

**KENT UTILITIES ENGAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, 12th April, 2017**

**2.00 pm**

**Medway Room, Sessions House, County Hall,  
Maidstone**







## AGENDA

### KENT UTILITIES ENGAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 12th April, 2017, at 2.00 pm

Ask for: **Joel Cook/Anna Taylor**

**Medway Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone**

Telephone: **03000 416892/416478**

#### Membership

Conservative (5): Mr R J Parry (Chairman), Mr R L H Long, TD (Vice-Chairman), Mr J A Davies, Mr G Lymer and Mr C Simkins

UKIP (1) Mr F McKenna

Labour (1) Mr T A Maddison

Liberal Democrat (1): Mr I S Chittenden

Independent (1): Mr M Whybrow

*Tea/coffee will be available 15 minutes before the start of the meeting*

*County Councillors who are not Members of the Committee but who wish to ask questions at the meeting are asked to notify the Chairman of their questions in advance.*

#### Webcasting Notice

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#### **UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

*(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)*

- 1 Welcome & Introductions
- 2 Apologies & Substitutes
- 3 Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the agenda for this meeting
- 4 Minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2017 (Pages 5 - 10)
- 5 Review of progress and areas for improvement (Pages 11 - 26)

**EXEMPT ITEMS**

*(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)*

John Lynch  
Head of Democratic Services  
03000 410466

**Tuesday, 4 April 2017**

**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL**

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**KENT UTILITIES ENGAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting of the Kent Utilities Engagement Sub-Committee held in the Medway Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Monday, 27 February 2017.

PRESENT: Mr R J Parry (Chairman), Mr R L H Long, TD (Vice-Chairman), Mr I S Chittenden, Mr G Lymer, Mr T A Maddison and Mr F McKenna

ALSO PRESENT: Mr R Bishop, Mrs R Baker, Mr C Hollamby, Mrs J Osborn and Mr C R Pearman

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs K Stewart (Director of Environment Planning and Enforcement), Mr A Turner (Water Resources Manager) and Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Research Officer)

**UNRESTRICTED ITEMS****10. Welcome & Introduction**

*(Item 1)*

The Chairman welcomed those present to the third meeting of the Kent Utilities Engagement Sub-Committee. Following invitation from the Chairman; Sub-Committee Members, Guests and Officers gave a brief introduction to their role.

**11. Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2017**

*(Item 4)*

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2017 were an accurate record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

**12. Technical & Development Service Presentation**

*(Item 6)*

1. Robin Bishop, Managing Director of Technical and Development Services Group Limited (TDS) explained the background of TDS to Members of the Sub-Committee. Mr Bishop was the Managing Director of TDS which supported the construction sector and engaged with the utility sector on behalf of developers to assess market competition, fair pricing and project feasibility. Mr Bishop came from a technical background and TDS had 4 regional offices and one headquarters and covered the whole of England and Wales. There were differences in the working practices of developers and utilities companies across the country.
2. Mr Bishop explained some of the problems faced by developers, including:
  - a. Water and sewerage element – companies unwilling to vary standard costings

- b. Sewerage companies responding that there is no capacity for developments
  - c. Companies unwilling to forecast and making no provision for development sites therefore resulting in additional costs
3. Mr Bishop highlighted a development for which South East Water had identified the area and brought schemes forward but Southern Water had stated that there was no capacity. Delays arose where utilities companies did not forecast until there was some certainty about developments. Some schemes took 12 months to design and another 12 months to start work. This was stopping developments moving forward in a timely manner, developers were sitting on the land because there wasn't the infrastructure to go forward, and utilities companies would prefer the developers to fund the schemes.
  4. It was considered that utilities companies could be more open and amenable to discussions. However there was a good relationship with South East Water.
  5. There was a discussion around the responsibility for clearing sewers, for example. It was considered that some utilities companies used the developers to improve their networks. Developers could use S106 agreements to connect to sewers; companies wanted a clause in planning consents to ensure developers took responsibility for connections.
  6. It was thought that capacity was not as issue, money was being spent upsizing sewers for storm conditions. Members considered that when looking at the big picture there were elements of the system that were not working, but were water companies in breach of their statutory duty in any way? Mr Bishop explained that his company did challenge utilities regulators on behalf of developers where there were problems. Water authorities needed to be more forward thinking. There was a need to allow for future development and future expansion, utilities companies often blamed the local authorities and their lack of housing policies preventing them from forecasting need.
  7. Mr Bishop also alerted Members to highways insisting on dual networks because they did not want services crossing the main highways. This was doubling up on cost.
  8. The Chairman offered that the sub-committee write to the Government Minister explaining that there were requirements to build houses but there were some major inhibitors.
  9. Q: do you think the new charging regime will benefit both large and small developments equally? Mr Bishop stated that he did not think it would benefit equally, he had been told that charges would vary, it was considered that infrastructure charges needed to be stabilised across the county.
  10. Mr Pearman, who was substituting for the Cabinet Member, stated that there were huge complexities surrounding the issues and utilities in general. They were under public ownership without a business focus. He considered that the situation would remain unless it was cracked. If the situation resolved would Mr Bishop's company go out of business? Mr Bishop responded by explaining that in part, yes but partly TDS was in business because the issues had got more

complex. TDS was working alongside bigger consulting engineers who didn't understand the legislation/regulations. TDS was trying to get the best value for developers and would challenge where there were high prices. There was a gap in the market place between large developers and smaller developers and that gap was growing. There was also a shortfall in finding staff to work on developments that understand the complexities of the issues.

11. A Member asked whether there was a body with statutory power and a relevant framework encompassing all issues to direct questions to? Mr Bishop explained that there was not a body overseeing all companies, there were regulators which were fairly toothless. Members considered that there were too many regulators, which were toothless and only looked after their own companies.
12. One Member asked whether the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation helped? Mr Bishop explained that it did help and was a positive way forward.
13. In response to a question about the regulators and what would make them more powerful Mr Bishop suggested that independence might make them more powerful. Other Members agreed that a statutory regulatory body was necessary and asked whether there was any way Mr Bishop could assist in lobbying Government to ensure statutory body. Mr Bishop explained that he did lobby Government, frequent changes to Government ministers made this more difficult.
14. One Member considered that the only alternative was to make the market work properly and this was a challenge.
15. In response to a question about good practice Mr Bishop highlighted Seven Trent which had changed its way of working, and its culture.

RESOLVED that the Committee thank Mr Bishop for a very informative presentation and for his clear answers to questions from Members.

### **13. South East Water Presentation**

*(Item 5)*

1. Rachel Baker, Developer Services Manager gave a presentation to Members of the Sub-Committee which can be viewed [here](#).
2. She explained that the estimating and planning was undertaken within South East water and delivery by Clancy Docwra.
3. South East Water carried out internal work to change their internal developer services. This changed the idea that the developer was not a customer; previously the company did not believe that developers were customers. Customer engagement was crucial.
4. South East Water were involved in start-up meetings, houses were being built very quickly and there was a need to ensure work reflects timescales.
5. Mrs Baker explained that there were not many self lay organisations (SLOs) in the South East (5% of schemes), South East Water had been trying to work out why. It was found that developers felt that they weren't treated in same way as water customers, so South East Water built a system to log discussions.

6. Mrs Baker was part of the Charging Subgroup which was developing the new charging system for water connections. It was made up of water companies, DEFRA, Water UK lawyer, and a Member of HBA and HBF. The group has looked at options and aims to build a model to find best way for industry to charge, key is transparency and consistency. It was thought that many developers were blind to the cost of new charging regime.
7. Regarding illegal connections, this was not a big problem for South East Water but it was a huge issue for Thames Water with 6000 illegal connections per year, from developers or members of the public.
8. Mrs Baker explained that she could understand the hesitancy of other companies but South East Water was still trying to be as proactive as possible. Developers asked what capacity was available and South East Water would respond so developers could begin building so not to hold up site.
9. With regards to assets department – South East Water had a 5 year plan and water resources had a 25 year plan. Developers made initial contact for planning as early as possible. South East water had worked hard to ensure developers realise they are available and that the best option is for developers to come in and talk to them.
10. Issues with new developments – there was due to be a group on 8 March where OfWat would discuss what could be done to lift barriers to lack of competition.
11. A brief discussion was had around Highways and there was surprise that this had not been raised as an issue more frequently as was raised in developer groups.
12. New charging rules would be available in April 2018, and it was thought that this would encourage competition. There was also a Government consultation on Fixing Broken housing market.
13. A Member stated that it would help if others would follow the example set by South East Water. When dealing with major set of developments, what stage did South East Water start planning?
14. It was considered that South East Water did take a risky approach. When planning applications were accepted South East Water started thinking about putting infrastructure in. They would have been aware that site was being developed and would have started increasing capacity on the assumption that the development will eventually go ahead. Looking at sites as early as possible was key.
15. Mr Bishop expressed the view that South East Water were a good example, it was possible to pick up the phone to the relevant officer and have a conversation. Other utilities companies had got rid of developer services, over last 15yrs or more, only point of contact was an email and contact was lost.
16. A Member asked what had driven South East Water to good practice and other utilities were a shambles, it was considered that South East Water saw the problems and dealt with them.



17. Mrs Baker explained that culturally developer services had a much higher profile in hierarchy than before. Directors and Managing Directors had to take ownership and were very aware of developer services. Following further questioning from a Member Mrs Baker explained that South East Water had, previously, got charging wrong and an OfWat review had determined that South East Water had to pay money back and this led to a review and the high profile of developer services.
18. Mr Bishop explained that whilst the interpretation might be that utilities companies were allowed to do something it didn't mean that they should be doing it. A Member asked whether the Council should approach Ofwat or the Government and it was considered that the Government was more appropriate, there was not a consistent approach across the county.
19. Jo Osborn, Head of Communications addressed the Sub-Committee and explained that the long term vision of South East Water was thinking ahead. She explained their Water Resources Management Planning process and the key role that members of their Environment Focus Group play. The current plan focussed on 2015-40. South East Water was looking to reduce demand whilst increasing supply. By 2020 90% customers on water meters. £400million of investment in new water resources.
20. With regards to the Engagement Plan timetable – conversations would feed into next plan. 97% response rate and in Kent 100% local authorities had fed back into local resources team.
21. Mrs Osbourne explained that SEW's draft Drought Plan will be published for consultation by 31 March 2017.
22. South East Water was working with Southern Water and Affinity on drought plan, the more companies work together helped to avoid confusion. There was a regional 'Water Resources in South East' group which included Thames Water, Portsmouth Water and Sutton and East Surrey Water and took a long term view and identified opportunities to work together.
23. A Member asked what happened with developments near boundaries of two water authorities? Mr Hollamby explained that it was possible to have a cross border supply, a decision would be made early on to decide who would feed developments, developers would go and see which company had more water and least off site reinforcement.
24. Following invitation from the Chairman Mr Turner asked a question regarding the 'right to connect'. Southern Water had said that this was a barrier to investing up front. If they did and developers exercise their right to connect, then Southern Water would have no mechanism to recoup their investment costs. Is that fair and to what extent are developers right? Mr Bishop explained that part of the 5 year review process was to identify a pot of money to use for infrastructure (money to invest). Along with infrastructure money Southern Water hold one view and other companies others. There was inconsistency across the country. Mrs Baker explained that regarding infrastructure payment developers would say infrastructure money was for growth, and onsite infrastructure. When developer

lays new water main (Self Lay) South East Water paid asset value, but for sewerage didn't get asset payment but still getting payment from residents. Inconsistency in funding.

25. A Member referred to the Growth Infrastructure Framework, Mrs Osborn responded by saying that it was very helpful and that relationships with Mr Turner and team were working well.

26. A Member referred to run off from developments, Mrs Osbourn explained that South East Water worked closely with highway authorities to ensure that they were as joined up as possible. Mr Bishop highlighted the planning of developments people were taking up their front gardens for parking; this was causing a big problem in older developments.

27. The Chairman concluded the meeting by thanking the witnesses for their time, Mr Bishop was asked to provide a few bullet points to form the basis of a letter to be sent from KCC to Government to try to resolve the issues preventing good working relationships between the utilities companies and the developers.

RESOLVED that:

28. KCC should write to Government to ask appropriate authorities to knit the issues together.

29. Thank witnesses for attending and giving their time to inform and educate Members. Members of the Sub-Committee had every sympathy with the issues raised and would try to see how Members could help.

By: John Lynch (Head of Democratic Services)  
To: Kent Utilities Engagement Sub-Committee 12 April 2017  
Subject: Review of progress and areas for improvement  
Classification: Open

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Summary: The Sub-Committee is meeting with representatives of organisations that have previously attended to facilitate a multi-agency discussion to identify areas of good practice, opportunities for improvement and to encourage information sharing.

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Sub-Committee has previously received presentations and updates from the following organisations:
- Ofwat (water regulator)
  - Southern Water
  - South East Water
  - Technical Development Services (TDS – development consultants)
- 1.2 The Sub-committee has so far focused on gathering information from the relevant organisations to build up an evidence base for consideration of how Kent County Council may best facilitate improvements to the utility sector, keeping in mind the key priorities of developers and utility providers.
- 1.3 To ensure the focus remains on developing improved partnership working, information sharing and positive engagement between organisations and with customers, the Sub-Committee is including all previous attendee organisations in a single round table discussion item. The Sub-Committee will consider the views expressed and recognise elements of best practice that should be highlighted and shared, as well as advising where opportunities for improving the customer experience and information sharing are identified.
- 1.4 In addition to previous attendees, the Sub-Committee is receiving an update from David Latham, KCC Highways Policy and Inspections Manager, to provide additional information about how KCC facilitates relevant works as part of development and utilities activity. Mr Latham will also be providing a national perspective in relation to his work with Highways England. Documents outlining KCC's roadwork management schemes may be found as appendices to this report (Appendices 1 & 2).

- 1.5 A representative from Affinity Water is also attending the Sub-Committee meeting. Affinity Water is the largest water-only supplier in the UK and serves parts of North West London and the Home Counties.

## **2. Kent Utilities Engagement Sub-Committee**

- 2.1 The Kent Utilities Engagement Sub-Committee was established by the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 9 June 2016 and it first met on 27 July 2016. This was an inaugural meeting to allow discussion with Members and Environment, Planning and Enforcement (EPE) department officers regarding the practical remit of the sub-committee and outline plans for working with the key partners in the sector. The sub-committee agreed to attend sector specific training prior to external engagement.

The sub-committee agreed its scope as follows:

- (a) Gathering and scrutinising evidence as to the performance of utilities and other relevant bodies to support current and future growth, gathering information and data from all stakeholders – utility companies, developers, and districts;
  - (b) Identifying the key barriers presented by utilities and other relevant bodies to growth ;
  - (c) Identifying and testing recommendations for overcoming these barriers; and
  - (d) Engaging with national regulators as appropriate to promote these recommendations.
  - (e) Promoting the maintenance and improvement of current infrastructure in the Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework.
- 2.2 The Sub-Committee met informally in November 2016 to receive detailed training on the water sector from EPE staff (Lead Officer – Alan Turner).
- 2.3 The Sub-Committee met on 27 January to receive presentations from Ofwat (Water regulator) and Southern Water. Members had a positive discussion with the external guests, taking reassurance from the improvement in service levels noted by Ofwat and Southern Water’s in engaging in better partnerships with developers and local authorities. Key recommendations from the session relate to KCC promoting and supporting improvement in early strategic collaboration and information sharing between local authorities, developers and the utility sector (supported by Ofwat experience that lack of communication between parties had been the key cause of most disputes).
- 2.4 The Sub-Committee met on 27 February to receive a presentation from Technical & Development Services (TDS - a private development consultancy

firm) and South East Water. TDS provided an overview of some of the challenges facing developers, with consideration of some of the good work being done in partnership with some utility companies, including South East Water. South East Water provided an overview of their activities in Kent and highlighted the positive progress in the industry with the recognition of developers and customers. South East Water also noted the expectation that the new charging scheme, when implemented, would help simplify the development system and allow for better long term planning and information sharing. The Committee resolved that further engagement with Central Government was needed on encouraging appropriate authorities to work together on the range of issues with a co-ordinated approach to improve consistency around the country.

**Recommendations:**

Members are asked to note the discussion with the relevant organisations and consider appropriate recommendations for improved joint working.

*The Committee may require further information be provided by relevant KCC departments and it may request further information from the external bodies.*

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Kent Lane Rental Scheme  
Appendix 2 – How Roadworks are managed (a short guide)

Background Information:

*(Due to focus of the meeting being on updated consideration of all previous discussions and reports, background information for all Sub-Committee meetings has been listed below)*

South East Water website - <http://www.southeastwater.co.uk/>

SEW website – Developer services: <http://www.southeastwater.co.uk/your-water/new-connections>

TDS website - <http://www.t-d-s.com/>

Better Connected: a practical guide to utilities for home builders

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/389772/Better\\_Connected\\_Dec14\\_2.PDF](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/389772/Better_Connected_Dec14_2.PDF)

Southern Water – Strategic Statement 2015-40

<https://www.southernwater.co.uk/strategic-direction-statement>



Keeping Kent  
**moving**

# Kent Lane Rental Scheme

Kent County Council is committed to keeping Kent moving by ensuring Kent's road network and utility services are well maintained. We make sure any essential works are managed to limit the amount of disruption to road users, while ensuring safe and reliable roads.

So that KCC can manage the road network effectively, the Kent Lane Rental Scheme (KLRS) has been introduced to work alongside the Kent Permit Scheme. The scheme works by charging a daily charge to those carrying out work on the highway (promoters), if their works are required to be carried out and restrict the highway during busy periods such as rush hour.

The aim of the KLRS is to incentivise those carrying out works on critical roads to plan and execute their work so that they take place outside of traffic-sensitive times and other busy periods such as during term times.

The KLRS does not apply across the whole of Kent. It is applied to specified locations identified within the KLRS schedule of roads, which represent the most critical and busiest parts of the county's road network.

The KLRS and associated KLRS schedule provide the scope of the Kent Lane Rental Scheme. Further details are provided in the KLRS Operational Guidance and Surplus-Revenue Governance documents, which can be found on the KLRS webpage:

[www.kent.gov.uk/lanerentalscheme](http://www.kent.gov.uk/lanerentalscheme)



# KLRS in action

## Case study 1

When a pedestrian crossing in Gravesend needed repair, scheme engineer Tony Atherton used an innovative – approach. By uncovering the old road, which was under the pavement, he used tarmac to bring the level of the existing road surface up. In doing so he:

- maintained traffic flow
- saved 14 days of road closure
- avoided Lane Rental Scheme charges



## Case study 2

By trialling 'keyhole' techniques similar to surgery, Southern Gas Networks (SGN) cut disruption time from one week to two nights. Two gas leaks were repaired in Maidstone without the usual week of traffic lights they would have needed reducing re-surfacing delays and avoiding Lane Rental Scheme charges.

### (3.3) Specified Works

A Specific Work is a registerable work that would require a permit - street works; works for road purposes; major highways works and also includes those carried out under a Section 50 Licence.

### (3.4) Specified Location

The KLRS charges will apply to Specified Locations only - as identified within the KLRS Schedule.

### (3.5) Specified Days and Times

The KLRS charges will only apply when works are carried out during Specified Days and Times - as identified within the KLRS Schedule and associated references.

### (6.4) Lane Widths

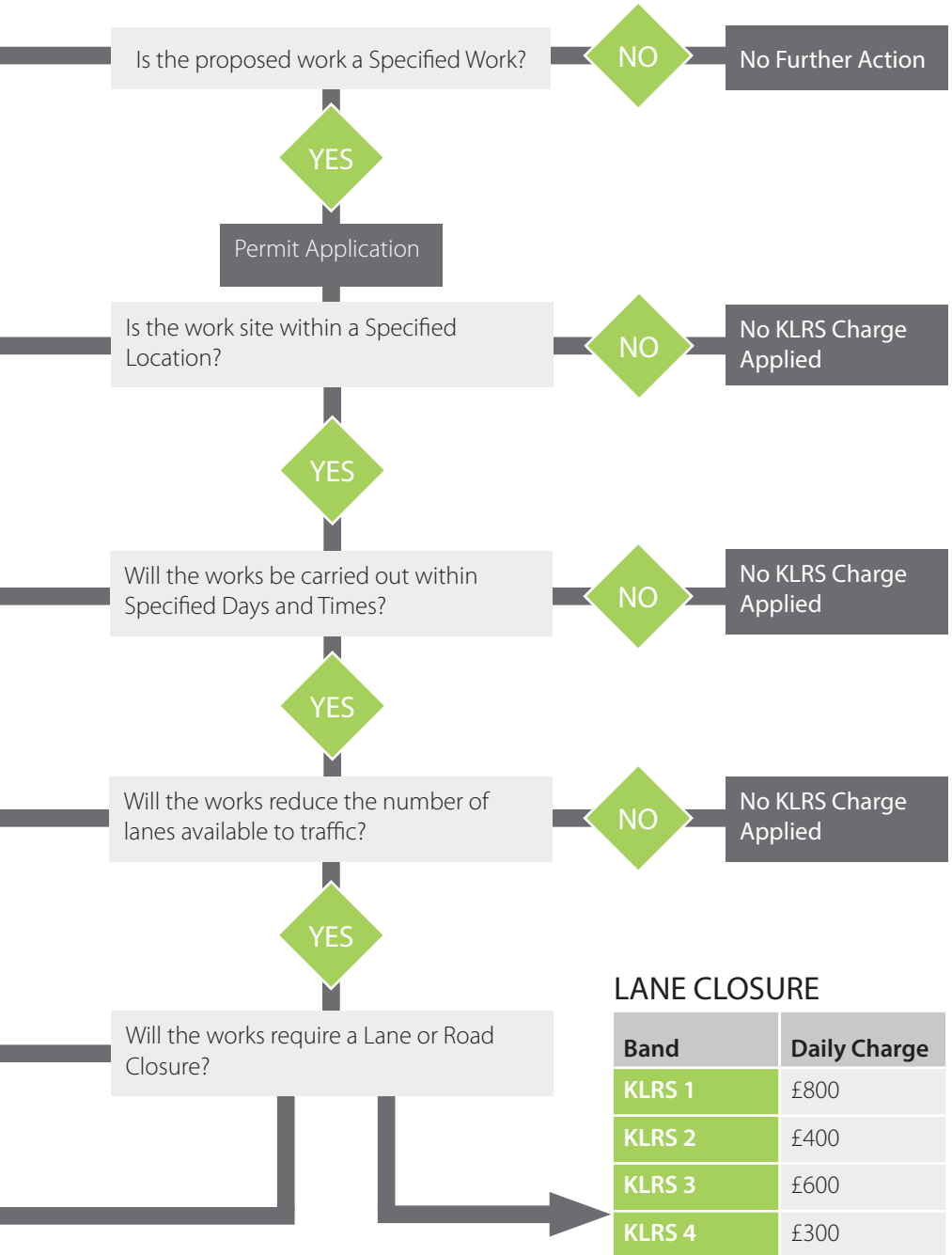
Lane rental charges will not be applied for works which do not reduce the number of lanes, of prescribed width, available to traffic.

### (6.2) Charge Categories

The daily charge to be applied will correspond to the traffic management in place for the works (road or lane closure) and the Band of the road (as defined within the KLRS Schedule).

## ROAD CLOSURE

Band	Daily Charge
KLRS 1	£2,000
KLRS 2	£2,000
KLRS 3	£1,600
KLRS 4	£1,600



**LANE CLOSURE**

Band	Daily Charge
KLRS 1	£800
KLRS 2	£400
KLRS 3	£600
KLRS 4	£300

\*The KLRs schedule of roads set outs the location bands (KLR1-4).

## Reducing or avoiding charges

To achieve the objectives of the KLRS there are opportunities for a promoter to carry out their works whilst minimising the potential impact and avoiding or reducing charges by:

- working outside of traffic-sensitive times
- working outside of term or seasonal times
- working at weekends and Bank Holidays during term-times
- avoiding the reduction of lanes available to traffic
- collaborating with other promoters to share a collective charge.

## Working within the KLRS

Permit applications and variations must still be submitted in accordance with the Kent Permit Scheme. For works within a KLRS specified location these will be coordinated and approved by a KLRS route manager, irrespective of whether a charge for the works will be applied.

One permit application must be submitted per USRN and there is one charge per occupation per USRN.

KLRS charges apply from the start of work, except for immediate activities where the charges can apply from the third day of occupation.

## What happens to the revenue?

All surplus revenue collected through the Kent Lane Rental Scheme will be put towards projects and initiatives associated with the objectives of the scheme. Funds will be applied equally to the following areas:

- **transportation** – managing and monitoring traffic and works to avoid disruption
- **enabling infrastructure** – promoting and providing facilities for future maintenance, access and improvement
- **industry practices and research & development** –operational practices, materials and news ways of working for the control, planning and execution of works.

The purpose of these projects and initiatives is to reduce the impact of works on our highways. The aim is to raise standards in the planning and execution of works for the benefit of road users in Kent.

Key decisions are made by a governance board made up of industry representatives. The board meets regularly to discuss applications for funding and individual board members act as sponsors for applications.

If you have an idea that falls into one of more of these categories, email [kent.lanerentalscheme@kent.gov.uk](mailto:kent.lanerentalscheme@kent.gov.uk)

The content of the permit application and any subsequent permit variations will determine the application of KLRS charges. However KCC reserves the right to amend their charges based on other additional information, such as site inspections.

All non-excavationary works, such as operating valves, hydrants, sewer jetting, lifting manhole covers, leakage and fault detection and above asset ground maintenance may be deemed as a 'registerable activity' and will therefore require a permit and may be subject to the scope of the KLRS.

Section 74 overrun charges will apply once any reasonable period is exceeded in addition to the applicable KLRS Charges.

## Further Information

The KLRS and an Operational Guidance document can be found on the KLRS webpage [www.kent.gov.uk/lanerentalscheme](http://www.kent.gov.uk/lanerentalscheme)

For further information or enquiries on the KLRS contact:  
[kent.lanerentalscheme@kent.gov.uk](mailto:kent.lanerentalscheme@kent.gov.uk)

This short guide explains how Kent manages work to the highway and the pipes and cables below and above it. It covers the basic legislation and how quality of the finished work is monitored. The guide explains how Kent works within national legislation to minimise the impact of road works.

### **The legal situation**

#### **Are utility companies allowed to dig up the road?**

To provide water, sewerage, gas, electricity, and telecommunications services, utility companies have rights with regard to develop and maintain their apparatus. They all have powers to lay maintain and improve their apparatus within streets.

#### **What powers does Kent have to manage and coordinate this work?**

Work carried out on the highway, whether by utility companies or Kent as Highway Authority, can unavoidably cause disruption to road users. It is necessary to balance the rights that people have to access all available services against the disruption that may be caused in providing, maintaining, and enhancing the pipes and cables that supply these services.

The New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA) and the Traffic Management Act provide the framework to manage and coordinate the work to minimise disruption to the traveling public but equally to allow the statutory undertakers to carry out what is required of them by statute.

The NRSWA:

- Places a duty on the street authority to co-ordinate works of all kinds on the highway.
- Places a duty on undertakers to co-operate in the process.
- Makes provision for Lane Rental (explained later).

The Traffic Management Act was brought in to provide better conditions for all road users. It has:

- Introduced a duty on traffic authorities to manage their network.
- Created new legislation that enables Kent to run a permit scheme.

### How Kent Manages and Coordinates Roadworks

Kent uses the very latest legislation and approaches. The Kent Permit Scheme drives improvement in how work on the highway is carried out, and the Lane Rental Scheme focuses on the busiest roads in Kent. Kent's roadwork co-ordination teams work with those working on the highway and use the legislation to reduce inconvenience and delays caused by road works to an absolute minimum. This aims to deliver growth without transport gridlock.

#### The Kent Permit Scheme

The scheme requires those working on the highway to apply for a permit. Conditions can be applied to permits granted for work and these are aimed at minimising inconvenience and disruption.

The Kent Permit Scheme delivers improvements to the way work is carried out on the highway, routinely achieving:

- Over 10 years occupation of a highway saved each year through extending working hours and joint working with several companies working at the same time. This equates to saving 1 day in every 15.
- A 26% reduction in complaints and enquiries. These have steadily reduced since the introduction of the Kent Permit Scheme as better information has been made available and the implementation of work on the highway has improved.
- Over 98% of sites have been completed to original programme or earlier. Before the permit scheme only 86% of work was completed to time.

#### The Kent Lane Rental Scheme

Kent additionally is one of only two authorities in the UK piloting a Lane Rental Scheme. This is aimed at further cutting congestion on key routes by giving those working on our highways a clear financial incentive to reduce the scale and duration of roadworks on the county's busiest roads.

- The Kent Lane Rental Scheme covers about 5% of Kent's 5,000-mile network.
- The charges apply at certain times of day, and in some cases at times of year when routes are impacted by tourism or school runs.
- Road closures are charged at £2,000 and £1,600 a day and lane closures at £800, £400, £600, or £300 dependant on disruption caused and the location.
- It is estimated that there has been a 90% reduction in occupying the strategic roads at the busiest times.



### How Kent Checks Quality of Work and Good Working Practice

The main purpose of inspections is to protect the highway asset, arguably a local authority's most valuable asset.

It is also critical that inconvenience is minimised. Conditions are applied to permits granted for work on the highway, these are aimed at minimising that inconvenience. To improve compliance with the permit conditions more inspections are being carried out on live sites. This includes work at the weekends.

### The Inspection Regime for Kent

There are three categories of inspection, these are:

- Category A for work in progress looking at how the work is carried out and the safety of the sites.
- Category B for when work is complete looking for the site to be cleared of equipment and materials and most importantly the quality of the reinstatement.
- Category C for just before the end of the guarantee period looking at the quality of the reinstatement. looking for failures such as edge cracking, trips, depressions or crowning, quality of surface, and correct material used.

Category A, B and C inspections are purely visual and can only reveal failures such as edge cracking, trips, depressions or crowning, quality of surface, and that the correct material is used.

Kent aims to inspect 1 out of every 2 sites at one of the inspection stages. This is more stringent and exceeds the national guidance. As a result the quality of work has improved steadily improving year on year with over 97% now passing the visual inspections.

There is an ongoing testing programme looking at the thickness and quality of material used in reinstatements. Kent has taken targeted action against the poorest performers demanding plans for improvement. The pass rate for the tests in Kent have risen steadily, increasing from 62.8% in 2009/10 to in excess of 80% in 2014/15, this is in contrast to a national pass rate of around 60%.

### Where can I see information on Roadworks in my area?

Roadworks.org is a publically accessible website enabling virtually real time information on Roadworks planned or current and the type of traffic control and likely disruption caused.

The web page is able to be customised to match the level of information required and can provide alerts on a route or over an area of interest.

The web link is: <http://kent.roadworks.org/>

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