

South West Highways

Presented by: Philip Trenaman – South West Highways

Background

Southwest Highways (SWH) made a successful re-bid for Devon Highway Term Maintenance contract in 1999. The value of the works carried through the term maintenance contract in 2003 was approximately £32,000,000.

The highway maintenance strategy set out in the last DLTP called for considerable improvements to the highway network through both structural (e.g. improved drainage and road surfacing) and safety works (e.g. White lining and traffic calming schemes).

Key Issues Highlighted:-

1. Experience

SWH has a great deal of experience in the highways area. The high proportion of the workforce previously worked for Devon County Councils Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) Devon Highways thus brings with them a high degree of experience of road maintenance on Devons' highways. In addition SWHs parent company Colas and Ringway bring the experience of two private sector companies.

2. Partnership

There have been a number of successful partnerships between Devon County Council and South West Highways covering a variety of areas/issues (e.g. quality in routine and cyclic work, vehicle/contract management). Through this partnership a better and more focused and efficient service has been provided to the public.

Recommendations For The Next DLTP (2006-2011)

1. Development of Further Partnering Initiatives

SWH are especially keen to work on the stewardship of Public Realm Initiatives. SWH believe that they can be implemented alongside current work with a minimum of cost.

2. Electronic Transfer of Information

Purpose that a joint working party should be established to continue work carried out on the implementation of an electronic transfer system.

3. Electronic Billing

To maximise efficiency a compatible electronic billing system should be implemented whereby all orders and bills are processed electronically.

4. Hims Replacement (Highway Management System)

Further partnering work with those responsible for implementing cyclic maintenance work with the aim of finding a suitable replacement for the current Hims Information.

5. Environment and Recycling Issues

SWH propose forming a working party to evaluate environmental issues associated with the term maintenance contract – including the disposal of waste/ use of pesticides etc.

6. Depot and Office Rationalisation

Further depot and office rationalisation would benefit the implementation of the maintenance contract.

7. Staff Integration

SWH proposes an action group be set up to investigate areas of the maintenance contract that would benefit from further integration.

8. Winter Maintenance

A further action group should be set up to investigate route efficiency, ordering/timing of work and the provision and funding of new items of winter maintenance plant.

9. Road Marking

DEVON LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN – 2006-2011

New road marking specifications are coming into effect early next year – An Action group should establish the parameters for improving the performance of road markings.

Handouts

The following handouts were issued to support this paper: -

- **Presentation by South West Highways Ltd the incumbent Highway Network Term Maintenance Contractor.**
- **South West Highways – The Way Ahead**

Panel Discussion:-

- The County Council has the challenge of reaching the point where highway maintenance is not in backlog but is a sustainable network. Over the last 10 years SWH has made cultural changes and works in partnership with Devon County Council to accommodate this strategy.
- When Re-surfacing, 90% of waste materials are stored for reuse (60% in dry form) and eventually recycled on other projects. At the current time recycled materials go directly to site.
- Currently SWH failure rate on surface dressing is less than 1% there is no charge for these failures. SWH is constantly trying to reduce this amount. Delay in remedial work is often due to the time of year. If remedial work has not been carried out by mid September then there is a delay until the following August when conditions are more suitable.
- SWH try to minimise congestion especially during the summer months where work is planned to minimise impact on traffic flow.
- In the future SWH would like to see their role developing further so that they manage projects as well as carrying them out. This would be cost effective, reduce duplication and produce a better product.
- Priorities for next DLTP from a highway point of view would include getting more cars off the roads and encourage the use of public transport.