



**GROWTH, HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE: 3 SEPTEMBER 2026**

**NETWORK MANAGEMENT – ROAD AND STREET WORKS - ANNUAL
UPDATE**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF GROWTH, ENVIRONMENT AND
TRANSPORT**

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on the temporary activities taking place on the highway that fall within the duties of Leicestershire County Council as the Local Highway Authority (LHA).

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. In 2025, the County Council approved the Local Transport Plan (LTP4). The LTP4 sets out the strategic transport vision for the County Council, which seeks to “Deliver a safe, connected and integrated transport network which is resilient and well managed to support the ambitions and health of our growing communities, safeguards the environment whilst delivering economic prosperity”. The LTP4 sets six Core Policies:
 - 1: Delivering the Vision.
 - 2: Managing Demand.
 - 3: Enabling Travel Choice.
 - 4: Delivering Solutions.
 - 5: Embracing Innovation.
 - 6: Evaluating Progress.
3. To support the LTP4, the County Council has a Network Management Plan which enables it to:
 - a) Develop and operate a holistic network management approach.
 - b) Manage the operation, performance and development of the road network based on a balanced risk-based approach, which incorporates available evidence.
 - c) Plan for the housing and economic needs of Leicester and Leicestershire’s population, employ a flexible approach to reviewing, amending and developing the network.
 - d) Engage and consult with partners and the stakeholders, where appropriate, and lead by example, by applying the same standards and approaches to the Council’s own works on the road network as to those of others.
 - e) Have regard to the Council’s other wider obligations, policies and objectives set out in the Council’s Environment Strategy.

Background

4. The transport network in Leicestershire has a key role in enabling movement across the County, regionally and also nationally, supporting local communities in achieving their ambitions through access to key services and employment opportunities. The transport network is also important in supporting and delivering economic growth and prosperity by providing access to key markets locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.
5. Transport networks are experiencing greater movement in freight and logistics and with it increasing Heavy Goods Vehicle and Large Goods Vehicle movements across the transport networks. Leicestershire is located in the heart of the freight and logistics triangle. With East Midlands Airport serving as a key international gateway for the movement of goods and services worldwide, and as the largest dedicated freight airport outside London, the region plays a vital role in supporting the UK's global trade and logistics network.
6. As the LHA, the County Council is responsible for managing the traffic using its road network. By effectively managing the transport system, it can provide more consistent, predictable, and reliable journeys for the movement of people and goods. This helps to tackle congestion and environmental pollution and improves safety and accessibility for all road users. It also helps support economic growth. The Network Management Plan is an operational plan to support this responsibility.
7. Pressure on the highway network continues to grow in terms of traffic volumes. However, there is also increasing demand for temporary work activity to take place within the highway that results in higher levels of congestion and disruption. Temporary works on the network can be considered in three distinct groups, Street Works, Road Works and Diversionary Works, defined as:

- I. **Street Works** are a statutory function carried out by “statutory undertakers” using equipment and machinery on or under the road. Statutory undertakers include utility companies, licensees under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) and contractors.

Examples include utility companies carrying out essential, new and maintenance works to their assets within the highway, and developers constructing new and modifying existing infrastructure to provide for housing, employment and growth in the area. Street works are necessary to provide and maintain utility and transport services but can be disruptive to road users.

- II. **Road Works** are different from street works within the definitions under legislation. They are works carried out to repair or improve the highway, including footways, pavements and street lighting. The County Council, as the LHA, is responsible for highway maintenance within the administrative area for the County and undertakes road works which can be reactive and planned maintenance works.

Examples of planned activities include carriageway resurfacing, road surface treatments, footway resurfacing, street lighting replacement and bridge maintenance. Reactive works include pothole and drainage repairs, accident response and temporary road fixes.

Schemes, such as the recently opened North and East Melton Mowbray Distributor Road (NE MMDR), place demand on the network whilst in the construction phase, where new infrastructure meets existing roads and extensive temporary traffic management measures are required to make these connections.

- III. **Diversiory Works** are works to reroute utility services. They are sometimes necessary to accommodate highway improvement schemes.

Examples of diversionary works to existing utilities are required for schemes such as the NE MMDR but can also be required on smaller improvement schemes such as junction improvements where kerb lines are being changed.

8. Other bodies, such as Network Rail and National Highways, also require dedicated temporary space on the highways network to undertake works on their assets that impact directly and indirectly on the local roads in Leicestershire.
9. In addition, some types of public events (such as the Download festival held annually at Donnington Park) affect the highway network and require Highway Authority oversight and the implementation of Temporary Traffic Control measures by the event organiser.

Permit Scheme

10. To manage activity on the network, the NRSWA places a duty on the Council to coordinate activities (works) on the highway under its control. The legislation allows an authority to introduce and operate a permit scheme to support the delivery of this duty, which the County Council did in 2018.
11. The permit scheme enables the Council to take active involvement in the planning and coordination of works, including:
 - a) Organisations wishing to undertake works on the highway need to obtain a permit application approval by the Council for temporary highway occupation to undertake works, instead of 'giving notice' to the Council.
 - b) Any variation to the work needs to be agreed with the Council, before and after the works have started, including extensions to the duration of the works.
 - c) The Council can apply conditions to work to impose constraints; for example, off-peak working only.
 - d) Sanctions with Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) for working without a permit or in breach of the conditions (of the permit) can be issued by the Council.

Key Highlights

12. In the last calendar year (2025), there has been:
 - a) 77 - Average number of activities started every day;
 - b) 70,116 - Total number of days worked on the highway;
 - c) 6,624 - Live site inspections;
 - d) 9,431 - Reinstatements checked;
 - e) 2,502 - Total number of road closures (including immediate);

- f) 16,413 - Total number of days of road closures, including immediate;
- g) 24% - Of all permits challenged;
- h) 2,168 - FPN issued;
- i) 31,954 - Number of planned granted permits;
- j) 6,159 - Number of immediate permits;
- k) 2,635 - Total number of Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTROs);
- l) 126 - Permits granted every (working) day;
- m) 10 - TTROs issued every (working) day.

Permit Applications

13. All registerable works require an application to the Council to obtain a permit. The figures below show increases in permit applications received each year.

Table 1 - Total permit applications and modifications submitted to the Council

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Permit Applications	38,788	37,660	45,128
Modifications	17,905	18,024	20,259
Total of all permit workload	56,693	55,684	65,387

Table 2 - Total number of permit applications submitted to the Council over the last three years, by type of organiser

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Volume (Street Manager)			
Utilities	31,849	30,895	38,102
Highway Authorities	6,007	5,927	6,037
Total Permits	37,856	36,822	44,139

Table 3 - Total all granted permits by permit type over the last five years, including Highway Authority Permits

Type of Granted Permits	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Immediate (£19 - £28) (Volume) <i>Emergency authorisation for urgent road works that need to begin without the standard advance notice period.</i>	5,102	5,956	6,069	5,838	5,995
% of Granted Permits	23%	24%	19%	19%	16%
Minor (£37 - £41) (Volume) 3 days or less	11,204	12,601	18,445	18,733	24,384
% of Granted Permits	51%	50%	58%	61%	66%
Standard (£68 - £79) (Volume) 4-10 days	1,785	2,411	2,197	1,589	1,416
% of Granted Permits	8%	10%	7%	5%	4%
Major (£37 - £180) (Volume) 11 days or more, or road closures	1,984	2,104	2,447	2,344	2,505
% of Granted Permits	9%	8%	8%	8%	7%

Type of Granted Permits	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Provisional Advance Authorisation (PAA) (£48 - £58) (Volume)	2,115	2,065	2,413	2,351	2,644
% of Granted Permits	10%	8%	8%	8%	7%
Total Volume of Granted Permits	22,190	25,137	31,571	30,855	36,944
Value of granted permits (Street Manager) excluding Highway Authority Permits	N/A	N/A	£942,802	£944,057	£1,148,852
Last 3 Financial Years: • Immediate: Non – Strategic 86% = £19 / Strategic 14% = £28 • Minor: Non – Strategic 87% = £37 / Strategic 13% = £41 • Standard: Non – Strategic 78% = £68 / Strategic 22% = £79 • Major (4-10 days): Non – Strategic 81% = £68 / Strategic 19% = £79 • Major (over 10 days): Non – Strategic 84% = £93 / Strategic 16% = £180 • PAA: Non – Strategic 83% = £48 / Strategic 17% = £58					

14. Traffic-sensitive streets are roads that a highway authority has formally designated as particularly sensitive to disruption because of factors such as high traffic volumes, significant bus usage, proximity to key junctions, high pedestrian flows, or other strategic network importance. On these streets, utility companies and other works promoters are subject to stricter notification and coordination requirements to help minimise disruption and maintain the safe and efficient movement of traffic.

Table 4 - Granted permits by promoter over the last three years

Annual Total	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Water	12,496	11,720	16,111
Gas / Electricity	3,461	3,285	3,073
Telecoms	10,019	10,249	12,169
Other	225	228	168
Highway Authorities	5,370	5,373	5,423
Total	31,571	30,855	36,944

15. Not all applications for work result in an actual work, with many phases being cancelled or superseded. Across all promoters (any organisation carrying out works in the highway regardless of whether they are working directly for, or on behalf of, a highway authority or undertaker), only 77% of the permit applications resulted in actual works being carried out. This poses a constant challenge to coordination when change occurs, and it also limits network availability until an application is closed down.

Table 5 - Total number of permits submitted but not assessed over the last three years

Volume (Street Manager)	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Cancelled prior to assessment	798	688	779
Permit Modification Request	914	962	1,183
Not assessed total	1,712	1,650	1962

Volume (Street Manager)	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
% Permits not assessed	5%	5%	4%

16. For the Council to effectively carry out the coordination of works, including the advanced publicity of works, it is essential that the applications are submitted with sufficient lead time based on the work category, as set out within the NRSWA. This is:
- a) For major and standard work, an application lead time of 10 working days prior to the proposed work start date;
 - b) For minor works, three working days lead time.
17. Immediate works can be submitted after the works start and must be received within two hours of the works starting, or by 10:00 am on the next working day if the works started outside of non-working hours.

Work Location and Traffic Management

18. Work is undertaken across all the different sections of the highway, not just the carriageway. Since the introduction of the Department for Transport's (DfT) Street Manager system in July 2020, the location of the work has been recorded on the permits. The data shows that most of the works are undertaken with no carriageway incursion.
19. All works must be undertaken using an appropriate form of traffic management (control) to ensure that the work is conducted safely. This includes for those undertaking the works, as well as the road user, including pedestrians, cyclists and in particular the needs of disabled people and vulnerable groups. The table below shows that positive traffic control, such as temporary traffic lights or stop/go signals, is used the most. Full road closures were approved and implemented for 9.2% of works in 2026.

Table 6 - Traffic management control 2023-2026

	Values are shown as a percentage of all works		
	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Contra-flow	0.04	0.02	0.02
Convoy working	0.03	0	0.02
Give and take	16.7	16.7	16.9
Lane closure	2.1	2	1.8
Multiway signals	7.9	7.9	7.1
No carriageway incursion	31.6	31.1	34.9
Priority working	0.2	0.2	0.1
Road closure	9.1	9.1	9.2
Some carriageway incursion	20	20.2	18.5
Stop / Go	2.9	2.9	2.5
Temp 15 min delay	0.1	0.3	0.3
2-way signals	8.9	9.1	8.2

Signage Left on the Highway

20. The Council has undertaken a review of the issue of temporary traffic management equipment being left on the highway following roadworks, in response to concerns raised by Members and residents.
21. A clear process is now in place whereby the Network Management Team assesses reports, inspects where necessary to establish ownership, and either refers to the responsible utility company, contractor or National Highways for removal, or removes directly by the Council where ownership cannot be identified or where there is an immediate safety concern.
22. The Council continues to monitor and respond to reports of abandoned traffic management equipment through its highway inspection and network management functions. Reported cases have resulted in equipment being collected by responsible third parties, referred to National Highways, or, where appropriate, removed directly by Council teams. Highway maintenance and inspection processes also support this work by requiring inspectors to identify and record damaged, displaced, missing or misleading signs, while ongoing highway maintenance programmes seek opportunities to remove redundant street furniture and reduce unnecessary sign clutter.
23. It should also be noted that the presence of traffic management equipment does not necessarily indicate that it has been abandoned, as in some cases signs and barriers may be legitimately left in place for operational reasons, such as planned night-time roadworks, diversion routes, or other temporary traffic management activities taking place over an extended period.
24. If less than five traffic management items are left on a works site, and the responsible works promoter can be identified, the Council will issue official notification requiring the items (including temporary signage) to be removed within one day. If the items are not collected within that period, the Council can apply a daily financial penalty. Financial penalties can vary depending on the road categorisation.
25. In addition, communications materials are being developed to help Members, parish councils and residents better understand how roadworks and temporary traffic management are managed, and how concerns about abandoned signs and equipment can be reported.
26. Highway authorities can issue street works FPNs for certain notice offences under the NRSWA, as amended by the Traffic Management Act 2004, including:
 - a) Regulation 19 - Late immediate start, not advising Network Management Team within 2 hrs of immediate emergency/immediate urgent works;
 - b) Regulation 19 - Working without a permit;
 - c) Section 74 - Late works start, not advising Network Management Team within 2 hrs of the start of planned works on the network;
 - d) Section 74 - Late works STOP, not advising Network Management Team within 2 hrs of the works complete/site clear on the network;
 - e) Section 70 - Registration of the measures of reinstatement (the statutory undertaker has 10 working days to issue the registration, after which an FPN is applied). Accuracy of the information supplied on the registration;

- f) Regulation 20 - Breach of conditions, a FPN is applied if the undertaker breaches any permit condition agreed with the Authority during the approval process.

Table 7 – FPN charges and discounts

Offence	Full Charge	Discounted Charge
NRSA sections 70, 74, or 74A	£240	£160
Regulation 19 (working without a permit)	£1000	£600
Regulation 20 (breach of permit conditions)	£240	£160

27. Discounted charges apply where a FPN issued (see table 15) for offences under NRSA, including failures associated with Section 70 reinstatement notices and certain Section 74 street works requirements, is paid within the prescribed early-payment period. If the FPN is paid within 29 days of the issue date, the discounted charge will apply. Payments received after this period will be subject to the full charge.

Work Duration and Traffic Sensitive Streets

28. Since the introduction of Street Manager, there is a more accurate record of the actual start and stop times of temporary works on the highway. Analysis of the work duration is based on the works that are undertaken only. The data shows that whilst there has been an increase in the quantity of works, the overall durations of those works have reduced. This can be seen as positive and as a result of differing factors, including proactive duration challenge by the County Council.

Table 8 – Permitted Network Activity - works duration 2023-2026

	Year 6 2023/24	Year 7 2024/25	Year 8 2025/26
Calendar days duration	116,354	101,133	103,457
Number of permitted activities undertaken	29,158	28,504	34,944
Average number of days per permit	4	3.5	3

NB: Activities - refer to completed physical works activities on the Highway Network

29. The County Council designates a street as traffic-sensitive, based on a criterion that is set out within the regulations, to ensure that streets with specifically higher traffic flows have greater consideration with the coordination and control of works.
30. These designations contain timings for when the flow is estimated to be at the defined levels for traffic-sensitivity. The Network Management Team challenges methods of working, and wherever possible, places conditions to undertake work outside of peak times. However, in some cases, this cannot be avoided due to the nature of the type of temporary works being undertaken and/or the traffic restrictions that need to be in place at all times to maintain safety for all road users.

Work Exceeding Agreed Duration

31. Works that exceed their agreed duration can create significant coordination issues and can negatively impact other work programmes with the potential need to reschedule or revoke other active or planned works that may clash with adjacent over-running works.
32. Promoters may request an extension whilst the works are in progress, which can be granted or refused by the Council. Table below shows the works that have exceeded their agreed duration.

Table 9 - Work extensions 2021-2024

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Works exceeding the planned duration per year	2,175	1,990	2,157
Works exceeding the planned duration (% of total)	12.4%	10.3%	8.7%
Additional duration of work exceeding the planned duration per year (days)	30,177	17,638	14,720

Table 10 – Resolve/withdrawn Section 74 charges

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Resolved Section 74 charges	16	67	115
Withdrawn Section 74 charges	244	163	148

33. Overall, the volume of works exceeding the planned duration is reducing, and it is less than 10% of all works. Also, there are still large numbers where the additional duration is approved following a request by the promoter.
34. For the works that have overrun, the legislation enables the County Council to fine the promoters, and this is something that the Council undertakes. Applied offence charges for overruns are also defined within the NRSWA. The offence values are dictated by the type of offence and the sensitivity of the street. They are not fixed under the legislation, and they are subject to negotiations between the LHA and the Statutory Undertaker. The values can range from £100 to a maximum offence level of £5,000 per day in certain circumstances.

Variations to Permits

35. Both regulations and the permit scheme include a provision for the Council to vary or revoke a permit. Therefore, a permit variation can be issued either by the works promoter, for the Council to grant or refuse, or by the Council to the promoter as an imposed change. There are many reasons why variations are issued, including:
 - a) Changes to the work details, such as a change in traffic control or the work methodology once a work has been started.
 - b) Requests to extend the planned duration of the work, because of plant breakdown or other factors, such as bad weather, are preventing or limiting the work.

- c) Other unplanned activities on the network, such as an emergency diversion route caused by an accident or other emergency work.

Table 11 - Status of permits following assessment of the last three years

Assessment Status	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Granted	31,571	30,855	36,944
% Permits Granted	87%	88%	88%
Refused	4,417	4,249	5,138
% Permits Refused	12%	12%	12%
Revoked	156	68	95
% Permits Revoked	0.49%	0.22%	0.26%
Assessed Total:	36,144	35,172	42,177

NB: Permit Assessment - reflects chargeable permit applications

36. In most instances, the promoters submit a work duration extension request when it is apparent that the work will take longer than planned. For example, if the work is impacted by adverse weather conditions, or other unexpected events, such as plant failure. Table below shows the number of requests for extensions and the outcomes.

Table 12 - Number of requests for work duration and the outcomes 2023-2026

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Request for work duration extensions	2,057	1,903	1,940
Percentage refused	8%	11%	13%
Percentage granted with a duration challenge	12%	11%	15%
Percentage granted	80%	78%	72%

37. The County Council can issue imposed variations and revocations, and these are shown in Table 13 below.

Table 13 - Total number of permit variations submitted

Variations Volume (Street Manager)	23/24	24/25	25/26
Council Imposed Changes (after approval)	1,456	1,118	1,200
Modified Permit (during assessment process)	7,318	7,686	9,532
Promoter Change Request	5,541	5,984	6,060
Promoter Imposed Change	1,252	1,046	1,245
Work Extension	2,057	1,903	1,940
<u>Total Changes</u>	17,624	17,737	19,977

Permit Conditions

38. The permit application process allows the Council to apply or amend the permit conditions (within the categories that are defined in the statutory guidance). The use of the conditions is a primary benefit of a permit scheme. Table below shows the proportion of work where permit conditions have been applied.

Table 14 - Percentage of total proportion of minor, standard and major works where additional conditions have been applied 2023-2025

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Percentage of total proportion of works where condition applied	72.3%	73%	73.5%

39. It is not always possible to determine the effect of a condition or an outcome that can be quantified. However, there are a few indicators that can be used to identify whether conditions are being applied to good effect, and therefore of benefit to the road users. These include:

- a) Planned works outside traffic-sensitive times (on a traffic-sensitive street) with a timing condition (National Condition Text (NCT2a)) to ensure that there is compliance to this arrangement.
- b) Works at traffic-sensitive times (on a traffic-sensitive street) involving temporary traffic lights with a condition (NCT8b) to manually control the lights at specified times (typically peak traffic times).
- c) Planned works under a road closure with advanced publicity of the works.

Permit Compliance Inspections

40. A permit scheme introduced two new offences (working without a permit and breaching a permit condition), with financial penalties for the statutory undertakers where there is a failure to comply. The County Council has a team of ten inspectors who undertake inspections to manage and monitor compliance of the relatively high volume of temporary works on Leicestershire's Highway Network. Table below sets out the number of penalties that were issued together with the inspections carried out per year.

Table 15 - Permit offences 2023-2026

Volume (from Street Manager)	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Total FPNs Issued	3,067	2,912	3,134
FPNs Withdrawn			
Section 19	14	29	75
Section 20, Section 70, Section 74	226	213	509
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>240</i>	<i>242</i>	<i>584</i>
Revised FPN Total	2827	2670	2550
FPNs Disputed or Unpaid			
Section 19	77	70	28
Section 20, Section 70, Section 74	833	750	508
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>910</i>	<i>820</i>	<i>536</i>
FPNs Paid			
Section 19			
Full (£500/£1,000)	1	2	7
Discounted (£300/£600)	140	215	357
Section 20, Section 70, Section 74			

Volume (from Street Manager)	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Full (/£120£240)	128	55	37
Discounted (£80/£160)	1,648	1,569	1,613
Total Paid	1,917	1,841	2,014
Total Unpaid FPNs	910	820	536
% of Unpaid FPNs	32%	31%	21%
% of FPNs that are Paid	68%	69%	79%
Income	£301,720	£307,060	£303,730

41. FPNs withdrawn: The principal reason for the withdrawal of FPNs is that they are deemed invalid upon review.
42. Unpaid FPNs: Focused activity continues to be undertaken to recover outstanding FPN debt balances.

Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders

43. A TTRO, is a legal mechanism used by highway authorities to manage traffic safely when normal road conditions need to be temporarily changed. These changes may be necessary for roadworks, utility works, large public events, emergency situations, or any activity that could affect the safe movement of traffic. Examples include:
 - a) Waiting and loading restrictions (yellow lines, limited waiting bays, loading bays, blue badge holder parking etc.);
 - b) One-way streets;
 - c) Prohibited turns;
 - d) Speed limits;
 - e) Weight, length or width restrictions.
44. The Authority must follow a set legal process to introduce a TTRO in accordance with enabling legal powers. The Council is responsible for making TTROs that apply to the adopted highways network that it maintains.
45. Safety is the primary reason for introducing a TTRO. They help protect both the workforce carrying out activities on the highway and the public using the road network. By controlling vehicle and pedestrian movements, the risk of collisions, injuries, and congestion can be significantly reduced.
46. TTROs also play an important role in minimising disruption. Although restrictions may cause short-term inconvenience, careful planning helps ensure that works or events can take place efficiently while maintaining access wherever possible. This includes considering diversion routes, emergency service access, public transport impacts, and communication with affected residents and businesses.
47. As the LHA, it is Council's responsibility to ensure that temporary traffic management is not only safe and proportionate but also complies with the relevant legislation and national guidance. The TTRO process enables the Council to balance operational requirements with the needs of road users and the wider community.

Table 16 – TTRO volumes over last two Financial Years by type

TTRO TYPE	FEE PRE 2025	TTRO VOLUME 2024/25	FEE FROM 01.04.26	TTRO VOLUME 2025/26
Planned/Standard				
Non-Council	£1450	506	£1950	730
Council	£0	403	£0	572
		909		1302
Short Duration				
Non-Council	£500	216	£1000	319
Council	£0	339	£0	305
		555		624
Emergency				
Non-Council	£600	493	£1200	590
Council	£0	54	£0	126
		547		716
Cancellations				
Non-Council	£500	113	£1950	63
Council	£0	79	£0	50
		192		113
Events				
Non-Council	£600	51	£600	47
Non-Chargeable	£0	39	£0	85
		90		132
Charity				
Non-Council	£400	2	£400	4
TOTAL TTRO VOLUMES		2305		2891
Non-Council		1391		1753
Council		914		1138

48. Table 16 above sets out the number of TTROs issued over the last two years and the associated income received. Where TTROs are required for works undertaken by external organisations, the Council recovers the applicable costs through charging arrangements. No charge is applied where the works are being undertaken directly by the Council, and therefore these orders do not generate income. This should be taken into account when comparing the total number of TTROs issued against the income received.

Service Challenges

49. A key challenge continues to be ensuring that sufficient resources are available to deliver the network management service, particularly in the context of a competitive employment market and the difficulty of recruiting and retaining staff with the specialist skills and experience required for roles such as street works inspectors, coordinators and managers. To address this, the service has undertaken a Target Operating Model review within the last 18 months, which identified opportunities to strengthen the structure, improve resilience and support service delivery.
50. At the same time, demand for works on the highway network continues to increase, as demonstrated by the data presented in this report. This growth places additional pressure on service resources to effectively coordinate works, apply appropriate traffic management conditions and undertake inspection and enforcement activities. The changes being implemented through the Target Operating Model review are intended to ensure the service remains well placed to manage this increasing demand while maintaining a robust approach to permit approval, compliance monitoring and enforcement. This remains an important element of driving improvements in performance and behaviours across all organisations working on the highway network.
51. The data shows that the number of permit applications received continues to increase year on year and it is considered that demand for road space and permits will continue to be high irrespective of the Council's ability to resource and deal with the requests. This is because if the permits are not dealt with within the permitted timescales, then the permits are "deemed" as accepted.
52. The Network Management Team's resources have been reviewed and increased within the last 24 months as part of a wider change project. This exercise has had a positive impact on delivery capabilities but will require ongoing review.
53. Housing developer works on the highway are outside the scope of the Council's permit scheme. A developer that requires temporary road space on the highway to facilitate their works or to meet the requirements of a Section 278 agreement (allows a third party to work on the highway), follows a different process. The developer is required to engage with the Council during their preconstruction period. The Council will then process the temporary road space requirement and apply charges where this is necessary; for example, for road closures and for the associated fees.
54. As part of its strategic coordination responsibility, the Network Management Team collaborates regionally with neighbouring authorities, all statutory undertakers and other works promoters.
55. Network Management Coordination Meetings are held to provide an information sharing platform enabling the sharing of plans for major work programmes. This includes capital programmes that are ongoing or starting in the future (examples of this are the Council's rollout of Electric Vehicle Charging Points and Severn Trent Water's Upgrades to Wanlip Sewage Treatment Works). This type of work creates further demand over and above the utility maintenance activities on the network that will cause disruption. These meetings are held on a quarterly basis.

Communications

56. All roads and planned works across the County can be viewed on the One Network website. This information source is available to the public and organisations seeking information about temporary works on the highway, as it contains, for example, the details of the works, the works promoter, and the diversion routes where applicable. The website is map-based and user guides are available on the County Council's website. If the answers cannot be found via this site, then the 'report it' form can be used to raise any issues.
57. The Network Management Team undertakes a statutory consultation that consists of a public notice in the press. The duty for the consultation lies with the works promoter and, where applicable, conditions such as a communication plan will be added to the permit by the County Council – enforcement against these can be undertaken if not adhered to. Under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) and the associated Code of Practice for the Coordination of Street Works, stakeholders are required to cooperate and share information to support the effective coordination of works. Communication plans and public information are an essential part of this process, ensuring that residents, businesses, and road users are informed of planned road and street works, associated traffic management arrangements, and any potential disruption.
58. The promoter is required to erect site notices for the road closures, and to undertake letter drops and community / business engagement for larger schemes. The same applies for the County Council promoted works, such as carriageway resurfacing.
59. In all cases, it is important to reinforce that utility providers (such as gas, water, electricity and telecommunications companies) have a statutory duty to provide and maintain their infrastructure. This means that, where necessary, they are entitled to carry out both planned and unplanned street works. Whilst Leicestershire County Council can coordinate planned utility works and apply conditions to minimise disruption and manage their impact on the highway network, it does not have the power to prevent utility companies from undertaking works that are required to fulfil their statutory obligations. In some cases, this includes emergency or unplanned works, such as the repair of a burst water main affecting the supply of water to properties, where immediate intervention is necessary. Consequently, advance notice and early communication of such works are not always possible.

Lane Rental Scheme

60. The main aim of a lane rental schemes is to reduce the impact of the works on the busiest roads at the busiest time for the road users. Charges up to £2,500 per day can be applied for works on these roads. The objective of the scheme is to encourage those engaged in the works to reduce congestion by, for example, carrying out the work at different times, in different locations, and reducing the duration of the works or jointly with other works. Typically, a lane rental scheme will only apply to a small percentage of an overall highway network.
61. The lane rental schemes need to be approved by the Secretary of State for Transport before they can become operational. Such schemes do not replace a permit scheme, but they are an additional regime that provides a clear framework for a targeted approach to network management and reducing the congestion from the works.

62. Lane rental charges can be applied to utility street works but are not required to be applied to a LHA's own road works. However, road works typically account for around one-third of all of the works on the street and also cause disruption. In addition, road users do not distinguish between street (utilities) and road (highway authorities) works.
63. As a result, the DfT's policy position is that schemes should apply to an authority's own works in the same way, as is the case with the existing lane rental scheme. This is consistent with the 'parity' principle, which is a well-established principle for this sector and the traffic authority's network management duty set out in the Traffic Management Act 2004.
64. The detailed design of lane rental and the exact streets that should form part of it will, subject to certain criteria, be determined at a local level. This will need to be undertaken by LHAs in close consultation with the works promoters of both utility and highway works and the other interested parties. A lane rental scheme also needs to be focused on the most critical parts of the highway network and with charges applying only at the busiest times, which should encourage those that are undertaking the works (including road works) to carry out their works in a less disruptive manner. It is expected that updated guidance will confirm that the DfT expects lane rental to cover between 5% and 10% of an authority's network which is a change to the 'no more than 5%' recommended previously. The change proposed recognises local variation but also that 5% should be used to indicate that lane rental should be focused on the busiest part of the network only and should not be excessively applied.
65. Before applying for lane rental, LHAs need to demonstrate the operation of a well-run permit scheme. This should be demonstrated in evaluation reports and may include:
 - a) Permit fees that are proportionate;
 - b) Discounts offered for joint works;
 - c) Compliance with the permitting regulations and guidance;
 - d) Permitting is applied equally to both utility street works and an LHA's road works;
 - e) Schemes fully supporting the delivery of national infrastructure projects, such as:
 - i. Broadband/full fibre rollout;
 - ii. Installation of electric vehicle charging or heat network infrastructure.
66. It is worth noting that there are currently 11 lane rental schemes in operation: Transport for London, Kent County Council, Surrey County Council and West Sussex County Council, East Sussex County Council, Buckinghamshire Council, Oxfordshire County Council, North Yorkshire Council, London Boroughs of Lambeth, Enfield and Merton.
67. The costs should be proportionate to the outputs required to satisfy local obligations. Schemes developed to date have either been self-funded or have procured external expertise to help develop their scheme.

68. There are costs associated with the development of the lane rental schemes. Setup costs can include, but are not limited to, congestion analysis, cost-benefit analysis, the undertaking of public consultation and the resources to develop the scheme itself.
69. Currently, it is considered that any further work associated with a lane rental scheme is done in conjunction with the strategic approach to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

Resource Implications

70. There are no direct resource implications arising from this report. However, increases in the volume of chargeable activities, such as TTROs, can positively impact income budgets and may present further opportunities to improve the financial performance of the service.
71. The Director of Corporate Resources and the Chief Legal Officer and Monitoring Officer have been consulted on the content of this report.

Conclusions

72. The purpose of this report is to provide information to the Committee about the Council's duty to coordinate work on the highway and the level of activity that takes place across the County. If the volume of temporary works on the highway continue to increase, and the demand to work on the highway will continually put pressure on the Council's statutory responsibility to minimise disruption whilst facilitating work to maintain and repair the highway network and underground apparatus. Roadworks inevitably cause frustration to all road users, and this is reflected in the increasing challenges around the purpose, the duration and the types of works that are undertaken.
73. The Committee is asked to note and comment on the content of the report.

Background Papers

Leicestershire County Council – Permit Scheme

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2018/5/3/LCC-Permit-Scheme-Feb2018.pdf>

Network Management Plan

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2020/12/21/Network-Management-Plan.pdf>

Cabinet – 1 April 2014 (Agenda Item 13) – Network Management Plan 2014-2026

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s91663/13.%20Network%20Management%20Plan%202014-26.pdf>

Cabinet – 15 December 2020 (Agenda Item 6) – Network Management Plan Refresh

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/g6000/Public%20reports%20pack%20Tuesday%2015-Dec-2020%2014.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10>

Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 5 November 2020 – Network Management Plan Refresh

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s157600/Network%20Management%20Plan%20Refresh.pdf>

Highways and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 7 November 2024 – Network Management – Highway Activity Review

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1293&MID=7459>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

74. None.

Equality Implications

75. It has been assessed that an Equality Impact Assessment is not required. However, it has been identified that the only group with a perceived impact is 'Disability', which is considered to be a positive impact, as under a permit scheme, the Council can further ensure that the work is carried out in consideration to the needs of all vulnerable road users

76. Officers will continue to assess the role of the permit scheme to meet the Council's Public Sector Equality Duty.

Human Rights Implications

77. There are no human rights implications arising from the content of this report.

Environmental Implications

78. The Traffic Management Act 2004 was introduced to give powers to the Government and to delegate powers to local authorities in order to reduce traffic congestion and influence reliable journey times. The permit scheme that is operated and managed by the County Council is a tool that is used to achieve this.

79. By managing congestion and minimising disruption, this will have environmental benefits in terms of the impact of the works by reducing noise and improving air quality. These are achieved by reducing the length and duration of temporary road works.

Officers to Contact

Ann Carruthers
Director of Growth, Environment and Transport
Tel: (0116) 305 7000
Email: Ann.Carruthers@leics.gov.uk

Mike Barnett
Interim Assistant Director, Highways and Transport Operations
Tel: (0116) 305 2247
Email: Mike.Barnett@leics.gov.uk