

Councillor Question Time

Questions from Cr Bond

Currently there is works happening across a large area of Fitzroy Street, St Kilda. The utility company undertaking these works are digging up our paving, and performing completely inadequate reinstatements in places. Can officers provide an update of their conversations with the company undertaking these works and how they're going about ensuring we have adequate reinstatement of the dug-up areas?

Response

Service utilities are continuing to carry out upgrades for their customers at various locations across the City. There are a number of utility works occurring along Fitzroy Street at the moment, such as TPG working for NBN, who are installing new telecommunication pits and conduits between Grey St and Jackson St and gas and water providers near 1 Fitzroy St.

The service authorities usually have a number of contractors involved with these works at different times. The first carrying out the service upgrade works, and then provide a temporary reinstatement when finished. The final reinstatement footpath works often occurs sometime later, which Council often has no control over regarding time frames.

Council officers, continually, follow up the service authorities and the various contractors involved, including meeting them on site to talk over reinstatement issues, to try to speed up the process and to ensure that the reinstatements are as close as possible to the original infrastructure conditions.

As new tenants enter premises, it is likely that service authorities will need to return to carry out modifications and further work on the footpath to suit business needs. With the numerous authorities and contractors involved working with different priorities and timeframes, it has been an ongoing challenge for Council to have some of these reinstatements occur faster, but Council officers continue to monitor and follow up with them on the progress to ensure the reinstatement of our footpaths are returned to their original appearance.

In addition, this, there is a considerable amount of work underway to increase the capacity of Council to prevent, and respond to assets being damaged. This includes the consenting/permitting processes transitioning from the current use of the very limited Local Law to the much broader Road Management Act. The latter of which enables Council to charge fees that are commensurate with the costs to ensure the works are undertaken appropriately, and provides the ability to place tighter conditions on service authorities. There is also work underway to improve Council's proactive patrols to ensure works being undertaken without consent are dealt with and enforcement action taken where appropriate. Council's asset management data for our roads and footpaths is also being segmented to better capture individual locations of service authority work and there is an ongoing review of standard drawings to ensure contractors working for service authorities are familiar with the standard of reinstatement expected.

**Please note: answers to any questions in Public Question Time which were answered at the meeting are included in the minutes of that meeting.*