

Mrs Angela Scott
Chief Executive
Aberdeen City Council
Marischal College
Business Hub 12, Level 2 West
Broad Street
Aberdeen AB10 1AB

11 September 2018

Contact: Nisha Bunting
Direct Tel: 0131 244 9937

Our Ref: PER/NB/2018/ACC

Dear Mrs Scott

Scottish Road Works Commissioner 2017/18 Annual Performance Review

Please find enclosed Aberdeen City Council's 2017/18 annual road works Performance Review in respect of the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

My review is presented in a similar format to last year utilising data from two full business years for comparison purposes. Roads authority and utility company averages are included where appropriate.

In terms of section 118(1) of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (the 1991 Act), roads authorities have a statutory duty to co-ordinate the execution of works of all kinds (including works for road purposes) in roads for which they are responsible:

- a) in the interests of safety;
- b) to minimise inconvenience to persons using the road; and
- c) to protect the structure of the road and integrity of apparatus in it.

This review considers how well you are meeting your statutory obligations.

In addition to your annual review, Aberdeen City Council's road works performance is routinely discussed at quarterly Area Roads Authorities and Utilities Committee meetings. A mid-year interim performance review is also issued to your designated senior manager.

Management and Performance Reports

Organisations are expected to routinely monitor their own performance utilising reports which are downloadable from the Scottish Road Works Register (SRWR). This ongoing performance review process allows your organisation to take appropriate action throughout the year to improve performance. If your performance falls at any point during the year, it is expected that an explanation will be provided to my representative at your Area RAUC meeting. Organisations can also generate reports to assist benchmarking against similar authorities.

Consistent failure to achieve the expected level of performance may result in further formal action.

APPENDIX 1

Aberdeen City Council Road Works Performance – Primary Indicators

	Indicator	Performance				Notes
		Aberdeen City Council	Expected	RA Average	Utility Average	
Administrative Functions	Gazetteer Submissions	4	4			
	Noticing Failure rate (%)	26%	< 4%	9%	7%	
	Notices without correct Contact Details	389	0			Originator and Contractors names and telephone numbers must be recorded prior to works commencing.
	Notices without Traffic Management Type	0	0			Prior to works commencing the correct traffic management type must be recorded on all notices of 7 days or less.
Works Planning and Operational Functions	Works requiring Early Start (%)	12%	< 15%	17%	8%	
	Works requiring Late Start (%)	7%	< 1%	2%	1%	
	Works requiring Works Extension (%)	14%	< 10%	14%	8%	
	Overrunning Works	37	0	1%	4%	
	Unplanned Works (%)	5%	< 4%			Excessive use suggests poor works planning and a lack of co-ordination and co-operation.
	Works Awaiting Closure at year end	0	0			
Sample Inspections	Works registered per 100km	79		69		This metric considers a roads authorities performance against their respective SCOTS peer group. The RA Average is shown for SCOTS Group - City.
	Category A Undertaken	77%	100%			It is expected that all roads authorities undertake all target sample inspections in each of the 3 categories.
	Category B Undertaken	98%	100%			
Category C Undertaken	100%	100%				
Miscellaneous	Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) Issued	212	> 0			All roads authorities are encouraged to issue FPNs to drive improvement of utility performance. Currently 20 authorities issue FPNs.
	Attendance at Area RAUC meetings	100%	100%			Regular attendance at Area RAUC meetings demonstrates a commitment to meeting your statutory obligations to co-ordinate road works.
	Vault Submissions	4	4			Whilst not a statutory requirement, organisations are encouraged to submit regular updates in the interests of safety and to assist good works planning.

Commentary

In general terms, the road works performance of Aberdeen City Council was poor during 2017/18 and is in need of early improvement.

At 26%, your noticing failure rate remains particularly high despite being advised that action was required to improve this metric last year. It is expected that a failure rate of 4% or less is achieved within the next twelve months.

It is disappointing that the number of works recorded without correct contact details has increased, with 2 in 5 works incorrectly recorded, the worst roads authority performance. This is a simple administrative function, not subject to weather and other operational activity.

Greater focus should be given to reducing your use of late starts and overrunning works which are high in comparison to other roads authorities.

On a positive note, I am encouraged that you have reinstated local RAUC meetings.

Specific action is required in respect of:

Noticing Failures - Noticing is key to the good co-ordination of road works. At 26%, your Noticing Failure rate is well in excess of the expected performance of <4% which is regularly achieved by a number of roads authorities and utility companies. It is also higher than the roads authority average of 9%. Noticing is largely an administrative function, not generally influenced by weather and operational activity. Improvements should be achieved through training and works planning and management. Action is required to reduce your failures.

Missing Contact Details - As a minimum, you are required to input the originator name, the originator telephone number, the contractor name and the contractor telephone number on the SRWR for all road works. At the very latest, these four individual fields must be entered on Actual Start notices.

Late Starts – The managed use of Late Starts can be viewed as good co-ordination. However, excessive use suggests that works are not being well planned and managed. Across Scotland, roads authorities generally use Early Starts in <2% of their road works. At 7%, your use of Late Starts is high and suggests a lack of co-ordination. It is expected that <2% can be achieved by your authority through improved works planning and management.

Overrunning Works - Across Scotland, around 1% of roads authority road works overrun their planned completion date. At 6%, your use of overrunning works is high, suggesting that planned works durations are unrealistic. Processes for setting works durations should be reviewed.

Sample Inspections Undertaken – Roads authorities are expected to undertake 100% of all agreed Category A, B & C target sample inspections. Results are used to monitor utility company road works performance. Details of inspections registered should be comprehensive, accurate and registered timeously. It is important that 100% are undertaken demonstrating that road works sites are being properly monitored and co-ordinated in accordance with your statutory obligations.

In view of your continuing failure to demonstrate any overall improvement in performance, please contact Nisha Bunting by 31 October 2018 to arrange a meeting in Edinburgh to review your proposed Improvement Plan. Please note, your draft Improvement Plan should be submitted to my office 5 working days in advance of the agreed meeting date.

Should you wish to discuss your Performance Review further, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Yours sincerely



Angus Carmichael
Scottish Road Works Commissioner