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Highways Heads Up: April 2021 Update

The County Council is making major investments into the highways service to improve our ways of working for staff and outcomes for our customers. We continue to make good progress in a range of areas including going live with system modules, developing a robust training plan for our staff and exploring ways we can communicate with the service.

The project team continues to provide regular updates and opportunities for you to give feedback and get involved so we can continue to make things better.

We have a new opportunity available for staff to feedback. Please encourage your team to participate as the ongoing feedback is helping to shape the service.

Any questions? Send them to askkevin@cumbria.gov.uk.

Highways Engagement Team recruitment update

After a successful recruitment campaign, Belle Taylor has recently been appointed as the Highways Engagement Officer Team Leader.

Belle started working for Cumbria County Council in 2017 as the Business Support Team Leader for Economy & Infrastructure (E&I, South Lakes). Belle then joined the Information Governance team and continued to support E&I alongside all directorates with corporate governance, FOIs, complaints and MP enquiries.

Highways Engagement Team Manager, Maggie Wardman has been with the Council 14 years, working within Highways for 10 years and has spent the last 4 years in the centralised Business Resource team. As a part of the Business Resource Team, Maggie has continued to work alongside colleagues in Highways delivering on projects such as the transfer of the Highways Hotline to the Service Centre in 2019 and the Highways front door workstream, which includes the development of the new interface via Liberty Create.

Interviews for team members were concluded on 20 April 2021. The interview panel successfully appointed 7 individuals that will add exceptional value to the customer experience and improve the efficiency of the reporting process.

Staff Communications and Engagement Survey

Help us, to help you – how can we improve the way information is distributed within the Highways department?

Your comments in recent feedback and listening sessions highlighted that communication and engagement with employees was an area for improvement. We want your views on how this can work better so you receive the right information, in the best format.

Please encourage all staff to take part in our Staff Communications and Engagement Survey using the link below. It can be anonymous, or if you are interested in being part of an ongoing working group to help move improvements forward, then please include your contact details.

>>> Complete our communications survey <<<

Paper copies of the survey are available at each depot and can be found on the notice board. We would encourage all staff that do not currently have access to technology to complete the survey as it is extremely important for us to understand everyone's' needs and how we can improve communication.

Please complete the survey by Sunday 16 May 2021. Paper copies can be returned to (just need to confirm).

Engagement

Work has already begun in making some direct changes, particularly around communication and how everyone receives information.

We recognise that those staff who do not have access to IT are unable to receive the same direct information as other colleagues. All staff will be receiving a new mobile device this summer and these are currently on order. Training will be provided so everyone feels confident in using them when they arrive.

We want everyone to receive the same information at the same time moving forward rather than relying on colleagues to pass this on. The mobile devices will help with this and we are also working on the following improvements which will be available to all Operations and Asset teams:

- **A new Highways Staff Homepage:** We are currently developing a web page where all key information can be held and accessed by all to ensure messaging is consistent.
- **Need to Know Template:** For key updates, there will be a short briefing document that will be available via the staff homepage, email and printed information in depots.

- **Meeting Minutes Template:** Based on the feedback from the staff sessions, we are developing a document to show the agenda items for a staff meetings across all levels of the service that will promote consistency and a clear way to identify subsequent actions.

These are being worked on now and we hope to have something to share with you very soon.

If you or your team would like to get involved in the future feedback and listening sessions please let us know by emailing askkevin@cumbria.gov.uk.

System development

We are engaging with system supplier, WDM to agree on ongoing quarterly system support sessions to support the continuous improvement project and development of HMS. Most modules are ready to go live, however the recruitment of staff will play a key part in the system going live and we will keep you updated as these progresses.

Timescale overview

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| March
2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue improvements to street lighting module • Highways Project: Where are we now? Sessions for Members. • Defects, safety inspections, collisions, pavement management system and works ordering modules go live. • Asset Management Online Engagement Sessions. • Staff engagement sessions with Asset Department. • Continue with the recruitment of Highways Engagement Team. • Further show and tell sessions to support system roll out. • Regular updates to staff. |
| April
2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing Highway Engagement Team recruitment. • ODWT recruitment for dedicated Highways training support. • Customer focus group with Copeland Disability Forum. • Defects modules and Safety Inspections available. • Continued development of Works Ordering module. • Develop a response to the Highways Feedback Survey and You said, We did' piece. • Customer messaging and snippets development • Further front-end demonstrations with staff groups. • Wider engagement approach and sequencing (Senior Management Team, Extended and Directorate Management Teams, Executive Director, key Members and Programme Board). |
| May
2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order placed for additional tablet devices for the highways service • Agree ongoing quarterly system support with system supplier, WDM • Develop blended learning approach and timeline • Scheduling of further staff engagement sessions • Development of intranet pages specific to the Highways Service |

- Wider engagement approach and sequencing (SMT, EDMT, DMT, Executive Director, key members, Programme Board)
- Communications including Highways Heads up for Members and Managers
- Further front-end demonstrations with staff groups
- Module completion assessed by WDM and staff to formalise accreditation
- System in position to go-live, timescale subject to recruitment and training.

If you have questions, suggestions or concerns that you'd like to raise please email askkevin@cumbria.gov.uk. For those without email access, we're encouraging feedback via managers and supervisors.