of any changes to the provision.</li> <li>• Consider landowner responsibilities and enforcement powers of the Council.</li> <li>• Consider the environmental impact including biodiversity.</li> <li>• To formulate recommendations for consideration by the Executive Board.</li> </ul>

<b>Scope of the review</b>	<p>This review will focus on the provision for maintenance of highway hedgerow and verges.</p> <p>Whilst consideration was given to including cycle and footpaths within the scope of the document it was established this was a separate issue and would make the scope of this review too broad.</p>
<b>How it will contribute to achieving corporate / community objectives and well-being objectives</b>	<p>Contributes to the following outcomes from the County Council's Corporate Strategy 2015-20:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People who live, work and visit Carmarthenshire are safe and feel safer</li> <li>• Carmarthenshire's communities and environment are sustainable</li> <li>• Carmarthenshire has a stronger and more prosperous economy</li> </ul> <p>This project will link directly to the following Carmarthenshire County Council Well-being objectives:-</p> <p>In a Healthy &amp; Safe Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objective 12 - Looking after the environment now and for the future</li> <li>• Objective 13 - Improving the highway and transport infrastructure and connectivity</li> </ul>
<b>List of key stakeholders</b> [not exhaustive]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment Officers</li> <li>• Customer Services Officers</li> <li>• Democratic Services (information on how often reported from Elected Members)</li> <li>• Police (Incidents recorded, feedback)</li> <li>• Community Councils (Do they or would they assist with maintenance).</li> <li>• National Farmers Union (NFU)</li> <li>• Biodiversity Groups</li> <li>• Neighbouring Authorities – Pembrokeshire &amp; Ceredigion</li> <li>• Natural Resource Wales (NRW)</li> <li>• Local Access Forum (LAF)</li> <li>• Other as identified</li> </ul>

<p><b>What information / documents are required to inform the work of the study?</b> [not exhaustive]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current Programme and Guidance</li> <li>• Highways Maintenance Plan</li> <li>• Forward Plan for Environment (Wales) Act 2016</li> <li>• Budget</li> <li>• Information from Contact Centre</li> <li>• Incident/accident data</li> <li>• Democratic Services data on Elected Members who have reported this issue.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Timescale for completion of the review</b></p>	<p><b>Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> November 2017</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Planning &amp; Scoping Document to E&amp;PP Scrutiny Committee</li> </ul> <p>Research and Evidence Gathering period – December 2017 to April 2018:-</p> <p><b>January 2018– Group Meeting 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree overall approach for the review</li> <li>• Draft project plan</li> </ul> <p><b>Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2018 – Group Meeting 2</b></p> <p><b>Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018 – Group Meeting 3</b></p> <p><b>Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2018 – Group Meeting 4</b></p> <p><b>Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> May 2018</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final Report to Committee</li> </ul>