

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT – 7 MAY 2002**

#### **PROGRESS REPORT ON OMNE COMMUNICATIONS CABLING INSTALLATIONS**

##### **Report by Director of Development Services**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1** To inform the Committee of the progress and performance of OMNE installation works within the town of Kilmarnock.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** A Public Utility (or a contractor employed by them) have the right to install and access apparatus within the limits of the public road. The Utility is obliged to comply with the rules and regulations as described by the “New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA) 1991”. OMNE Communications has a current programme of works, which will allow the majority of residents within Kilmarnock an opportunity to connect to a new digital cable network. The new network will provide alternative access to digital TV, phone services and the internet.

#### **3. PROJECT PLANNING**

- 3.1** On the 9 Jan 2002 a joint meeting was held to discuss the programme of works and to identify all associated Services requirements. East Ayrshire Council was represented by Councillor G.Smith, Roads Division and Press Office personnel. Also in attendance were representatives from OMNE Communications, Broadband Services (planners), Clincart (contractors), Strathclyde Police and the Emergency Services.
- 3.2** An extensive schedule of implementation and action requirements was agreed which included systems to deal with :- 24 hour emergency access, maintenance of bus routes, liaison with other Public Utilities, 24 hour standby, provision of traffic orders, public relations through letter drops and local press, public requests for information and complaints, provision of daily programmes, working methods and monitoring and reporting on progress. The possibility of a caravan information point in locations of intensive activity was discussed with OMNE.
- 3.3** It was also agreed that a review meeting with the Vice Chair of the Committee would be held periodically.

#### **4. PROGRESS**

- 4.1 Employing up to 15 installation squads and 2 reinstatement squads work is on programme to be completed by 20 September 2002.

#### **5. QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE**

- 5.1 The pre-planning requirements were achieved at an early date which has allowed the initial weekly meetings, involving personnel from East Ayrshire Roads Division, Strathclyde Police and OMNE Communications (client and contractor), to concentrate on the progress and development of the works programme.
- 5.2 Complaints or requests for information from the public have been well handled by OMNE's 24 hour call centre facility such that the Roads Division staff have had few problems to resolve. This call centre facility has proved effective. Since operations have taken place in several locations simultaneously and have moved on rapidly the company have considered that a caravan information point would not improve the quality of information provided to the public.
- 5.3 Good working relationships and an understanding by OMNE of the Roads Divisions and Police requirements has allowed the progress meetings to be reduced from weekly to fortnightly. The company have provided the Council with full programme information on a daily basis. Every Councillor affected has also been provided with a programme of works.
- 5.4 Reinstatements have been carried out promptly and to a high standard.
- 5.5 A customer survey carried out in March revealed that a high proportion of residents had not been given the agreed advance notice of intended works. This issue has been raised with OMNE who have now employed a marketing company to carry out the leaflet drops. Further checks will be carried out in due course.
- 5.6 All those surveyed, however, have been happy with the quality and speed of the works and report that the Contractors staff have been helpful and co-operative.

#### **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The cable installation works are controlled by the New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA 1991).

#### **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The cost of monitoring and inspecting work carried out under the NRSWA is partly financed by the Public Utility.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1** The Committee is requested to note the progress on the installation of the new digital network.

**Stephen Chorley**  
**Director of Development Services**

18 April 2002  
BW/NP

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**Nil**

For further information on the contents of this report, please contact Brian Weadon on  
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**AGENDA**