

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2013/14

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

11th NOVEMBER 2013

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

ROADS AND STREETWORKS

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the responsibilities of the Section in the co-ordination and control of all road openings within the County Borough, and to summarise the performance of the Statutory Undertakers to date.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note the content of this report.
- 2.2 Scrutinise and comment on the information provided.
- 2.3 Endorse and approve the works undertaken by the RSWA Section during financial year 2012/13 as detailed within the report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Following the introduction of the New Roads & Streetworks Act 1991 which removed the automatic right of Highways Authorities to inspect and charge Utility Companies for any inspections carried out on the highway. The Act allowed Highway Authorities only to charge up to a maximum of 10% of randomly sampled locations. However, any number of "investigatory inspections" may be carried out at the Councils risk , where concerns, such as materials used or quality of the final reinstatements are reported by others.

- 933 openings (excavations) were undertaken by Utilities in financial year 2012/13.

4. **INSPECTIONS**

4.1 **Random Inspections**

Three inspections randomly selected at the following work stages by the computer database.

- Inspection A, whilst works are currently being undertaken to check for the correct signing, lighting and guarding and that the correct materials are used.
- Inspection B, within 6 months of the work being completed, to check for defects.
- Inspection C, within 1 month of the end of the guarantee period.

The Council presently undertakes 10% of both Inspection A & B's with 100% Inspection C's (to minimise risks of costly repairs.)

4.2 **Investigatory Inspections**

Where inspections are undertaken following complaint, the Council is able to instruct the Utility to return to site and make good the necessary repairs and to recharge a series of defective inspections (3 in number) with a present inspection fee of £47.50 per inspection.

- 783 defective openings Identified in 2012/13 as detailed below.

Utility	No Defects Identified
Welsh Water	408
BT	192
WPD	46
Wales and West Utilities	122
Virgin	15

4.3 **Coring**

In addition to random and investigatory inspections, inspectors currently undertake coring utility openings, whereby the bound layers (bitmac layers) are cored where a 100mm core is extracted from the reinstatement to determine if the correct materials, thickness and compaction were used.

- 177 cores were undertaken and 57 cores were found to be defective as detailed below.

Utility	No Cores Taken	No Cores Failed
Welsh Water	90	31
BT	42	16
WPD	8	2
Wales and West Utilities	37	8

4.4 Overstays on the Highway (Section 74)

The Council is able to charge Utilities a fee where they overstay their allotted time on the highway.

Utility	No 74,s Issued	Fees Charged (£,000)
Welsh Water	47	19,500
BT	8	11,400
WPD	9	8,300
Wales and West Utilities	9	6,600

- 73 overstays were issued during 2012/13 with £45,800 charged in fees.

4.5 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN)

The Council is able to charge Utilities a fee where they do not provide the correct information.

- Fees able to be charged are based on time
- Up to 91 days, £80.
- Over 91 days, £120.

Utility	No FPN's Issued	Fees Charged (£,000)
Welsh Water	76	6,320
BT	33	2,840
WPD	22	1,760
Wales and West Utilities	29	2,240
Virgin	3	320

- 163 FPN's issued and £13,480 fees charged during 2012/13.

4.6 Private Openings (Section 50)

Private openings are where non Utility companies request permission to work within the highway.

- 15 number private openings were issued and £5,555 fees charged during 2012/13

4.7 Defective Apparatus (Section 81)

Defective apparatus occurs when the Utilities apparatus has been identified as problematic, for example a missing stop-box cover.

Utility	No Defects Reported
Welsh Water	790
BT	85
WPD	6
Wales and West Utilities	11

Virgin

32

4.8 Builders Skips

Permit fees charged for the placement of a builder skip on the highway.

Permits Issued	Non-Permitted Skips	Permit Fees (£,000)
2,847	12	66,739

4.9 Scaffolding

Permit fees charged for the placement of a scaffold on the highway.

Permits Issued	Non-Permitted Scaffolds	Permit Fees (£,000)
599	3	14,975

4.10 Temporary Traffic Lights (TTL)

Approvals must be obtained prior to setting out temporary traffic lights on the highway.

- 191 Applications approved during 2012/13.

4.11 Road Closures

Approval of requests to close roads for works purposes only.

- 78 requests to close roads were approved during 2012/13.
- Fee earning function, actual fee dependant on nature of the closure

5 CONCLUSION

The above report highlights and identifies the performance of the Roads & Streetworks Section throughout 2012/13 financial year, in its management and co-ordination of the highway works and it is accordingly recommended for Scrutiny Committee approval.