

Project *SafeStart*

18th May 2020

HIGHWAYS
SECTOR COUNCIL 

What is the Highways Sector Council?

- The Council, a partnership of private and public sector organisations, first came together in September 2019, and has been recently recognised by the Secretary of State for Transport, Grant Shapps. Partners include the UK's leading highways contractors, local authority organisations and national agencies.
- The Council has been created to help transform delivery in the highways sector, using a unified voice and approach so the industry can work in greater partnership with central and local government. It aims to drive innovation across the sector to deliver economic, environmental and social benefits for business, communities and all road users.
- Its work has been focused on developing a collaborative approach to transform and improve how the sector works across a number of key areas: people and skills; innovation; safety; environment; value; investment; and delivery models.
- Private sector members include: AECOM, Amey, Atkins, Balfour Beatty, Costain, FM Conway, Eurovia Ringway, Jacobs, Kier, Leon Daniels and Associates Ltd, Mott MacDonald, Sir Robert McAlpine, Skanska, Tarmac.
- Public sector members include: Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport (ADEPT), Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport (CILT), Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation (CIHT), England's Economic Heartland, Highways England.
- Supporter members include: Highways UK, Local Government Association

Defining the challenge

- Central government clarified that those working in the highways and transport sectors are 'key workers'. Anyone travelling on foot, by bike, on public transport or in their own car to and from work will continue to rely upon roads, footways and bridges being repaired, road gullies emptied and roadside grass cut.
- All key workers must be able to work safely. The Construction Leadership Council (CLC) set out 'site operating procedures' – endorsed by Public Health England - that clarified how those in construction could do so under current circumstances.
- Central government and the Department for Transport (DfT) challenged the Highway Sector Council to set out how highway maintenance and improvement work could continue to be delivered whilst the United Kingdom tackles the COVID-19 pandemic.
- '**Project SafeStart**' is the Highways Sector Council's response – clarifying how best to "*accelerate*" and "*bring forward*" major maintenance and to deliver "*shovel-ready*" essential highway projects on all local highway authority road networks.

Basic principles

- Highways England (a Highways Sector Council member) has agreed with the DfT measures to continue with major maintenance and capital projects on the strategic road network (SRN) – including applying the CLC's site operating procedures.
- As the CLC procedures are generic, the Highways Sector Council (HSC) has produced its **COVID-19 Local Highways Safe Operating Procedures** guidance document for use in operational depots, on static highways maintenance/ improvement sites and for more 'mobile' reactive maintenance-related work.
- As confirmed in the 24th April 2020 letter from the Roads Minister, Baroness Vere, any form of abuse directed to key workers in the highways sector is unacceptable.
- Current government and DfT policy remains that major maintenance and essential highway projects are classified as "essential" works and would be so recognised by police forces.
- The DfT fully supports local authorities in recompensing the additional costs due to COVID-19 in line with the Cabinet Office Procurement Note PPN 02/20.

Project *SafeStart* – “Golden COVID-19” rules

- **A tiered approach to highway maintenance (please refer to the slides in the Appendix)**
 - ‘Tier 1’ is “critical” activity, in line with statutory duties (consistent with ‘out-of-hours’ activity)
 - ‘Tier 2’ is “essential” activity across all strategic and local authority highway networks
 - ‘Tier 3’ work comprises a mix of major maintenance (i.e. preventative or restorative maintenance work) and “shovel-ready” essential highway projects that every local highway authority should seek to proceed with.
 - Achieving all three tiers of work equates to a virtual business as usual approach – or ‘adapting to a new norm’
- **No restricted hours**
 - Full day shifts or full night shifts on weekdays
 - Weekend working is avoided unless a specific location is best suited for weekend works
- **Full road and footway closures for Tier 3 works wherever possible**
 - Use the relaxation in TTRO rules to permit fast re-programming during the COVID-19 period if needed
 - NO public access / egress during operational activity
 - Avoid any unnecessary site visitors

Project *SafeStart* – “Golden COVID-19” rules

- Tier 3 works on highways:
 - All endeavours should be made to “*accelerate*” and “*bring forward*” **major maintenance** and deliver “*shovel-ready*” **essential highway projects**. This should include the delivery of **multi-modal shift schemes** for public transport and/or promotion of cycling and walking in line with the Government and DfT policies, further to the allocation of £250m by the DfT for this purpose
 - Avoid works and projects in **residential and urban streets** where risk assessment determines that compliance with the HSC’s Local Highways Safe Operating Procedures may be compromised. This is particularly important on ≤30 mph roads, during the COVID-19 period, due to conflict risks with road users, residents and dealing with increased parked cars due to increased people “at home”.
 - Major maintenance of urban dual carriageways and expressways should still be undertaken where compliance with the HSC’s Local Highways Safe Operating Procedures can be maintained.
 - **No works occur on any primary emergency routes** for hospitals and military COVID-19 logistics
 - **No works to occur on primary logistics routes** for NHS / food or in proximity to any medical / funeral / chemist / food retail outlets unless linked to multi-modal shift schemes (as above)
 - **Social distancing** may mean increased individual personnel transport and reorganisation of works

Project *SafeStart* – “Golden COVID-19” rules

- **Essential worker status**
 - All vehicles and sites should be badged “*Essential Highway Works*” or similar
 - All personnel directly & indirectly are given status individually (formal letter) from respective client for agreed works and any hotel accommodation is secured for transient mobile workers within a highway authority area, using the “essential worker status”
- **Rigorous programming & planning**
 - Joint local authority and delivery partners create and follow a detailed plan with respective supply chain sub-plans (suppliers / builders merchants etc.) agreed in advance –including a targeted PPE requirement for the works package or project
 - Keep police and emergency services fully informed at all times
 - All road space agreed/booked through Street Manager and visible on one.network
 - Use digital live updates from work to trigger “real time” SatNav updates for road closures and diversion routes



Project *SafeStart* – “Golden COVID-19” rules

- **Intense media support**

- MP / Member / senior officer / delivery partner director messaging & proactive comms plan
- Dedicated social media management for each project, explaining what we are doing, why it is being done and what the delivered improvement outcomes are...
- Use “#HighwaysHeroes” & “Unsung Hero” type messaging

- **“Sterile” perimeter to enable “closed” work sites:**

- Create 2.0m “sterile zone” perimeter where there are any potential public interface points
- NO public crossing points through work areas / job sites
- Enact full closures of the road and footway, wherever possible, for the duration of the works

- **Traffic & public management**

- Permanent TM presence with, if possible, one additional “security officer” on site to ensure public control on the works site at all times
- Dedicated individual responsible for COVID-19 control, ensuring all site / depot based welfare is kept to a scrupulous standard at all times, each operative is allocated additional PPE and hand washing facilities with hand sanitiser are always available



TIER 3 - Programmed Services & Works

Routine Maintenance	Litter picking (highway)
Routine Maintenance	Sign repairs & maintenance – non-mandatory
Routine Maintenance	Street lighting: lantern and lighting column replacement
Routine Maintenance	Street lighting: night scouting
Routine Maintenance	Street cleansing/sweeping rural areas
Routine Maintenance	Carriageway/footway surfacing work
Routine Maintenance	Carriageway patching and surface dressing pre-patching
Routine Maintenance	Surface treatments inc surface dressing
Routine Maintenance	Minor pothole repair
Routine Maintenance	Capital scheme works
Routine Maintenance	Grass cutting (low risk areas)
Routine Maintenance	Road marking maintenance
Employer's Premises	Electrical testing and other compliance tests
Employer's Premises	Routine inspections

Yellow highlights above denote Tier '3' major maintenance and "shovel-ready" essential highway projects that local highway authorities should proceed with

Please note - highway maintenance 'Tier 1' & Tier '2' activities are deemed "critical" or "essential" works

•Appendix

Describing “Tier 1” critical and “Tier 2” essential highway works

Tier 1 – Emergency & Critical highway maintenance works – “critical” worker status

TIER 1 - Emergency and Critical

Severe Weather	Gritting and snow clearance (winter maintenance)
Severe Weather	Tree clearance (storm event)
Severe Weather	Flooding (storm event)
Incident Response	Attendance of Incident including bridge strike/other structures
Incident Response	Pothole repair
Incident Response	Emergency and Cat 1 (urgent) defects
Incident Response	Sweeping (clean up after incident)
Incident Response	Removing dangerous debris including oil spills
Incident Response	Emergency arboriculture
Incident Response	Traffic management (emergency closure/diversion etc)
Incident Response	Emergency street lighting & electrical repairs
Incident Response	Emergency traffic signal repairs
Incident Response	Removal of roadkill & other obstructions on the highway
Routine Maintenance	Debris patrols & collection - high speed network
Routine Maintenance	Litter picking/ blocked drains/EH issues/amenity areas - environmental health
Routine Maintenance	Street cleansing/sweeping urban areas
Routine Maintenance	Vehicle safety barriers/make safe - (where affecting integrity)

Routine Maintenance	S58 statutory inspections - single person & use of CCTV/technology where possible
Routine Maintenance	Maintenance & inspection of long-term temporary traffic management
Routine Maintenance	Street lighting: fixing power outages
Routine Maintenance	Drainage: repair and maintenance of critical network drainage systems (series 500)
Routine Maintenance	Safety critical road marking
Routine Maintenance	Safety critical mandatory road signs
Routine Maintenance	Emergency repair of powered apparatus (sump pumps etc)
Routine Maintenance	Grass cutting / maintenance of sight lines (inc strimming/mowing)
Routine Maintenance	Plant and fleet maintenance (keep fleet compliant)
Employer's Premises	Security/fire safety/depot facilities
Employer's Premises	Cleaning (virus containment), depots & welfare facilities
Employer's Premises	Health and safety compliance checks e.g. Legionella
Employer's Premises	Maintenance of fuelling equipment
Employer's Premises	Maintenance of safety critical equipment (brine tanks/salt stocks)
Employer's Premises	Fuel stocks & salt stocks

Tier 2 Key / Essential highway maintenance – “essential” worker status

TIER 2 - Key/Essential Services	
Incident Response	Mandatory sign repair and maintenance
Routine Maintenance	CAT 2H/M (up to 28 day) defects (likely to become CAT 1 if not treated)
Routine Maintenance	Vehicle safety barrier repairs
Routine Maintenance	Drainage: gully cleansing
Routine Maintenance	Pothole repair and surfacing where critical to integrity of the network
Routine Maintenance	Street lighting: structural Integrity testing
Routine Maintenance	Street lighting: identification and repair of cable faults
Routine Maintenance	High frequency gully cleaning (flood prevention)
Routine Maintenance	Traffic management for "others" undertaking safety works
Routine Maintenance	Street lighting: electrical testing
Routine Maintenance	Maintenance of powered apparatus (sump pumps etc)
Routine Maintenance	Drainage: schemes to improve integrity & resilience
Routine Maintenance	Drainage: grip / ditch clearance
Routine Maintenance	Drainage: clearing trash screens
Routine Maintenance	Sweeping and clearing highway channels (impact on drainage if not completed)
Routine Maintenance	Fleet: client vehicle maintenance and repairs