

Report on	Maintenance Activities on Roundabouts and Carriageways within the District
Reporting Officer	Terry Scullion, Head of Property Services
Contact Officer	Terry Scullion, Head of Property Services

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To advise Members of the Health and Safety issues relating to the provision of grounds maintenance and other Council services frequently undertaken on dual carriageways, rural and trunk roads (including roundabouts) in the Council area; and put forward options to ensure compliance with these requirements for staff and contractors.
2.0	Background
2.1	Council are required under The Litter (Northern Ireland) Order 1994 to ensure that the land or roads for it is responsible are, in so far as is reasonably practicable, kept clear of litter. Whilst there is no such similar provision for grass cutting or planting on arterial routes, rural roads etc, Council provide this service within the District.
2.2	Members will also be aware of Council's obligation under the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 to ensure the safety of employees, contractors and the wider public at all times.
2.3	Routinely over many years Council has been maintaining rural roads in relation to grass cutting, planting, maintenance of bus shelters, litter clearance, etc. For the majority of roads these works were carried out on a 'rolling' basis with advisory signage deployed advising motorists that such work was taking place and with a Council vehicle used to provide protection for the employee(s) working on foot or by the roadside.
2.4	In response to safety concerns from LASAN (Local Authority Safety Advisory Network), with the endorsement of the HSENI, they produced formal Guidance in the form of a document entitled 'Safety at Street works and Road works Guidance' (Appendix 1). The document primarily focuses on traffic related issues associated with manual and mechanical activities carried out by Councils. The document goes on to discuss temporary traffic management, monitoring issues as well as the supervision and the training of staff.

2.5	In addition to the above Councils must also take due cognisance of The Traffic Safety Measures and Signs for Road Works and Temporary Situations – commonly known as Chapter 8.
2.6	Council in consideration with this Guidance have had many frontline staff trained in basis traffic management awareness, to levels T1 and T2. Supervisors trained to T6, and Managers to T7 to help with compliance. With further training planned in the coming weeks to address remaining staff gaps.
2.7	The Guidance also sets out the measures that should be taken to protect staff during these operations including signage, traffic restrictions, speed limits etc. On main arterial routes, roundabouts and dual carriageways it poses additional hazards for those engaged in typical maintenance activities, and require that Council undertake appropriate risk assessments and put in place robust control measures to protect staff. This may include applying temporary lane closures, speed restriction etc, all of which must be agreed in advance with TNI.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	In consideration of the issues as stated above Council is required to have appropriate health and safety measures in place in advance of undertaking grounds maintenance and other Council response services on the carriageway ensuring the protection of both employees and members of the public.
3.2	To ensure the matters raised by LASAN and the HSE were addressed properly Council officers engaged a traffic management specialist to advise on the appropriate sections of Chapter 8 and the LASAN Guidance, and to provide an informed professional insight into the relevant issues on traffic management, particularly in relation to grounds maintenance activities.
3.3	Arising from this is that training gaps among staff are being addressed during February and March. In addition there is a need to develop and implement an Safety Action Plan to address specific health and safety concerns on an individual road basis where works exceed 15mins (e.g. Roundabouts).
3.4	A review of such all such locations where grass cutting, planting, weeding, watering, etc occurs across the district with the intention of progressing with operations where its deemed safe to do so.
3.5	The traffic management specialists also advised that the signing of works on high-speed dual carriageways should be carried out by an external specialist Traffic Management company due to the high-risk nature of this work. On some occasions it may be possible to coordinate activities with Transport NI if undertaking any planned maintenance, if it's necessary for any Council maintenance.
3.6	An area of significant concern is the maintenance of roundabouts on 60mph carriageways in the district maintained as per Council's Grounds Maintenance Delivery Outcomes Standards namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castledawson Roundabout, • Magherafelt By pass roundabouts, • Dungannon Road Roundabout, Cookstown • Stangmore Roundabout, Dungannon

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ballygawley (Old Roundabout), Ballygawley																				
3.7	The Tamnamore roundabout was maintained up until last season, however it has been excluded from safety considerations as it is actually outwith of the area included in Council's Grounds Maintenance Delivery Outcomes Standards agreed in 2017, and will therefore not be maintained by Council in the 18/19 growing season.																				
3.8	Any Council led Grounds maintenance activities in these locations should be undertaken in accordance with the standards as set out in Chapter 8 and the Red Book code of Practice, as modified by IAN 115/08. To safely adhere to these safety standards, and retain the quality standard of grounds maintenance at these roundabouts the lowest risk period for Council to carry out this work is either during the night or on Sundays when traffic levels are lowest to reduce the risk to staff, based on the current system of work. The consequence is an increased cost to maintain the quality standard of maintenance.																				
3.9	Following the completion of training as detailed above all other works on high speed rural roads that are regarded as less high risk and roads with speed limits of 40mph and under will be undertaken by suitably trained and equipped in-house staff.																				
3.10	In consideration of the above the officer team have been reviewing and considering the options for continued grounds maintenance of roundabouts and dual carriageway areas:																				
3.11	<table><tr><th>No cuts per season</th><th>In-house cut within core hours (£)</th><th>External contractor within core hours (£)</th><th>In-house cut outside core hours (e.g. Sunday) (£)</th><th>External contractor outside core hours (e.g. Sunday) (£)</th></tr><tr><td>7</td><td>2,492.91</td><td>2,257.50</td><td>4,506.18</td><td>4,147.50</td></tr><tr><td>14</td><td>4,985.82</td><td>4,515.00</td><td>9,012.36</td><td>8,295.00</td></tr><tr><td>21 (17/18 standard)</td><td>7,478.73</td><td>6,772.50</td><td>13,518.54</td><td>12,442.50</td></tr></table>	No cuts per season	In-house cut within core hours (£)	External contractor within core hours (£)	In-house cut outside core hours (e.g. Sunday) (£)	External contractor outside core hours (e.g. Sunday) (£)	7	2,492.91	2,257.50	4,506.18	4,147.50	14	4,985.82	4,515.00	9,012.36	8,295.00	21 (17/18 standard)	7,478.73	6,772.50	13,518.54	12,442.50
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3.12	It should be noted that all such areas are the responsibility of Transport NI to maintain and costs are not reimbursed to Council following the withdrawal of funding by Transport NI at the start of the 2015/16 growing season.																				
3.13	A further consideration for Members should to be aware of is that in late 2016 Council agreed to commit approx. £15,000 to TNI for the installation of a Public Art Gateway Feature at Castledawson roundabout. See scheme sketch plans in Appendix 2. Subsequently a pre-condition of the scheme by TNI is that Council enter into a maintenance agreement associated with the proposed scheme in terms of grounds maintenance, litter clearance and other associated maintenance.																				
4.0	Other Considerations																				
4.1	<p><u>Financial & Human Resources Implications</u></p> <p>Financial:</p> <p>Undertake grass cutting work at the roundabouts and other high speed carriageway areas for the 18/19 growing season through a third party contractor to the same frequency and standard as the 17/18 growing season, subject to being compliance with the in accordance with the standards as set out in Chapter 8 and the Red Book Code of</p>																				

	<p>Practice. Provision for grass cutting is subject to 18/19 financial year estimates, however no provision has been made to carry this work out through an external third party. As a consequence it may be necessary to make a saving through a reduction in other discretionary grounds maintenance areas such as a reduction in the extent of seasonal planting and associated maintenance across the district.</p> <p>Human: Officer time to manage the contract, monitor safety compliance and manage the impact of re coordinating seasonal planting and associated maintenance across the district.</p>
4.2	<p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>N/A</p>
4.3	<p><u>Risk Management Implications</u></p> <p>Council has a duty of care to staff and the public to mitigate against such risks and put adequate management systems in place if undertake such work to avoid injury or claims.</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	<p>Members are requested to note the content of this report and recommendation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue maintaining the areas detailed to the same standard as the 17/18 season, however through a third party contractor to manage safety compliance at an approximate cost of £6,772.00, subject to a cost saving in another area of grounds maintenance, and • Approval to enter into discussions with Transport NI to more fully consider maintenance responsibilities associated with the installation of the Public Art Gateway feature at Castledawson roundabout.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	LASAN Safety on Street and Road works Guidance
6.2	Public Art Gateway Feature Illustration and Block Plan at Castledawson Roundabout