

<b>Report on</b>	Grounds Maintenance of Roundabouts within Mid Ulster
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2018
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Terry Scullion - Head of Property Services
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Terry Scullion - Head of Property Services

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To advise Members of the grounds maintenance provision of roundabouts in Mid Ulster in relation to Council's Grounds Maintenance delivery standards.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	In March 2016 an aspirational set of delivery standards for Council grounds maintenance operations was introduced. The introduction of the Grounds Maintenance delivery standards has raised issues from a number of areas as work continues to ensure consistency of approach across the three legacy Council areas; each of which enjoyed a very different standard.
2.2	It was reviewed following the experiences gained in relation to the changes as implemented, viewed against expectations and available resources lead to modifications of the standards. A revised version was adopted in March 2017. This continues to be the basis for grounds maintenance operations across the district.
2.3	In March 2018 Members were advised of the Health and Safety challenges 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. This includes 'Safety at Street works and Road works Guidance' In addition the need for Council to take due cognisance of The Traffic Safety Measures and Signs for Road Works and Temporary Situations – commonly known as Chapter 8.
2.4	The Guidance 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 and roundabouts it poses additional hazards for those engaged in typical maintenance activities, and requires 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.
2.5	A review of such all such locations were grass cutting, planting, weeding, watering, etc occurs across the district was carried out. An area of significant concern is the maintenance of roundabouts on 60mph carriageways or aerial routes in the district maintained as per Council's Grounds Maintenance Delivery Outcomes Standards namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Castledawson Roundabout,</li> </ul>

2.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Magherafelt By pass roundabouts,</li> <li>• Dungannon Road Roundabout, Cookstown</li> <li>• Stangmore Roundabout, Dungannon</li> <li>• Ballygawley (Old Roundabout), Ballygawley</li> </ul> <p>As a result it was agreed to maintain the areas through a third party contractor to manage safety compliance. This is funded by maintaining alternative lower risk sites in house that were previously carried out externally, and other discretionary grounds maintenance provision.</p>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p>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 roundabouts on the public carriageway ensuring the protection of both employees and members of the public.</p>
3.2	<p>As set out in Appendix 3 there are approximately 20 main roundabouts identified in the district, excluding mini-roundabouts. Council are maintaining 12 of the roundabouts identified. To adopt an alternative approach across the district and maintain the remaining roundabouts, the grounds maintenance delivery standards will require a change to some operational arrangements across the district. Maintenance to these standards is dependent on the availability of financial and human resources. It is also dependant of the availability of suitable plant and equipment to meet the standards, and ensure streetworks safety compliance.</p>
3.3	<p>To assume maintenance responsibility for the remaining roundabouts would incur significant additional expense for Council in maintenance costs and in Street works safety compliance. For two roundabouts; Hillhead Road/Creagh, Toome and Tullyvar Roundabout, Ballygawley investment in physical improvement works is also required in advance of any maintenance agreement. It should also be noted that much of this work is the responsibility of Transport NI.</p>
3.4	<p>Members should also be mindful of current and future road infrastructure improvements to the strategic network in the district that may increase the number of roundabouts. These include the A6 Dualling between Randalstown and Castledawson, especially the 5.4km section from Toome to Castledawson; and also the A5 Western Corridor Scheme that could see additional roundabouts in the Aughnacloy and Ballygawley area.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<p><b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b></p> <p>Financial: Undertake grass cutting work at the roundabouts is subject to compliance with Streetworks Safety standards as set out in Chapter 8 and the Red Book Code of Practice. Provision for grass cutting is subject to in year budget availability. However no provision has been made to carry this work out in house or through an external third party. The estimated cost to undertake annual maintenance on the 8 identified roundabouts would be approximately £35,100 per annum of additional cost.</p> <p>Human: Staff time to monitor safety compliance and consistency in approach associated maintenance across the district. Additional in house resources and training would be required to undertake this additional work.</p>

	<p>Risk Management: Council has a duty of care to staff and the public to mitigate against risks and put adequate management systems in place if undertake such work to avoid injury or claims, including an insurance and liability issues associated with maintaining a work area not under the responsibility of Council or were a maintenance agreement does not exist.</p>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	<p>Equality &amp; Good Relations Implications: It is important that an equitable approach is maintained across the district.</p>
	<p>Rural Needs Implications: None</p>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	Members are requested to note the content of this report and advise on the approach to future maintenance of Roundabouts in the district.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
6.1	Appendix 1 – Grounds Maintenance Outcomes based Standards
6.2	Appendix 2 – Settlement Sizes
6.3	Appendix 3 – Inventory of main roundabouts in Mid Ulster