
SBc CONTRACTS 1st QUARTER REPORT 2023-24

Report by Chief Officer Roads

EXTERNAL SERVICES/PROVIDERS MONITORING GROUP

22 August 2023

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report proposes a summary on the performance of SBc Contracts for the financial year 2023/24 up to 30th June 2023.**

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 I recommend that the External Services/Providers Monitoring Group notes the performance of SBc Contracts for the 1st quarter of 2023/24.**

3 WORKLOAD UPDATE

- 3.1 SBC Contracts delivers infrastructure improvements across the Council's roads and built estate. The work undertaken is funded by the Council's Capital budget, these works include:
- Road Surface Treatment including surface dressing and patching
 - Civil Engineering Works
 - Internal Building works to SBC Estate
 - Bond Coat Application
 - Traffic Management
 - Sign Manufacture
- 3.2 In regard to road surfacing activity to 30th June 2023. We have commenced or successfully completed 23 Surface Dressing Patching sites, 4 Carriageway Patching sites, 6 Screed sites, 2 Capital Resurfacing schemes, and contracts for private clients.
- 3.3 With specific regard to surface dressing, we commenced treatment across the network towards the end of June, despite unseasonable weather we are on track to complete this year's surface dressing programme by the end of July across an area of approx. 200,000m²
- 3.4 In addition to the above, our specialist bond coat operation is having a good year to date. We have successfully completed several contracts for third party clients and in April we were awarded a 5-year framework with neighbouring South Lanarkshire Council. This award delivers a number of benefits including generating external income against our specialist plant which contributes to lower unit costs and maintenance.
- 3.5 Moving to our Civil Engineering teams. We successfully completed work on the Peebles Eddleston Cycleway and are preparing to commence works on an additional phase from Eddleston to Waterheads. Works have commenced and are progressing well on this years' Bridge and Culvert repair programme.

In regards building works, we have commenced a project with the Architects team to carry out upgrading works to Balmoral Primary School reception area, and installation of acoustic ceilings at Melrose and Burnfoot Primary Schools. We continue to work in close collaboration with the SBC Estates and Architects team on various works and are approaching completion on the repair and upgrading to Peebles Swimming Pool.

Our works to carry out projects for the SBC Flood team has continued and we recently completed construction of a new flood embankment at Romanno Bridge and have commenced works at to repair erosion damage at Selkirk,

- 3.6 We have some contracts, which will extend beyond financial years. Of note in we currently have 12 sites which remain active from 2022/23 into 23/24 Since April 2023, we commenced works on 61 new sites, 15 of which remain active.

- 3.7 We have continued to meet demand by balancing the use of our own staff with that of external contractors, which in turn helps support and sustain the local economy when it comes to civil engineering/ground works and road surfacing.
- 3.8 Our programmes of delivery have progressed well this year. The good weather during May and June has particularly helped with our roads surfacing programmes.
- 3.9 We believe that the diversity, flexibility and proven record of accomplishment of delivery is a real asset for the Council. Our dedicated and hardworking staff and partners continue to support the Council to meet its needs in terms of roads maintenance and civil engineering whilst retaining the ability to help with emergencies should they occur.

Management Update

- 3.10 Our Pothole Pro continues to provide an alternative to traditional patching methods and that to 30th June 2023 we have completed repairs works using the Pot Hole Pro on 4 sites on the A Class network repairing 474 potholes amounting to 30415m² of asphalt.
- 3.11 We believe that the deployment of the pothole pro has helped the Council meet its obligations to repair the roads in a timely manner, and whilst the pothole pro is only one technique and approach to what is an integrated management regime, which we deploy across our roads. It is important as the type, nature of the repair is permanent, and this will help make us more efficient, and improve the road user experience, whilst also allowing us to reduce our fleet.
- 3.12 Members also previously requested at the Major Contracts Governance Group, 21 June 2022 that we take steps to try to promote the career opportunities within our service through linking into known career promotion programmes with our education colleagues. We made the initial enquiries with colleagues and HR and will continue to seek out and engage with any opportunities we identify to promote our services as a real career choice for our population including the younger people of the Borders.

At present we are in the process of recruiting an additional 5 modern apprentices, 4 general engineering operatives and 1 bricklayer.

We provided work experience from the Earlston High School Campus for 2 pupils at the Hawick ATN operations and also within our design team department. We also managed a site visit for some interested pupils to our site operations on the new PS at Earlston. One of our Contract Managers and young Engineer also took part in session where 3rd, 4th year pupils had the opportunity to ask questions about working for SBC Contracts, the type of operations we got involved in and career opportunities to develop within the service.

- 3.13 We continue to develop our approach to succession and people management in line with Council programmes.

4 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

There are no financial implication associated with the public section of this report.

4.2 Risk and Mitigations

There are risks and mitigations associated with the financial performance of SBc Contracts and these are discussed in the report to be considered in private.

4.3 Integrated Impact Assessment

An Integrated Impact assessment is not required as this report is a review of performance and does not make any recommendation for changes to the operating or business model.

4.4 Sustainable Development Goals

Whilst not directly impacted by the recommendations in this report, SBc Contracts through its trading and project delivery employs where ever possible local suppliers and trades which in turn supports aspects of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, through use of local materials it reduces its impact on the environment because of the reduced miles the materials have to travel.

4.5 Climate Change

There are no significant carbon management implications arising from this Report.

4.6 Rural Proofing

There are no significant rural proofing implications arising from this Report.

4.7 Data Protection Impact Statement

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

4.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

No changes are required because of this Report.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Director (Finance & Corporate Governance), the Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

Name
John Curry

Title
Director – Infrastructure & Environment

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Mark Douglas	Commercial Manager

Background Papers: nil

Previous Minute Reference: nil

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Jason Hedley can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Mark Douglas, Infrastructure and Environment, Scottish Borders Council, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA, Tel 01835 824000, Fax 01835 825071, email eitranslationrequest@scotborders.gov.uk.