

Oxfordshire Together

Giving communities control over local services

Transitional Offer of Highway Services Booklet

September 2015

Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Service Offer.....	3
2.1. Services in scope	3
2.2. Services out of scope.....	3
3. Funding.....	4
4. Agreement Period.....	5
5. Operational Requirements.....	5
5.1. Responsibility.....	5
5.2. Insurance	5
5.3. Health and safety	6
5.4. Equipment.....	6
5.5. Training.....	6
5.6. Monitoring	6
6. Individual Services in Scope.....	7
6.1. Grass cutting (urban) – DPS01	7
6.2. Grass cutting (rural) – DPS02	8
6.3. Vegetation cutback – DP203.....	12
6.4. Weed control – DPS04.....	16
6.5. Salt bin management – DPS05.....	17
6.6. Public rights of way – DPS06.....	18
6.7. Vegetation section 154 notices – DPS07	22
6.8. School crossing patrol – DPS08.....	26
6.9. Footway siding – DPS09.....	27
6.10. Epicormic/basal tree growth – DPS10	28
6.11. Tree planting – DPS11.....	29
6.12. Street furniture cleaning – DPS12.....	33
6.13. GIS asset mapping – DPS13.....	37
6.14. Roundabout management – DPS14	38
6.15. Public highway inspection – DSP15.....	39
6.16. Drainage notices – DPS16.....	40
7. Frequently Asked Questions.....	44
7.1. Budgets.....	44
7.2. Agreement periods.....	44
7.3. Operational details	44
7.4. Service delivery.....	45
7.5. Questions about the future	45
8. Further Information	45

1. Introduction

Oxfordshire County Council would like to begin engagement with town and parish councils to assess their interest in this highway services offer. This proposal is a first step, where we are looking to work with local councils to identify the best possible delivery solutions. We are open to discussing how the allocated budgets are utilised to best effect.

To enable this proposal to achieve the desired economies of scale, it would be preferable for a town and parish council (or clusters of councils) to deliver the identified highway services for their surrounding areas.

2. Service Offer

2.1. Services in scope

The essential services which can be included in the arrangement are:

- Urban grass cutting
- Rural grass cutting
- Weed control
- Vegetation cut backs
- Serving of Section 154 notification letters
- Salt bin management
- Public rights of way
- School crossing patrols
- Footway siding
- Epicormic/basal tree growth removal
- Tree planting schemes
- Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping of highway street furniture
- Roundabout management and sponsorship
- Public highway inspection drainage notifications

Further details of the services, minimum standards and restrictions can be found in the Individual Services in Scope Section.

Highway services will only be devolved if they are deemed to be a minimum risk to the town or parish council that will be delivering them. For example, this means that grass cuts within the 50mph/60mph limit will only be included in devolved arrangements on a case by case basis if parishes can deliver them safely.

2.2. Services out of scope

Highway services which are out of scope of this transition are as follows:

- **Passenger Transport:** this is currently delivered by the county council and a number of external providers. Clusters may wish to be involved in the various

community transport projects around the county. We are happy to help facilitate additional community transport schemes.

- **Street Lighting:** although towns and parishes are encouraged to report defects with street lights, this function will remain with the county council specialist team.
- **Winter maintenance:** although town and parish councils are involved in minor winter maintenance involving salting of footpaths and some roads, Oxfordshire County Council will continue to respond to emergency road clearance and maintain the primary network during winter.
- **Parking services:** town and parish councils may report parking infringements to the police or Oxfordshire County Council, but they do not have the powers to issue Penalty Charge Notices.
- **Capital Works:** these are large scale programmes which require specialist in-house expertise to manage.
- **Routine maintenance:** there are a number of areas where town and parish councils will be able to conduct maintenance. However the following areas are not deemed to be appropriate for external delivery because they involve work on or by the highway:
 - Filling of category 1 & 2 potholes
 - Resurfacing and patching of roads
 - Replacements of road signs
 - Major siding out
 - Major drainage improvement schemes
 - Lining works

The following services will remain with Oxfordshire County Council (at the present time) as they require specific areas of expertise & knowledge:

- Highway safety inspections (all metalled (surfaced) public highways)
- Bridge inspection & management
- Tree inspection and management (the county council may seek to offer the delivery of this service for town and parish councils within the next two to three years)
- Traffic management & road space management
- Asset management
- Casualty reduction

3. Funding

Every town and parish would receive an offer of an annual budget based on the service delivery they have opted to undertake. The county council is open to discussions about the best way to allocate the available funding, although the total budget will not be increased.

The budget that will be allocated is based on the amount of work per activity in scope (for example grass cutting is calculated on a per square/linear metre basis). By undertaking a budget allocation in this manner, it provides a consistent approach in each area.

Where discussions identify unusual costs or particular challenges, we would like to work through the best way to solve them with each parish. We recognise that some areas may require some additional initial funding to resolve such issues. This may include the agreement for some initial start-up funding.

4. Agreement Period

The initial highway service transfer agreement will last for three years. At year two a review of the transfer of services will be undertaken by the county council and financial offers for the second allocation of services will be defined. At this point, towns and parishes would be able to opt out of the services if they choose to do so. It should be noted that the county council will not seek to re-commence the services that are handed back in year three as there is insufficient funding to do so.

5. Operational Requirements

5.1. Responsibility

The county council is looking to hand responsibility for the services identified to the town and parish councils. However we will seek to establish alternative local delivery solutions wherever possible should a service fail.

The town or parish that is delivering a service will adhere to a minimum standard of service delivery; however, beyond this it is up to them how they determine service delivery. Towns and parishes will have a formal role in determining the quality and quantity of service provision.

Parishes and town councils are under no obligation to take on a service delegation but if they are unsure they are advised to seek legal advice.

5.2. Insurance

The town, parish or cluster lead should inform its insurers of its involvement in the scheme and providers will be required to put in place a £10,000,000 public liability indemnity and a minimum of £5,000,000 employer's liability insurance. Where a service contract is used, the operative should also have this level of indemnity. There may be exception to this rule if works are being undertaken away from a public highway for activities such as weed spraying on parts of the highway that do not require traffic management. Local agreements will be issued to town and parish councils prior to the roll out of this proposal with greater levels of detail surrounding insurance, minimum standards and legal responsibilities.

Service providers will be responsible for creating method statements and risk assessment of all activities and ensuring that all mitigation measures arising from the risk assessments are in place. Oxfordshire County Council will help create these documents for parish or town councils if they need assistance.

Further information on insurance requirements will be provided after the initial launch event.

5.3. Health and safety

Service deliverers are required to follow their own health and safety arrangements. The county council will offer support to establish these as part of the programme set up. Service leads and town/parish councils will be responsible for ensuring that their operatives work in a safe and appropriate manner at all times, whilst adhering to any relevant legislation or best working practices.

If a service is not able to be undertaken safely then the work will revert to Oxfordshire County Council for completion and the funding for that given service will be recovered.

5.4. Equipment

Service leads can use the budget to buy or hire equipment to enable them to deliver the devolved services if there is a need to do so. This equipment must be maintained to the manufacturer's specified recommendations.

5.5. Training

The county council is prepared to offer training in some areas of the transition to assist with business continuity. This will be determined on an individual basis.

5.6. Monitoring

The county council will not manage the performance or delivery of the highway services. Any public enquiries about the quality of service delivered within the new arrangement would be routed directly to the town, parish or cluster lead.

If defects are beyond the capability of the service provider, the remedial operations may be passed back to the county council for action. However, in these circumstances the longevity of the arrangement and payments may need to be revisited.

The county council will review the services at the end of the initial three year period to establish if the process is working. Town and parish councils will be asked for feedback on how they feel that the process has worked for them.

6. Individual Services in Scope

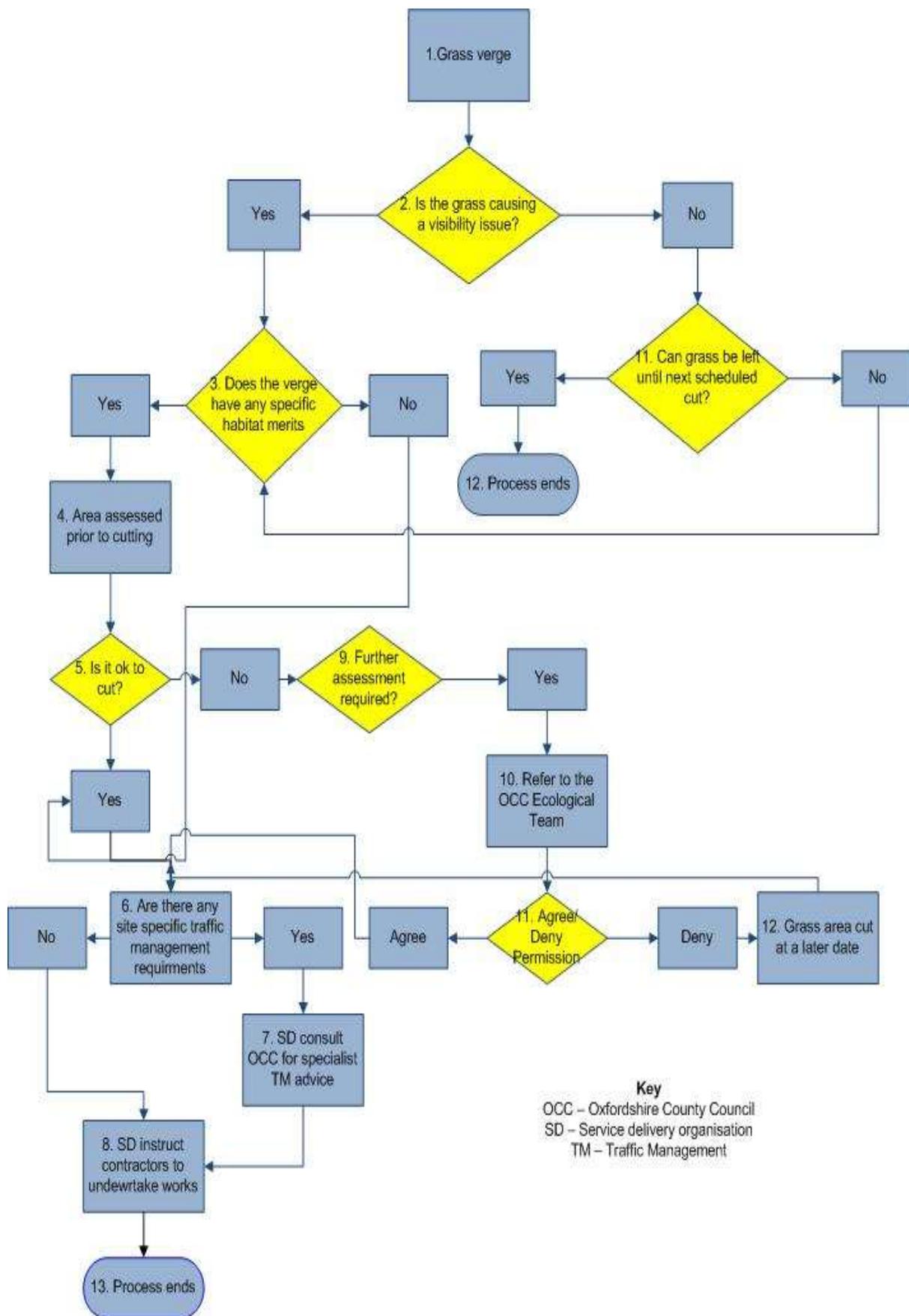
6.1. Grass cutting (urban) – DPS01

Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding will be available for this service. The figures will be based upon a square/linear metre.
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cutting of urban grass verges twice a year with key visibility areas cut as and when required.
Minimum Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no set length that the grass must be cut to, however it must be cut one metre back from the kerb edge a minimum of once a year, unless otherwise agreed. Information on hazard and speed limit signs must be clearly legible to oncoming road users. Visibility splays at road junctions or pedestrian crossings are maintained in a safe manner at all times. Cuttings must be left to mulch on the road side, disposed of commercially or composted in the community. They must not be taken to the local household recycling site.
Health & Safety Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn/used and correct for the speed of the road being worked on. Correct type of grass cutting equipment used for different environments (steep verges etc.). A site risk assessment must be carried out. Legislation relating to safe working on/near carriageways must be observed. When using specialist equipment staff must be appropriately trained. Where appropriate, works must be noticed to ensure that there is no conflict with works being undertaken by the local highways authority or utility companies. Any locations that require this type of notification will be identified prior to allocation.
Insurance requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £10 million public liability (for paid operatives).

6.2. Grass cutting (rural) – DPS02

Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding will be available for this service. The figures will be based upon a square/linear metre.
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cutting of rural grass verges twice a year with key visibility areas cut as and when required.
Minimum Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no set length that the grass must be cut to, however it must be cut one metre back from the kerb edge a minimum of once a year, unless otherwise agreed. Information on hazard and speed limit signs must be clearly legible to oncoming road users. Visibility splays at road junctions or pedestrian crossings are maintained in a safe manner at all times. Cuttings must be left to mulch on the road side, disposed of commercially or composted in the community. They must not be taken to the local household recycling site.
Health & Safety Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn/used and correct for the speed of the road being worked on. Correct type of grass cutting equipment used for different environments (steep verges etc.). A site specific risk assessment must be carried out. Legislation relating to safe working on/near carriageways must be observed. When using specialist equipment staff must be appropriately trained. Where appropriate, works must be noticed to ensure that there is no conflict with works being undertaken by the local highways authority or utility companies. Any locations that require this type of notification will be identified prior to allocation. Principal roads will require specific traffic management. Oxfordshire County Council may be able to supply this function through the highways partnership contract.
Insurance requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £10 million public liability (for paid operatives)

Process flow chart: Grass cutting DPS01 & DPS02



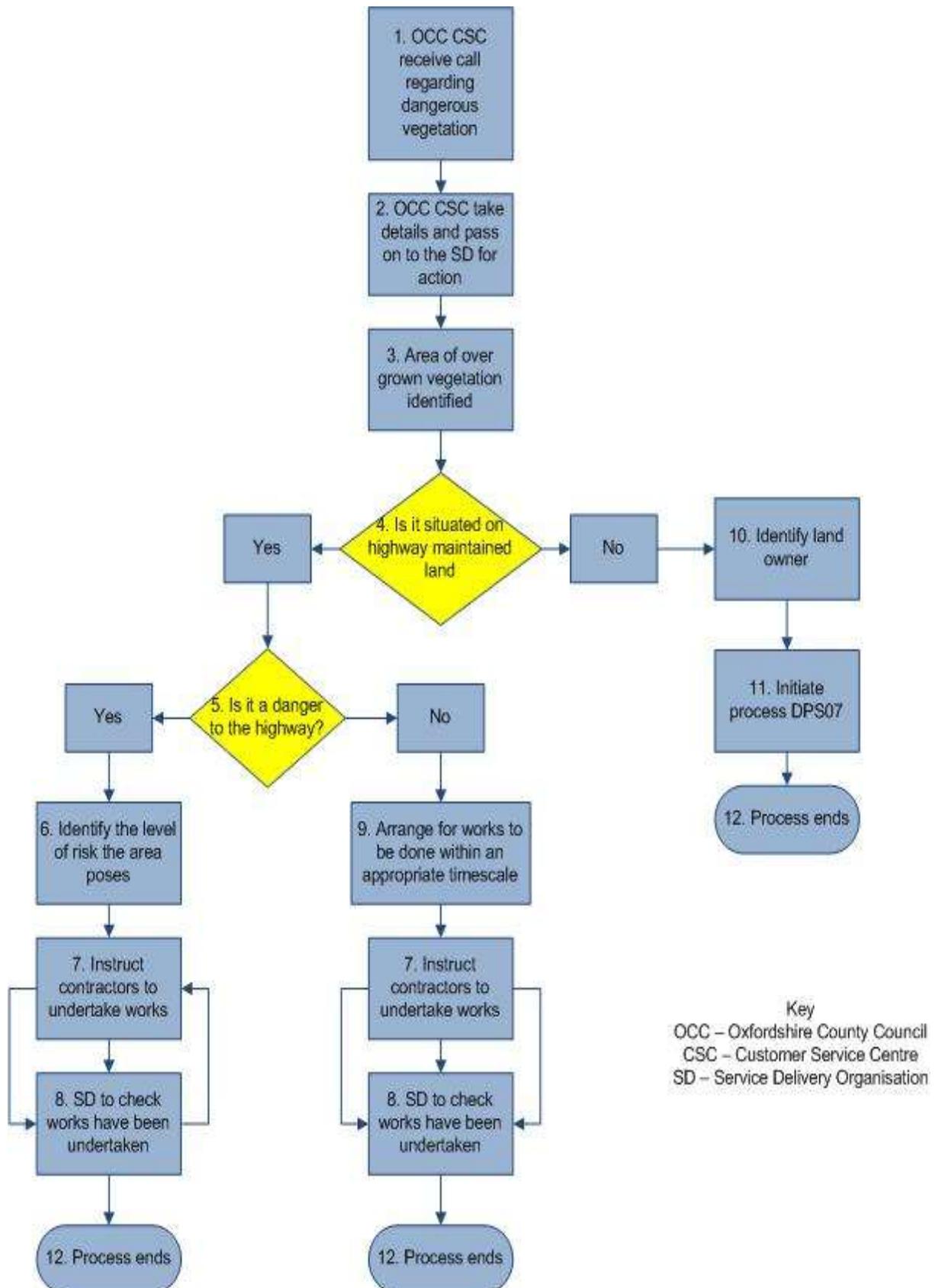
Process Step	Description
<p>1. Grass verge</p>	<p>A grass verge that is on land that forms part of the adopted public highway. Maps of all the locations will be supplied with the Transition agreement.</p> <p>Go to 2</p>
<p>2. Is the grass causing a visibility issue?</p>	<p>Grass that is deemed to be obscuring visibility splays must be reduced in height to avoid the risks that it may pose to users of the public highway.</p> <p>Go to 3</p>
<p>3. Does the grass verge have any specific habitat merits?</p>	<p>Some grass verges within the county are designated as being of important interest for local flora or fauna. Cluster leads must check the status of a verge prior to commencing remedial works.</p> <p>Yes go to 4 No go to 5</p>
<p>4. Area assessed prior to cutting</p>	<p>A final walked inspection of the grass verge is undertaken prior to operatives cutting the area.</p> <p>Go to 5</p>
<p>5. Is it ok to cut?</p>	<p>If there are no risks posed to the flora or fauna on the site, can the grass be cut?</p> <p>Yes go to 6 No go to 9</p>
<p>6. Are there any site specific traffic management requirements?</p>	<p>Due to the nature of grass verges on highway maintained land, some of the locations are adjacent to busy public highways, which will have a variety of set speed limits. To ensure the safety of both the operatives and the users of the public highway, operators are required to comply with the Safety at Street Works and road works: a code of practice 2013 (2nd impression June 2014).</p> <p>Yes go to 7 No go to 8</p>

<p>7. SD to consult OCC for specialist TM advice</p>	<p>Prior to commencing grass cutting operations, cluster leads or chosen operatives must check with the OCC NRSWA Team on 0845 3101111 or highway.enquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk to establish what if any traffic management is required for the area and if the works need to be notified. The NRSWA Team will be able to advise on this matter and once it has been done the first time, the process will become self-explanatory.</p> <p>Go to 8</p>
<p>8. SD instruct contractors to undertake works</p>	<p>Following approval from the NRWSA Team contractors may be instructed to undertake the required remedial operations that are specific to the given site.</p> <p>Go to 13</p>
<p>9. Further assessment required?</p>	<p>If further advice is required to establish the feasibility of remedial works to a given site.</p> <p>Yes go to 10 No go to 5</p>
<p>10. Refer to the ecological team</p>	<p>If a grass area is not initially deemed ok to cut within step 4 of this process, the SD must consult with the OCC Ecological Team (highway.enquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk). The team will be able to give you clear guidance on the value of the site and they will be able to authorise or deny the operations.</p> <p>Go to 11</p>
<p>11. Agree or deny permission</p>	<p>A professional decision will be taken to either grant or deny permission to cut what may be deemed to be a verge of specific importance to wild flora or fauna.</p> <p>Agree go to 6 Deny go to 12</p>
<p>12. Grass area cut at a later date</p>	<p>If there is a particular reason that will lead to significant problems to flora or fauna, cuts may be approved at a later date in the year to mitigate the impact a cut may have.</p> <p>Go to 6</p>
<p>13. Process ends</p>	<p>No further action is required. Process ends.</p>

6.3. Vegetation cutback – DP203

Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding will not be on offer for this service.
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where vegetation (that is on land that forms part of the public highway) is obscuring pavements or other areas of public highway, this should be removed to ensure pedestrians and vehicles can navigate the route safely. • No privately owned hedges are to be trimmed as part of this service (see DPS07).
Minimum Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pavements must be clear of all obstructions. • Pavements are accessible to pedestrians. • Encroaching grass must be cut out of pavements. • Where landowners are involved they must be made aware of their obligations and prompted to clear footpaths and pavements (see DPS07).
Health & Safety Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn/used when working on/near carriageways. • Legislation relating to safe working on/near carriageways must be observed. • When using specialist equipment staff must be appropriately trained.
Insurance requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £10 million public liability (for paid operatives).

Process flow chart: Vegetation cutback DPS03



Process Step	Description
1. OCC CSC receive call regarding dangerous vegetation	An area of vegetation is reported to the CSC. The following details are taken: Location, description of the problem, USRN (Unique Street Reference Number). Go to 2
2. OCC CSC take details and pass onto SD for action	OCC CSC pass on the data to the SD for action via email or phone. Go to 3
3. Area of overgrown vegetation identified	SD attend site to identify the vegetation that is deemed to be a problem. Go to 4
4. Is it situated on highway maintained land?	SD assess if the vegetation is located on land that forms part of the adopted public highway. Yes go to 5 No go to 10
5. Is it a danger to the public highway?	Is the vegetation causing an immediate danger to the users of the public highway? Yes go to 6 No go to 9
6. Identify the level of risk the area poses	What level of risk does the area pose to users of the public highway? Is the work High, Medium or Low priority? Go to 7
7. Instruct contractors to undertake works	SD instruct competent contractors to undertake remedial operations in accordance with the New Roads and Street works Act and the relevant British Standard BS3998:2010 Tree work – Recommendations. Footways must have 2.5 metres of height clearance and carriageways must have 5.2 metres of height clearance as a minimum. Go to 8

Process Step	Description
8. SD to check works have been done	SD check to make sure works have been undertaken in accordance with the work specification issued to the contractor. Go to 12 if done or 7 if not done
9. Arrange for works to be done within an appropriate time scale	Work to be completed within a timescale that is relevant to the risk that the vegetation poses to the public highway. Go to 7
10. Identify land owner	The landowner or persons responsible for the land are identified via local knowledge or a land registry search (undertaken by the SD). Go to 11
11. Initiate process DPS07	The process DPS07 Vegetation notifications should be instigated. Go to 12
12. Process ends	No further action is required. Process ends.

6.4. Weed control – DPS04

Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding will not be available for this service.
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control the spread of noxious weeds (as defined within the Noxious Weeds Act 1959) which can damage habitats and agricultural land. <p>These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Common ragwort ○ Creeping thistle ○ Field thistle ○ Spear thistle ○ Curled and broad-leaved dock ○ Ragwort <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NB: Japanese knotweed is not covered by this service, as specialist training and chemicals are required.
Minimum Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footways are kept clear and signs/road furniture on verges are not obscured by weeds/vegetation. • The spread of these weeds onto adjacent land is prevented as far is practically possible.
Health & Safety Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn/used when working on/near carriageways. • The employer is responsible for providing all PPE stated on the herbicide's label. • Legislation relating to safe working on/near carriageways must be observed. • When using specialist equipment staff must be appropriately trained and chemicals stored in accordance with the relevant legislation/regulations. • Legislation relating to safe working on/near carriageways/ watercourses must be observed.
Insurance requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £5 million public liability (for paid operatives).

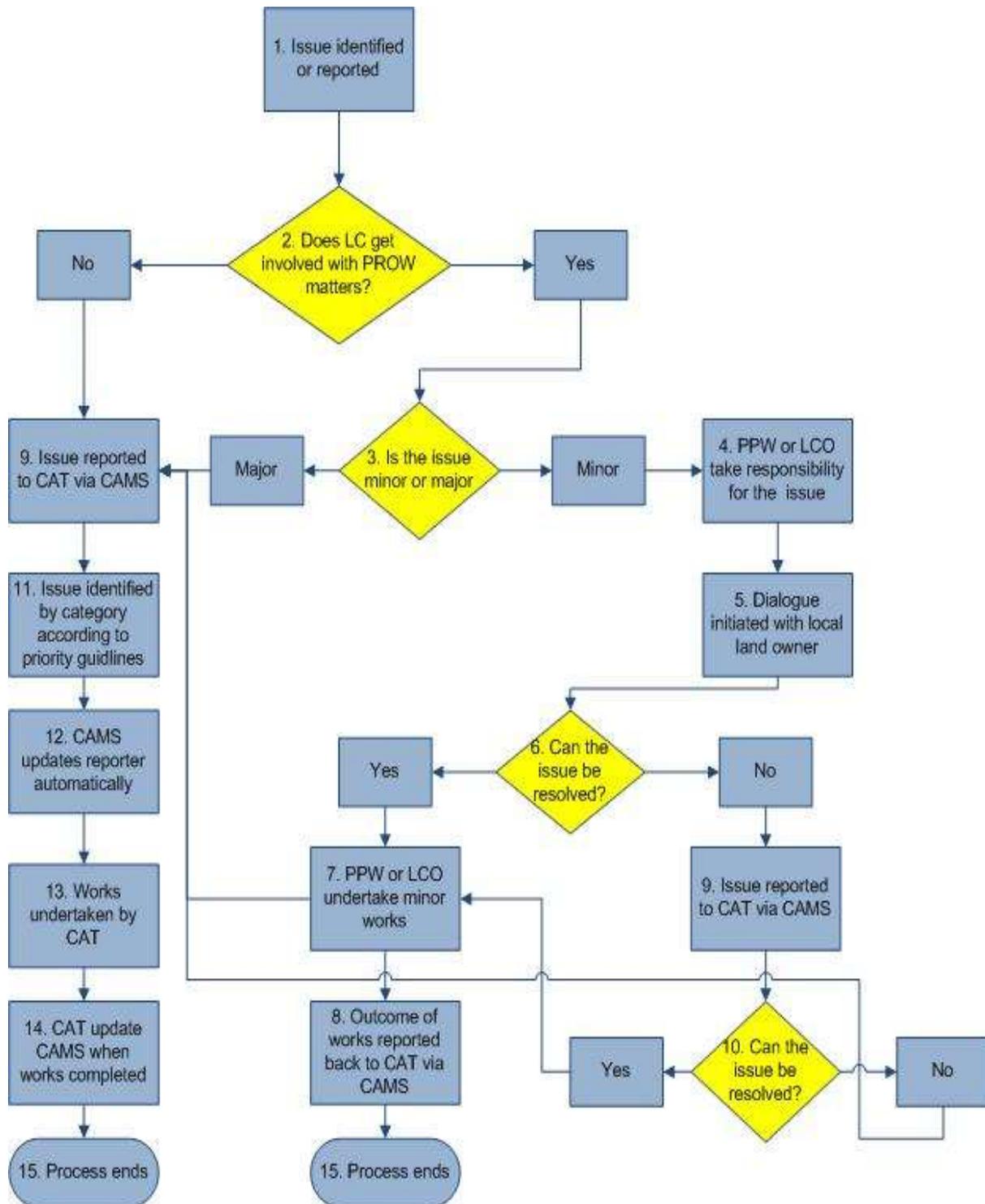
6.5. Salt bin management – DPS05

Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding will be available for this service.
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The restocking of 1,300 salt bins located adjacent to the Public Highway.
Minimum Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salt bins to be kept stocked during the autumn, winter and early spring period (normally 01 Nov to 31 March).
Health & Safety Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn/used when working on/near carriageways. The product must be stored in a location and manner that does not enable it to have an impact on the surrounding environment. No product may leach into any water courses. Operatives filling the salt bins must wear the correct PPE for the speed of the road that they are working on. Legislation relating to safe working on/near carriageways/watercourses must be observed.
Insurance requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £5 million public liability (for paid operatives)

6.6. Public rights of way – DPS06

Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding will not be available for this service.
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The undertaking of walked inspections on Oxfordshire’s rural network on an annual basis. • The reporting of issues to the county council’s Countryside Access Team for works that are considered to require specialist equipment or knowledge.
Minimum Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public rights of way are accessible for pedestrians (or other modes of transport relevant to the classification of the rights of way). • Walked surveys undertaken on an annual basis by a parish warden with defects found reported to the county council’s Countryside Access Team. • Basic defects such as minor vegetation clearance to be undertaken.
Health & Safety Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal protective equipment is worn/ used when working on/near carriageways. • Personal protective equipment suitable for the tools/machines being utilised must be supplied and adhered too. • Training must be given to operatives utilising any form of cutting or mowing equipment. • A site specific risk assessment must be carried out, prior to operations commencing.
Insurance requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £5 million public liability (for paid operatives).

Process flow chart: Public rights of way – DPS06



Key

PROW – Public Right of Way
 CAT – Countryside Access Team
 CAMS – Countryside Access Management System
 LCO – Local Community
 PPW – Parish Path Warden

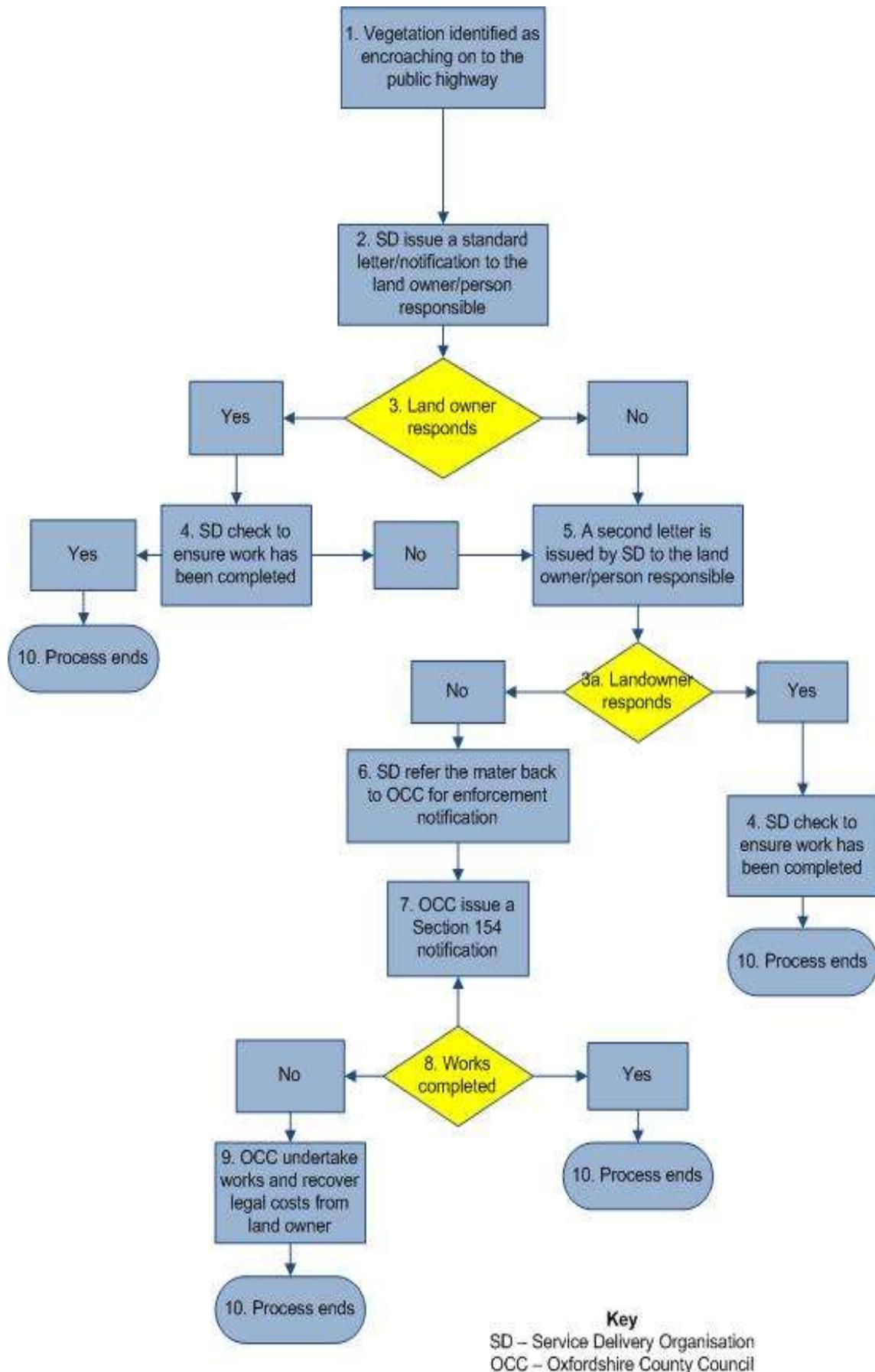
Process Step	Description
1. Town or Parish Council receive an enquiry regarding a PROW	<p>A town or parish council receive or discover a problem on a public right of way. The following data should be collected: The location of the issue using the grid reference or description of the route and the issue and the type of issue. If the issue is discovered by a PPW then a photo should be taken to support the follow up process.</p> <p>Go to 2</p>
2. Does the LCO get involved in PROW matters?	<p>Does the local community have any level of involvement in public rights of way matters other than passing on reports to the county council?</p> <p>Yes go to 3 No go to 9</p>
3. Is issue the minor or major?	<p>If the issue is major then it is normally works that the CAT will manage. Minor matters than can be addressed locally or improvement matters can be led on by the local council.</p> <p>Major go to 9 Minor go to 4</p>
4. PPW or LCO take responsibility for the issue	<p>The PPW or LCO will adopted the issue and commit to undertaking any works required.</p> <p>Go to 5</p>
5. Dialogue initiated with local landowner	<p>PPW or LCO initiate discussions with whoever owns or controls the land the path passes over?</p> <p>Go to 6</p>
6. Can the issue be resolved?	<p>Does the discussion lead to permission or permission in principle?</p> <p>Yes go to 7 No go to 9</p>
7. PPW or LCO undertake works	<p>If the proposed solution needs changes to path gates, stiles, new structures, surfaces or there is external funding needed then the county council access team need involving.</p> <p>Involvement of CAT required go to 9 PPW or LCO ok to undertake works go to 8</p>

Process Step	Description
8. Outcome of works reported back to CAT via CAMS	Outcome of works reported back to CAT via the CAMSweb system. Go to 14
9. Issue reported to CAT via CAMS	Parish or their contractor undertake works. Go to 10
10. Can the issue be resolved?	Does the issue require funding? Yes go to 9 Can the matter be dealt with locally? Go to 7
11. Issue identified by category according to priority guidelines	The issue is prioritised by the CAT, utilising a set of pre-determined priority guidelines. Go to 12
12. CAT updates reporter automatically	Automatic update acknowledgement. This includes a reference number so that progress can be tracked in CASMWeb. Go to 13
13. Works undertaken by CAT	Works scheduled and undertaken by CAT. Go to 14
14. CAT update CAMS when works completed	CAT update CAMS when the works have been completed and signed off.
15. Process ends	Process ends.

6.7. Vegetation section 154 notices – DPS07

Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding will not be available for this service.
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send requests to frontages and landowners to deal with overhanging vegetation that is causing an obstruction and/or danger to the public highway.
Minimum Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on hazard and speed limit signs is legible to oncoming road users. • Visual displays such as traffic signal heads, pelican crossings and Light Emitting Diode (LED) display boards are clear. • Pavements and right of way are accessible to pedestrians, and bridleways to pedestrians and horses. • Public highway widths are not restricted by encroaching private hedgerow vegetation. • Template letters will be supplied by the county council.
Health & Safety Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal protective equipment is worn/ used when working on/near carriageways.
Insurance requirements	

Process flow chart: Vegetation Section 154 Notices – DPS07



Process Step	Description
1. Vegetation identified as encroaching on to the public highway	Vegetation is identified as originating from private land by the SD. Owner/persons responsible for the land are identified. Go to 2
2. Service delivery Organisation (SD) issue a standard letter /notification to the land owner/person/s responsible.	The SD issue a standard vegetation letter on their own headed paper giving a set length of time for the works to be completed in. Go to 3
3. Land Owner responds	The land owner/person responsible reply to the SD and state works will be completed within the specified timeframe. Yes go to 4 No go to 5
3a. Land Owner responds	The land owner/person responsible reply to the SD and state works will be completed within the specified timeframe. Yes go to 4 No go to 6
4. SD checks to ensure works have been completed	SD attends the site to assess if the overhanging vegetation has been removed. Works ok go to 10 No go to 5
5. A second letter is issued by the SD to land owner/person/s responsible	If there is no response from the initial standard letter (Step 2) a second letter is issued by the SD with a shorter timescale for works completion. SD Copy OCC into the letter highway.enquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk . Go to 3a

Process Step	Description
6. SD refer the matter back to OCC for enforcement	If no response is received from the second letter the matter is referred back to OCC for enforcement. Go to 7
7. OCC issue a section 154 notice	OCC staff will assess the site and compile one of two legal notifications (Overhanging Vegetation or Dangerous Tree). This will be done by hand or recorded delivery. Go to 8
8. Works completed	Works are completed within the specified timeframe and the area is deemed to be safe. Yes go to 10 No go to 9
9. OCC undertake works and recover costs	The land owner/persons responsible have failed to meet the specified timescale within the legal section 154 notification. OCC instruct contractors to make the vegetation safe. The accumulated costs are calculated for: cost of works, cost of staff time and legal expenses. Costs recovered through small claims courts. Go to 10
10. Process ends	No further action is required. Process ends.

6.8. School crossing patrol – DPS08

Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding and equipment will be available for agreed sites.
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The delivery of existing school crossing patrols where the county council can delegate their powers.• The setting-up of additional school crossing patrols within a town or parish.
Minimum Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Existing and proposed new crossings delivered in accordance with the guidelines identified within the School Crossing Patrol Guidelines 2012.
Health & Safety Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Correct personal protective equipment (PPE) must be worn and suitable training given to operatives.• Stop signs must conform to the School Crossing Patrol Sign (England & Wales) Regulations 2006.
Insurance requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• £10 million public liability (for paid operatives).

6.9. Footway siding – DPS09

Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding will not be available for this service.
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventing the encroachment of verge soil and growth onto the pavement.
Minimum Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs on verges are not obscured by vegetation. • Cyclical maintenance approximately once every 2-3 years or as required. Safe passage of walkers should be possible.
Health & Safety Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn/used when working on/near carriageways. • Legislation relating to safe working on/near carriageways must be observed. • When using specialist equipment staff must be appropriately trained.
Insurance requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £10 million public liability (for paid operatives).

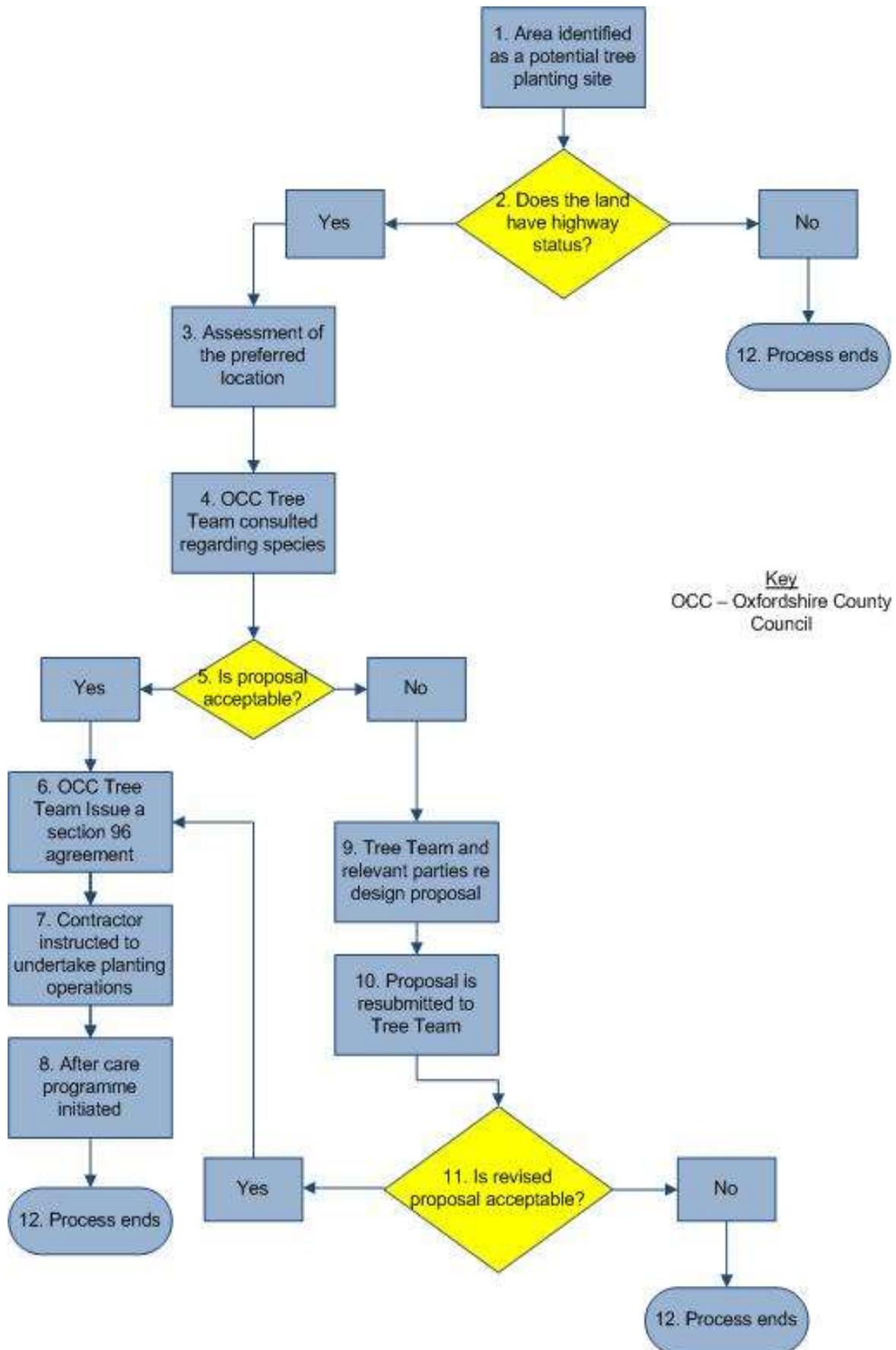
6.10. Epicormic/basal tree growth – DPS10

Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding will be available for this service based on the number of trees within a given area.
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The removal of basal tree growth from a previously agreed list of trees.
Minimum Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The removal of all basal and epicormics grown from previously identified trees up to the height of the first branch. Trees must not cause reduced visibility or width to any areas of the public highway. A minimum requirement of two cuts per annum. No damage may occur to the stem of the tree. Works should be undertaken utilising a sharp handsaw and hedge trimmers only.
Health & Safety Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn/used when working on/near carriageways. Legislation relating to safe working on/near carriageways must be observed. When using specialist equipment staff must be appropriately trained.
Insurance requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £10 million public liability (for paid operatives).

6.11. Tree planting – DPS11

Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding will not be available for this service.
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The undertaking of tree planting on highway maintained verges to enhance the visual amenity of a parish or town. • These works will be covered by Section 96 Agreements that will be issued by the county council’s Arboricultural Team.
Minimum Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree planting undertaken in accordance with the relevant British Standard: <i>BS8545 2014 Trees from Nursery to Independence in the Landscape – Recommendations</i>. • Robust aftercare programme (watering, weeding & stake management) must be factored into the cost of the works to ensure high establishment rates.
Health & Safety Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn/used when working on/near carriageways. • Legislation relating to safe working on/near carriageways must be observed. • When using specialist equipment staff must be appropriately trained. • All proposed ground areas must be checked for underground services prior to any excavation works taking place.
Insurance requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £10 million public liability (for paid operatives).

Process flow chart: Tree planting – DPS11



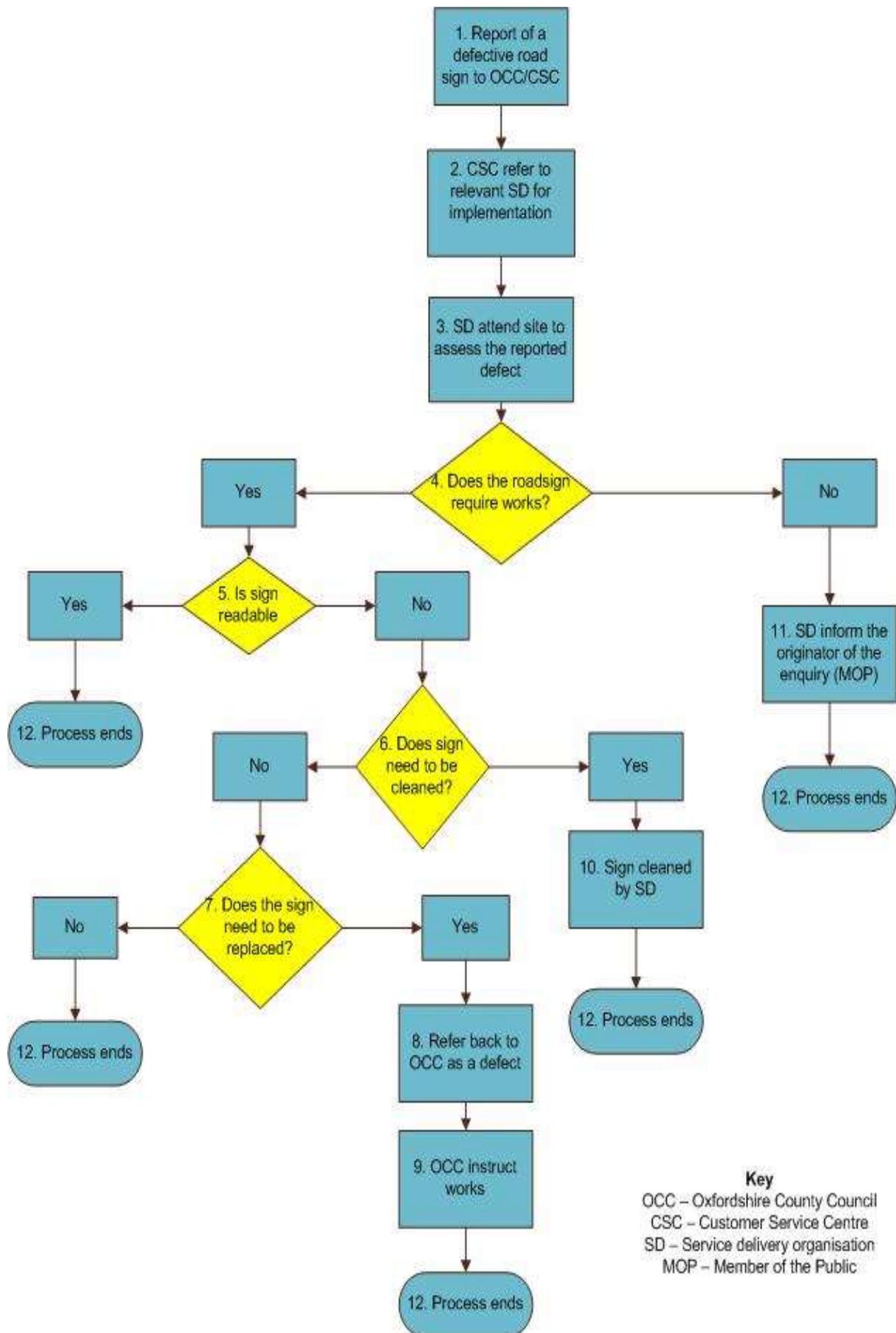
Process Step	Description
1. Area identified as a potential tree planting site	A location is identified by a town or parish council where tree planting could enhance the area. Go to 2.
2. Does the land have highway status?	The town or parish council must ascertain if the land has highway status. Yes go to 3 No go to 12
3. Assessment of the preferred location	The site is assessed for its suitability factors to consider are: the presence of underground or over ground services, visibility splays, the ultimate size of the preferred tree, the potential for local vandalism, the soil type and structure, the available rooting area for the tree to grow unimpeded, what attributes are required from a seasonal perspective i.e. leaf, flower colour. Go to 4
4. OCC Tree Team consulted regarding species	The preferred location and tree species are shown to the council's Tree Team to ascertain the suitability of the proposal. The Tree Team will visit the site and either agree the proposal, agree with slight alterations or deny the proposal. Go to 5
5. Is proposal acceptable?	Is the initial proposal acceptable? Does the site and tree species meet all of the required criteria? Yes go to 6 No go to 9
6. OCC Tree Team issue a section 96 agreement	Once the Tree Team are confident that the chosen location and tree species are suitable, a Section 96 (Highways Act 1980) planting agreement will be issued to the relevant body to enable them to undertake the tree planting scheme. Go to 7
7. Contractor instructed to undertake planting operations	Contractors are instructed to undertake tree planting in accordance with the specifications and the relevant British Standard BS8545: <i>Trees: From Nursery to Independence in the Landscape</i> . Go to 8

Process Step	Description
8. Aftercare programme initiated	<p>A three to five year aftercare programme is initiated post planting to ensure good establishment. The following factors must be considered: The amount of water that the tree/s will require during the summer months, the removal of weeds and the management of the chosen tree support method.</p> <p>Go to 12</p>
9. Tree Team and relevant parties re-design proposal	<p>Following consultation with the Tree Team an initial proposal is rejected due to factors such as: the presence of underground or over ground services, incorrect species selection, visibility issues, potential hazards arising from seed, leaf or sap fall.</p> <p>Go to 10</p>
10. Proposal is re-submitted to Tree Team	<p>The re-designed proposal is submitted to the Tree Team and a decision is made regarding the granting of a Section 96 agreement.</p> <p>Go to 11</p>
11. Is re-vised proposal acceptable?	<p>The Tree Team will consider all aspects of the proposal and make a professional informed decision regarding the outcome.</p> <p>Yes go to 6 No go to 12</p>
12. Process ends	<p>No further action is required. Process ends</p>

6.12. Street furniture cleaning – DPS12

Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding will not be available for this service
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cleaning of information on hazard and regulatory speed limit signs, give way and stop signs, to ensure their legibility to oncoming motorists. • The cleaning of non-illuminated bollards and warning signs i.e. bends and chevrons
Minimum Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs to be cleaned every three years with warm soapy water and a brush as a minimum standard. • All information on hazard and regulatory speed limit signs, give way and stop signs, must be legible to oncoming motorists at all times of the year. • Non-illuminated bollards & warning signs i.e. bends and chevrons to be cleaned. • Any defective signs/parts of minor street furniture that are no longer fit for purpose, must be reported back to the county council.
Health & Safety Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn/used when working on/near carriageways. • Legislation relating to safe working on/near carriageways must be observed. • When using specialist equipment staff must be appropriately trained. • All proposed ground areas must be checked for underground services prior to any excavation works taking place
Insurance requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £10 million public liability (for paid operatives).

Process flow chart: Street furniture cleaning – DPS12



Process Step	Description
1. Report of a defective sign to OCC/CSC	<p>Call taken from a member of the public (MOP) regarding a defective sign on the highway network. Details recorded by CSC including location, USRN (Unique Street Reference Number), type of sign.</p> <p>Go to 2</p>
2. CSC refer to SD for implementation	<p>The CSC will contact the cluster leads to inform them of the public enquiry and supply them with the relevant information to enable a site visit to be made.</p> <p>Go to 3</p>
3. SD attend site to assess the reported defect	<p>A member of the SD attends the site to assess the condition of the sign's reflectivity and readability.</p> <p>Go to 4</p>
4. Does the road sign require works?	<p>Does the road sign require cleaning or replacement?</p> <p>Yes go to 5 No go to 11</p>
5. Is the road sign readable?	<p>The sign must be reflective and clearly visible to users of the public highway in accordance with the traffic signs manual regulation 3.</p> <p>Yes go to 12 No go to 6</p>
6. Does the sign need cleaning	<p>The sign must be reflective and clearly visible to users of the public highway in accordance with the traffic signs manual regulation 3.</p> <p>Yes go to 12 No go to 10</p>
7. Does the sign need replacing?	<p>Has the sign been damaged? Is the sign beyond its useful life expectancy?</p> <p>Yes go to 8 No go to 12.</p>

Process Step	Description
8. Refer back to OCC as a defect	SD reports the defective sign back to the CSC stating the USRN (Unique Street Reference Number) that was supplied at stage 1 of the process. Oxfordshire County Council will assess the sign and feed back to the parish with their findings and estimated works completion date. Go to 9
9. OCC instructs works	Oxfordshire County Council signs and lines team will instruct works to rectify the defect. Go to 12
10. Sign cleaned by SD	The SD instructs a contractor to undertake the cleaning of the sign with warm soapy water. Go to 12
11. SD inform the originator of the enquiry (MOP).	The SD feeds back to the original enquirer. The details will be supplied to the SD at stage 2 of this process. Go to 12
12. Process ends	No further action is required. Process ends.

6.13. GIS asset mapping – DPS13

Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding will not be available for this service
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The undertaking of additional Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping to complete the existing inventory.
Minimum Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key highway assets such as street furniture and road signs identified on a Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping system with a unique reference number allocated to each individual item
Health & Safety Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn/used when working on/near carriageways. • Legislation relating to safe working on/near carriageways must be observed. • When using specialist equipment staff must be appropriately trained. • All proposed ground areas must be checked for underground services prior to any excavation works taking place.
Insurance requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £10 million public liability (for paid operatives).

6.14. Roundabout management – DPS14

Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding from the county council will not be available for this service as the income generated can be utilised to fund other highway services within an area.
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The maintenance and sponsorship of roundabouts within a given area.
Minimum Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roundabouts maintained in a tidy manner that does not visually impede the users of the public highway. Planning permission obtained from the relevant Local Planning Authority for any advertisements erected on a roundabout to indicate the company or individual that has sponsored it.
Health & Safety Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn/used when working on/near carriageways. Legislation relating to safe working on/near carriageways must be observed. When using specialist equipment staff must be appropriately trained. All proposed ground areas must be checked for underground services prior to any excavation works taking place
Insurance requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £10 million public liability (for paid operatives).

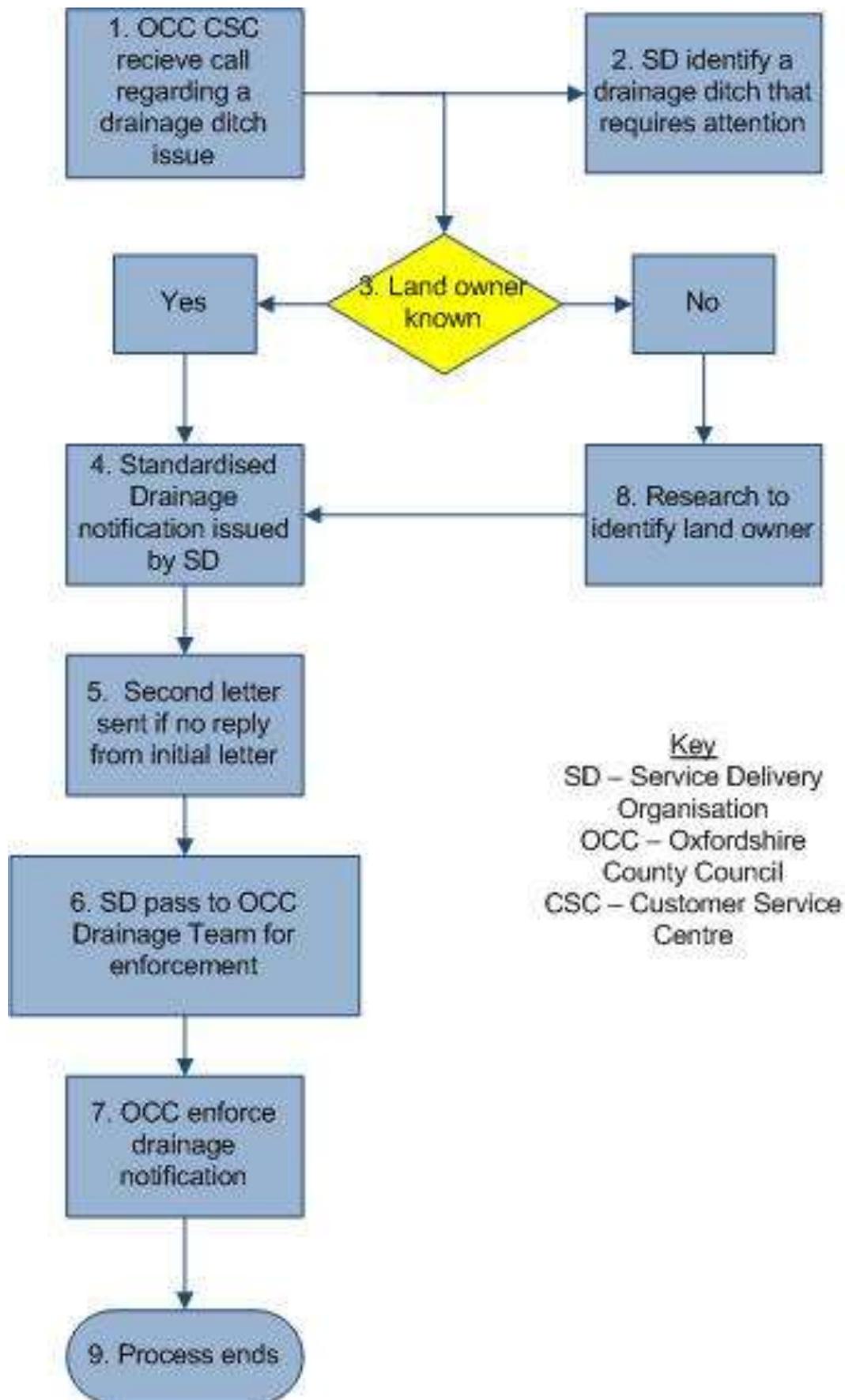
6.15. Public highway inspection – DSP15

Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding from the county council will not be available for this service.
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The inspection and basic maintenance of all un-metalled public highways that are not covered by the rights of way service.
Minimum Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual walked inspections of all public highways deemed to be in category 11 & 12. All inspections must be documented and basic defects rectified or reported back to Oxfordshire County Council via Fix My Street.
Health & Safety Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn/used when working on/near carriageways. Legislation relating to safe working on/near carriageways must be observed. When using specialist equipment staff must be appropriately trained. All ground areas must be checked for underground services prior to any excavation works taking place.
Insurance requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £10 million public liability (for paid operatives).

6.16. Drainage notices – DPS16

Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding from the county council will not be available for this service.
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The issuing of drainage improvement notices to land owners adjacent to the public highway.
Minimum Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Notices to be served on a standardised template with an initial 21 day period then a further 21 day period. If no response is received the matter can be referred to the county council for enforcement highway.enquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk.• Ditches to be maintained in a manner that prevents water running over the surface of the public highway.
Health & Safety Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn/used when working on/near carriageways.• Legislation relating to safe working on/near carriageways must be observed.• When using specialist equipment staff must be appropriately trained.
Insurance requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• £10 million public liability (for paid operatives).

Process flow chart: Drainage notices – DPS16



Process Step	Description
1. OCC CSC receive a call regarding a drainage ditch issue	<p>OCC CSC receives a call regarding a drainage ditch issue. The following information is collected: USRN (Unique Street Reference Number), Location, details of the issue. CSC pass the details to the SD for action.</p> <p>Go to 2</p>
2. SD identify a drainage ditch that requires attention	<p>A member of the SD or a local representative identifies a drainage ditch that requires remedial operations to prevent localised flooding or damage to the surface of the carriageway.</p> <p>Go to 3</p>
3. Land owner known	<p>Is the land owner known to the LC or the local representative?</p> <p>Yes go to 4</p> <p>No go to 8</p>
4. Standardised drainage notification issued by SD	<p>A standardised drainage notification is issued to the land owner or the person/s responsible for the land, requesting that remedial operations are undertaken within a given timeframe.</p> <p>Go to 5</p>
5. Second letter sent if no initial reply	<p>If no response has been received from the persons responsible for the land, a second standard letter is sent out to the recipient.</p> <p>Go to 6</p>
6. SD pass to OCC Drainage Team for enforcement	<p>If no response is received from the second communication the matter is referred back to the County Council's drainage team highway.enquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk for enforcement action.</p> <p>Go to 7</p>
7. OCC enforce drainage notification	<p>OCC drainage team enforce the notification or undertake the works to ensure the safety of the area and recover costs associated with the matter via a court of law should it be necessary.</p> <p>Go to 9</p>

Process Step	Description
8. Research to identify land owner	<p>SD to research the identity of the land owner or persons responsible for the land. This may be done utilising a land registry search. If a land registry does not give conclusive evidence of the land owner the SD can undertake the works to mitigate the issue.</p> <p>Go to 4</p>
9. Process ends	No further action is required. Process ends.

7. Frequently Asked Questions

7.1. Budgets

Q. Is the authority just trying to save money at town and parish councils' expense?

A. No. The budgets provided will be similar to those that we would spend if the services were not delivered at a local level. We do however believe that the delivery of services by a cluster can be undertaken in a more cost effective method.

Q. What can the money be spent on?

A. A minimum standard is expected for most services (e.g. for grass cutting visual splays must be kept clear to ensure road users have clear sight), however, beyond these minimum standards the money may be spent as the town and parish chooses. The minimum standards are described in Individual Services in Scope section.

Q. How was the budget allocated?

A. The provisional budget offer provided is made up of the current cost to the county council as per the Individual Services in Scope section.

Q. How much will each town/parish/cluster receive?

A. The budget that will be allocated is based on the amount of work per activity in scope (for example grass cutting is calculated on a per square/linear metre basis). By undertaking a budget allocation in this manner it provides a consistent approach in each area.

7.2. Agreement periods

Q. What happens to the current arrangements?

A. The current local agency arrangements for highway services that are within scope of this document will continue as normal. Existing agencies wishing to take on additional services will be asked to enter into a new agreement that will cover all of the transferred highway services.

Q. How long will agreements run for?

A. The initial highway service transfer agreement will last for three years.

7.3. Operational details

Q. What level of Public Liability Insurance will a cluster/operative require?

A. Clusters and parishes will need to arrange Public Liability Insurance (of £10 million) and £5 million (minimum) Employers' Liability Insurance. Advice and quotes should be obtained from your insurance broker. Contractors undertaking works on a public highway will also be required to hold £10 million in public liability insurance.

Q. Who is liable in the event of an incident?

A. We are asking parishes to have full responsibility, although the county council will remain as the enforcement authority. Under devolution legislation, the county council remains the principal authority and our statutory functions remain, however, we will seek to devolve liability for certain functions (services). Town and parish councils are under no obligation to take on service devolution but if they are unsure they are advised to seek legal advice.

Q. What are the statutory elements of this proposal?

A. Service deliverers will adhere to a minimum standard of service delivery; however, beyond this it is up to them how they determine service delivery. The minimum required standards are described in the Individual Services in Scope section of the “Transfer of Highway Services Booklet”.

7.4. Service delivery

Q. How do we identify the assets in our area?

A. There are maps available for the grass cutting areas, there are no maps for hedge cutting or footways as those activities are not carried out on a cyclical basis and maps have not been required in the past. All the information the county council has is the distance in scope within each parish and town.

Q. How do we find out who is the responsible landowner?

A. If there is a dispute over the ownership of a hedge, the county council will refer to the lands and highway records team and the Land Registry to determine if it is within the highway boundary and advise the cluster accordingly.

Q. Can the county council provide town and parish councils web access to county council land ownership in the parishes?

A. Maps of the grass cutting areas in scope are being provided. Other queries about land ownership will be responded to on a case by case basis. There is a potentially opportunity to create a parish area within the county council’s Intranet that would enable all layers of Geographic Information System (GIS) data that the authority holds to be shown.

7.5. Questions about the future

Q. What will the county council do if the proposal does not go ahead?

A. Oxfordshire County Council will not undertake any of the services identified within scope for transition unless they are a statutory responsibility or they are deemed to be a danger to users of the public highway.

Q. Will the county council ensure all areas in scope are repaired before handing over, for example clearing rights of way?

A. There will not be an additional programme of work before handing over. In simple terms, the land and fixtures in scope will be handed over “as seen”. However, where there are particular areas of concern we may be able to discuss some initial support for clusters to resolve difficulties.

8. Further Information

There is more information available on our website at:

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/oxfordshiretogether

If you have any queries which have not been addressed here or on the website, please contact us: localities@oxfordshire.gov.uk