

Report title: Review of the Member-led Pothole Scheme	
Report to: Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee	
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Date: 18 May 2023	For: Discussion
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County Divisions affected: Not applicable	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report summarises the review carried out by the Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee (PSEG) into the Member-led Pothole Scheme on 20 April 2023.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to

- note that the Conclusions and Recommendations (Paragraph 4) have been referred to the Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport.
- consider the response of the Cabinet Member (**Appendix 1**).

3. Background

- 3.1 Following the PSEG meeting of 16 March 2023, the Chairman (Cllr A Goggin) agreed that an all-committee Task and Finish Group should be established to conduct a one-off review of the existing member-led pothole scheme and make any necessary recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport.
- 3.2 The Committee met on 20 April 2023 to conduct this review immediately following the conclusion of the formal public meeting of PSEG.
- 3.3 The Committee considered the results of the all-member survey on the scheme. This had been sent electronically to all ECC members and saw a response rate of just over 50% (39 members).
- 3.4 It was agreed that following the 20 April meeting, the Vice-Chairman (Cllr M Steel) would work with officers to summarise the discussion. This summary is outlined below ('Conclusions and Recommendations').
- 3.5 It was further agreed that this summary would be given to the Cabinet Member

for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport ahead of the 18 May PSEG meeting for his response. His response is attached as Appendix 1.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations from the Task and Finish Group

4.1 Conclusions and Recommendations from the Member-led Pothole Scheme Survey (see Paragraph 5 for a full summary):

- A majority of members would like to see the member-led pothole scheme continue and be extended (e.g., to include footways).
- Members would like to see a tracking system and a streamlined reporting system. Ideas in this area included a 'live' tracking system allowing members to see the status of each submitted pothole and incorporating the member-led scheme into the existing reporting system on the 'Tell Us' website to avoid duplication.

4.2 Recommendations from the PSEG Task and Finish Group discussion on 20 April:

- Reflecting the results of the survey, PSEG members would like greater clarity on whether the existing scheme provides value for money.

This should include information on the cost per pothole of the member-led scheme compared to a pothole repaired through the 'normal' Highways route.

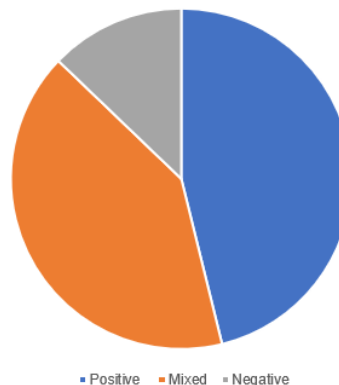
- Members should be provided with an annual scheme of work showing the planned scheduling of local repairs (including through s106 contributions) in their division. This could then be used by councillors to inform their choices for the member-led scheme.
- The timings for the scheme should be reviewed with some members suggesting that the deadline for submissions under the current scheme was too early, as many potholes only appeared after winter.
- Members would like to see greater clarity provided on the resource available and planned timetable for work to ensure that expectations match reality. This reflected members' disappointment that some repairs submitted under the existing scheme remain outstanding.

5. Evidence – Member-led Pothole Scheme Survey Responses

5.1 All Members were asked to complete a survey regarding the Member-led Pothole Scheme. 39 Members completed the survey, producing in the following results.

5.1.1 What is your overall experience of the member-led pothole scheme?

Positive	18
Mixed	16
Negative	5



5.1.2 What aspects of the scheme do you think worked well? *Summary of Comments:*

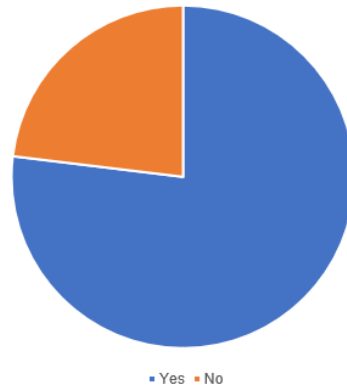
- Members being able to select the potholes for repair
- Getting repairs done quickly
- Being able to nominate potholes which were not eligible for repair outside this scheme
- Good amount of time from launch to close which allowed for consultation with Parish Councils

5.1.3 What aspects of the scheme do you think could be improved? *Summary of Comments:*

- An easier submission/reporting/tracking system
 - A 'live' report allowing Members to see the status of each pothole
 - Updating Members when potholes are repaired or rejected
 - Prevent duplication of work by using the existing reporting system on the 'Tell Us' website instead
- Having a larger allocation
- Amount of time it took to repair
- The quality of the repair
- The deadline was too early, as many potholes appeared after winter

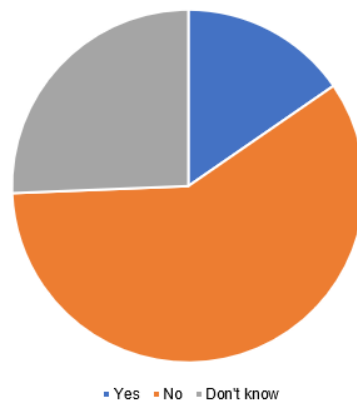
5.1.4 Do you think the objectives and operation of the scheme are clear to Members?

Yes	30
No	9



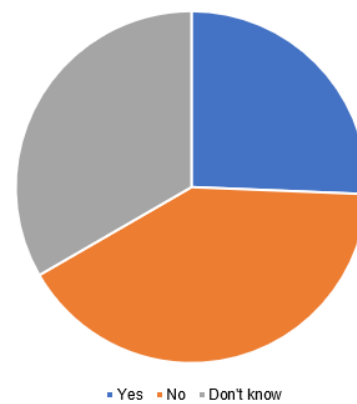
5.1.5 Do you think the objectives and operation of the scheme are clear to residents?

Yes	6
No	23
Don't know	10



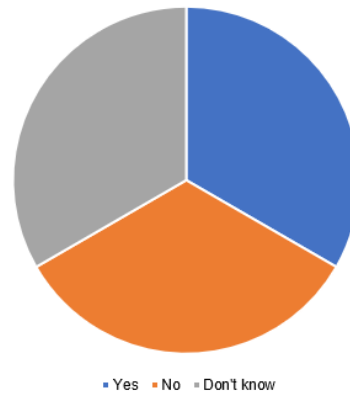
5.1.6 Do you think the objectives and operation of the scheme are clear to other groups, such as District or Parish Councils?

Yes	10
No	16
Don't know	13



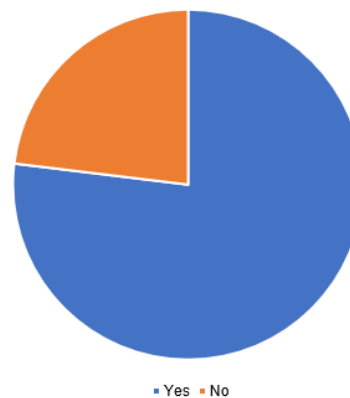
5.1.7 Do you think the scheme provides value for money?

Yes	13
No	13
Don't know	13



5.1.8 Did you use your full allocation of repairs this year?

Yes	30
No	9

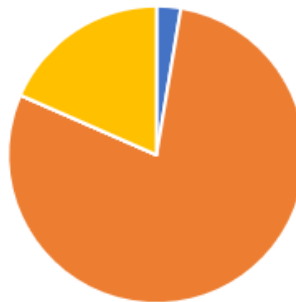


5.1.9 If you did not use your full allocation of repairs, why not? *Summary of Comments:*

- Complexity of submitting
- Losing track of how many had been submitted
- Struggled at the beginning of winter to find potholes

5.1.10 Looking ahead, the scheme could continue and be extended e.g. to include footway repairs. Which of the following best describes your view?

I would like the scheme to continue as it is	1
I would like the scheme to continue and be extended (e.g. to include footway repairs)	30
I would like the scheme to be scrapped and the money diverted into the general highways budget	0
Other	7



- I would like the scheme to continue as it is
- I would like the scheme to continue and be extended (e.g. to include footway repairs)
- I would like the scheme to be scrapped and the money diverted into the general highways budget
- Other

5.1.11 Are there any additional comments you would like to make on the member-led pothole scheme? *Summary of Comments:*

- A better reporting and tracking system would make the scheme easier to use
- Confusion between the Member led scheme and Highways reporting tool i.e. if a pothole was fixed through the tool or scheme
- Clarity and updates of how long it will take to repair a pothole after it has been reported would be helpful
- Having access to the status of potholes which have been reported both in the member-led scheme and the reporting tool would be helpful

- Should be extended to footways
- Make it clearer if multiple potholes count as one or more
- Overall the scheme has been a success and the fixed potholes have been appreciated by residents

Note – PSEG members discussed the results of the survey on 20 April. They agreed to make no specific recommendations on 5.1.5 (not seeing this as a key priority). They also discussed the cost-per-pothole of the scheme and would like clarification on this.

6. Update and Next Steps

This report has been presented to the Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport ahead of the PSEG meeting on 18 May 2023. His substantive response will be made at the meeting and is included in Appendix 1.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Response to PSEG Review of Member-led Pothole Scheme.