

Our ref: FOI 18723698

[REDACTED]
Highways England
Bridge House
Walnut Tree Close
Guildford
GU1 4LZ

27 June 2018

Dear Mr Thorpe

Thank you for your follow up letter of 29 May requesting further information under the Freedom of Information Act.

I have responded to your questions again in the same sequence as your original format for ease of reference. The original questions are highlighted in black text and our answers are highlighted in red.

1. Are the two matters (funding and re-branding) co-dependent.

My previous response set out the benefits of being a publically owned company rather than the benefits of the re-branding expenditure. I can therefore advise that funding and rebranding are/were not co-dependant.

2. Do you suggest that this funding agreement is a result of the re-branding and that this same arrangement was not/would not have been available to the previously named Highways Agency? If so please could you please indicate where supporting evidence of this can be found e.g. Hansard, legislation.

This also relates to the answer in questions 1.

With regards to Hansard, this is already in the public domain and you can access their website at <https://hansard.parliament.uk/>

3. The second of your two letters **removes** very important information, rather than adds anything significant as you suggest. Your first letter says that Highways England accepts that the sections of disrepair “may influence driver behaviour”. I agree completely that the sections **do** very definitely influence driver behaviour and it is this that causes the main danger. I am clear that your Press Office removed this as they did not want to imply a relation between even ‘potentially’ dangerous driver behaviour and the road surface. It is abundantly clear to me that Highways England **is** aware that drivers are swerving to avoid large areas of delamination as acknowledged in you first letter. If it is not, then I am formally putting Highways England that this **is** happening, and that it can be witnessed every day, during every journey. From personal experience the need to change line to avoid damaged road surface is particularly acute if on two wheels (motorbike) or towing, for instance a caravan. I need you confirm that Highways England has risk assessed this behaviour and concluded that it is not dangerous.

We are continuing to monitor this section of the A27 between Chichester and Elmsworth within our weekly inspections. This is to identify any defects in the carriageway that could present a risk to the travelling public. The most recent inspection was carried out on 27 June and no safety critical defects were identified at that time

Defects across the Highways England network are categorised by order of the severity and safety implication to the travelling public. Safety defects are attended to and made safe within 24 hours and any permanent repairs that are required are then carried out within 28 days.

Service defects are less severe and are further categorised into high or low priority. Service high defects will aim to be repaired within 6 months, whereas service low defects are monitored and placed into future programme of works and bid for funding.

Although the worn out sections of asphalt may appear unsightly however they have not been classed as safety defects.

We are planning to carry out a resurfacing scheme on the section of the A27 between Chichester and Elmsworth and the details are currently being finalised. This scheme is due to be completed by the end of the financial year 2018/19, however, we do not have confirmed date at this stage.

4. Please supply a copy of the risk assessment

The risk assessment methodology requires the contractor to determine the frequency of the inspections appropriate to the location, asset type and condition. In the case of the A27, inspections are carried out every week, highlighting any relevant risks. (please also see question No 3 above).

Where inspection regimes identify the need for an intervention to address a pothole as a localised failure, the next steps are determined by the depth and diameter of the failure and the level and type of traffic using the road. This is necessary to establish whether a safety hazard is present and/or whether further deterioration will occur because of the level and type of traffic. A decision is then taken on whether urgent treatment is needed or whether the failure may be tolerated until the repair can form part of a larger road renewal project.

If you are unhappy with the way we have handled your request you may ask for an internal review within 2 months of the date of this response for Freedom of Information requests and within 40 days for Environmental Information Regulations requests.

Our internal review process is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/highways-england/about/complaints-procedure>

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote reference number CRS 18723698 in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

████████████████████

████████████████████

██

██