

MEETING	Communities Scrutiny Committee
DATE	1 October, 2026
TITLE	Highway Maintenance – Installation of Road Markings
REASON FOR SCRUTINY	Review of arrangements
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CABINET MEMBER	Cllr. June Jones

1. Why does it need to be scrutinised?

This report is being submitted as the Highway Maintenance Service is reviewing arrangements for installing road markings.

2. What needs to be scrutinised?

The following points need to be scrutinised:

- Suitability of existing arrangements for the replacement of road markings
- The challenges affecting the department's ability to meet the highway management requirements outlined within the Highway Maintenance Manual
- The Department's intention to invest in machinery to enable the service to undertake a high percentage all road marking work in-house.

3. Summary and Key Issues

This report provides an overview of the current arrangements for maintaining and re-installing road markings in Gwynedd, as well as the challenges faced by the service in attempting to fulfil its statutory and operational responsibilities.

The Scrutiny Committee is requested to express its views, comments and recommendations on the proposals outlined in the report, including the proposed investment plans to strengthen the service's capacity and improve performance in maintaining road markings across Gwynedd.

4. Background / Context

4.1 Department's Responsibilities

The department has a responsibility to manage the maintenance of highway assets which include road signs and markings. This responsibility is highlighted within our Highways Maintenance Manual to ensure that risks to users are properly monitored and managed.

The types of defects and the levels of interference used are outlined within the manual. Within the list it will be seen that 'Mandatory signs/white lines which are missing, broken, eroded and/or faded.' fall within the responsibility of the Highways Maintenance service. Some of these defects may be a case of a lack of safety where the defect is required to be responded to by the end of the next working day.

See **Appendix A** for examples of the road markings that need to be maintained on our roads.

4.2 Current working arrangements

The service's work programme for the year for road marking works is shaped by a number of factors namely: -

- Safety Inspections by Road Inspector - Operating times will depend on road category
- Technical Survey Arrangements
- Complaints we receive from the public. There were 281 enquiries about Road Markings or Signs in 2025/26.
- Re installation of markings following tar and chip resurfacing works
- Requests from the Transport Team to reinstall disabled bays and single / double yellow lines.
- There are also requests to install new road markings from the Transport Team.

The work is split into small and major works. We are currently responding to small works through our internal Highways Maintenance teams e.g. re-laying lines on junctions and installing yellow lines in hard-to-reach locations. Our work is organised through our in-house workforce who are trained to carry out the work of hand laying road markings. Presently we only have one kit, and it has to meet the requirements of the whole county.

Major work falls within the category of requiring a bespoke vehicle to be completed. We don't currently have these vehicles and are therefore dependent on external contractors through a framework contract. There are only two contractors on the framework to undertake this type of work and due to distance/workload reasons there have been difficulties in programming this necessary work within a reasonable time. These companies operate across North Wales and are commissioned by the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency (NMWTRA) and other Local Authorities, so we are competing for their service.

The weather could also be a factor in organising this type of work and adds to the challenge of programming work.

Within the highway maintenance budget an amount of £132,000 has been earmarked for road marking works for 2026/27.

To sum up - the reliance on external contractors causes delays to the work programme which means that we do not always meet the thresholds of our Highways Asset Support Plan. This can also affect the ability of the road and street enforcement service to manage

parking. There are also risks arising from not acting on time through 3rd party insurance claims arising from safety deficiencies.

4.4 Steps to improve the service

Step 1

For major works, we are already in discussions with the external contractors in order to improve their response to our requests for timely service.

Step 2

To date, we have invested in training more of our in-house workforce to install road markings by hand. We have already taken the decision to invest in additional equipment so that it can operate on a North and South basis. This will ensure a better response and remove the need to move the equipment from one end of the county to the other.

Step 3

Develop a business plan for investing in a bespoke vehicle and present an investment-to-save bid. Such an investment would be a positive step ensuring a significant improvement in order to

- respond in a timely manner to the work programme
- reduce the number of complaints
- ensure that we are able to respond in a timely manner to requests to reinstall double and single yellow lines
- keep the work within our internal workforce seeing less reliance on external contractors
- create the opportunity to attract income from NMWTRA (which has already shown support)
- create the opportunity to attract work from neighbouring local authorities such as Anglesey and Conwy.

These steps will ensure that we make the best use of all financial resources that are in line with the principle of an Efficient Gwynedd in the Council's Plan. It will improve the service to the residents of Gwynedd by being able to respond more quickly to deficiencies and thereby we will put the needs of the people of Gwynedd at the centre.

4.5 Monitoring the Impact of the Changes

To ensure that we monitor this new way of working, we will create a performance measure which will be monitored according to the Challenge and Support Performance procedure. It will be possible to measure the number of complaints we receive for road markings and look at our response time to defects resulting from faulty road marks.

5. Consultation

This matter has arisen from concerns raised by the public and councillors. Our in-house staff are aware of the service's intention to move away from being completely dependent on external contractors for road line laying works.

6. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

This legislation places a duty on local authorities to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

6.1 Have you included residents'/service users? If not, when and how do you intend to consult them?

We have considered the enquiries/complaints we have received from the public about road markings. Collaborative meetings with the Environment Department have taken place and have also highlighted a problem. A Highway Maintenance Service Review is underway, and staff have had the opportunity to note their comments about the service where there was support for completing more of the work in-house.

6.2 Have you considered collaborating?

Consideration has been given to working together by offering the new service to the Trunk Road Agency and neighbouring Local Authorities. NMWTRA has already shown support for the idea, and they would consider commissioning us to complete work on their behalf.

6.3 What has been done or will be done to prevent problems from rising or worsening in the future?

The service will continuously monitor their work programmes, and a performance management measure will be added in order to measure that the number of complaints we receive about road markings is decreasing.

6.4 How have you considered the long-term and what will people's needs be in years to come?

Long-term demand for the service is anticipated to remain similar to what it currently is.

6.5 To ensure that integration, have you considered the potential impact on other public bodies?

As noted, this investment would be to provide opportunities for the Council to be able to work collaboratively with neighbouring Local Authorities and NMWTRA. This in turn will create an opportunity to attract additional income for the Council.

7. Impact on Equality Characteristics, Welsh Language and Socio-Economic Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to give due consideration to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equal opportunities and foster good relationships between different communities.

The Department has already completed an impact assessment. See **Appendix B**

8. Next Steps

- To accept the comments and recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee on the current arrangements for maintaining and re-installing road markings.
- We will proceed with the purchase of a second manual kit to increase service capacity and improve response times across the county.
- Continue to work with the existing contractors to try to improve the delivery schedules of road marking works where possible.
- Complete the business case for investing in a bespoke extruder vehicle, including an assessment of the costs, benefits, risks and potential income generation opportunities.
- Submit an Invest to Save bid to consider the proposed investment and the expected benefits to the service and the residents of Gwynedd.
- Develop performance monitoring arrangements to measure the success of any new arrangements
- Report back to the Scrutiny Committee on the progress of the scheme and the results of the new arrangements in due course.

Background information

- Well-managed Highways Infrastructure : A Code of Practice (2016)
- The Highways Act 1980

Appendices

Appendix A – Examples of Road Markings

Appendix B – Impact Assessment