

HIGHWAY ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

To: **Cabinet**

Date: **4th March 2014**

From: **Executive Director: Economy, Transport and Environment**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Forward Plan ref: **2014/008**

Key decision: **Yes**

Purpose: **To present the County Council's Highway Asset Management Strategy, which sets out how the County Council will best manage the Highway Network taking into consideration customer needs, local priorities, asset condition and best use of available resources.**

Recommendation: **That Cabinet considers and approves the Highway Asset Management Strategy, attached as Appendix A, and Policy, attached as Appendix B.**

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report is to seek Cabinet approval of the Highway Asset Management Strategy.
- 1.2 A key point made during the Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme (HMEP) Peer Review in July 2013, was that the County Council's approach to highway maintenance should be focussed around taking a long term view that would maximise the resources available to sustain the condition of the County's highway assets.
- 1.3 Since the Peer Review, work has been progressing to develop the Authority's Highway Asset Management Strategy.
- 1.4 The Department for Transport has recently issued a document '*Gearing up for efficient highway delivery and funding*', which identifies how highway maintenance funding is likely to be allocated in the future. It suggests that authorities who have an asset management strategy in place, and can demonstrate its use, will be incentivised through a revised highway maintenance block funding formula as well as being eligible to bid for major maintenance projects through a new Highway Maintenance Challenge Fund.
- 1.5 A workshop was held on 16th December 2013 to help with development of the Strategy. The workshop involved key members (Highway Spokespersons), along with officers, and alternative priorities were evaluated. General consensus on what is most important for Cambridgeshire was identified as well as the direction in the County Council should move forward in.
- 1.6 The key messages from the workshop that have helped develop the Strategy are:
 - The need to recognise the importance of all carriageway assets
 - The need to adopt a preventative maintenance approach, targeting a 'steady state' or better
 - Geographical considerations on funding disaggregation (i.e. more emphasis on footways/cycle ways in south, more emphasis on carriageways in north)
 - Long-term reduction in revenue spending is expected
 - Maximising the life of assets, by facilitating a sustainable longer-term approach by ensuring the most effective maintenance interventions are made
 - Providing a more even distribution of work over time, to reduce the impact on the network and to benefit delivery teams and their supply chains
 - Managing expectations of network condition, avoiding rapid and unsustainable improvement, by delivering gradual improvement over time.
- 1.7 Following on from the Strategy will be the development of a Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (HIAMP) that will detail how the Asset Management Strategy is applied. It will set out agreed levels of service, performance targets and detail the mechanisms for putting together forward programmes. The long term planned programmes will take the form of a three year rolling Transport Delivery Plan (TDP) from 2015.

- 1.8 The criteria for the identification and resolution of day to day reactive maintenance and shorter term planned works will be reviewed and details incorporated within the HIAMP.
- 1.9 A prelude to the Strategy is the development of a high level Policy document that confirms the County Council's commitment to Highway Asset Management and demonstrates how an Asset Management approach aligns with the authority's corporate vision and strategic objectives.
- 2. MAIN ISSUES**
- 2.1 The Strategy adopts a preventative approach for the maintenance of both carriageway and footway assets. A preventative approach targets assets that are not currently in need of full structural renewal and proposes to extend the assets whole life by arresting/delaying deterioration. The previous approach followed a reactive approach that focussed on assets at end of their life and involved carrying out more costly treatments, which was unsustainable.
- 2.2 To support the carriageway as a priority asset, the Strategy proposes reallocating funding between asset groups. The changes have been considered following consultation with officers responsible for managing these assets.
- 2.3 The Strategy allows for the distribution of available funds using network intelligence, in particular by targeting those geographical areas where certain assets are considered of 'higher' importance. Budget disaggregation can then be adjusted and incorporated within the Asset Management Plan and delivered through the Transport Delivery Plan (TDP).
- 2.4 Footway maintenance budgets are proposed to be weighted towards prioritising high use footways. Carriageway maintenance budgets are proposed to be weighted towards targeting C class and unclassified roads with funding weighted accordingly towards areas where there is most need and best value is delivered.
- 2.5 The Strategy provides greater visibility on the Structures and Traffic Signals programmes to demonstrate improved value (increasing to a 3-year rolling programme within the TDP from 2015/16). Priority assets have been identified and are proposed to be dealt with at the front end of the initial programme.
- 2.6 The Asset Deterioration models within the Options report, suggest that preventative treatments could deliver steady state outcomes (no improvement or deterioration) for around £2.1m less annually than the existing 'reactive' based approach. This will contribute significantly to the overall 10-20% savings that robust asset management processes can deliver. The proposed Strategy shifts the balance of preventative vs. reactive treatments from approximately 2/3 reactive, 1/3 preventative currently; to 2/3 preventative, 1/3 reactive.
- 2.7 The Strategy will be driven by the need to use network intelligence and condition data to identify the most appropriate schemes to best deliver our preferred outcomes and make the most effective use of our resources.

- 2.8 Whilst selection of these schemes will be driven predominantly by condition data, the role of local members to challenge is vital to ensuring that local priorities are incorporated into delivery plans.
- 2.9 It is recognised that the transition to a preventative strategy for the maintenance of roads and footways may lead to a short term perception that network conditions are worse. However in the medium to long term the condition will improve by demonstrating clarity in terms of service standards, forward visibility and consistency of approach.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH PRIORITIES AND WAYS OF WORKING

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

Adopting an Asset Management approach will ensure that highway infrastructure assets support the delivery of services and the local economy, taking into account the long term performance of the asset. It will support initiatives to deliver the optimum community infrastructure for new and existing communities within available resources.

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

The adoption of an effective Asset Management Strategy will support the development of an effective transport system that helps facilitate a high quality of life, by meeting the needs of the individual, whilst remaining responsive to the changing needs of businesses and the local economy. This approach will ensure that the condition and performance of transport assets are enhanced and continuously monitored in order to help optimise planned maintenance programmes.

3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

An effectively maintained local road network will ensure that those people in most need of access to local services have the best ease of movement, whilst also facilitating the support to vulnerable people within their own communities. In addition, an effective Asset Management Strategy will support the delivery of road safety initiatives, to help to reduce road traffic accidents.

3.4 Ways of working

The process used is primarily driven by an asset condition based approach.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource and Performance Implications

Funding is provided through Local Transport Plan allocations, prudential borrowing and other grants / third party funding streams. There are no further funding implications.

Road condition is a major factor for the public and businesses. Increased investment in capital maintenance programmes continues to deliver improved road network to support economic growth.

4.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

The Asset Management Strategy supports the County Council's role as the Highway Authority for Cambridgeshire in meeting its statutory duty for maintenance, under the Highways Act 1980. In future there may be funding implications for authorities without a robust Asset Management Strategy in place – see 1.4 above.

4.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no implications under this heading.

4.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications

There has been engagement with Members by developing the Strategy through the HMEP Peer Review, workshops, Overview and Scrutiny and Group planning meetings. Wider engagement with local communities and businesses will take place when developing the authorities Highway Asset Management Plan during 2014 when service standards will be reviewed.

4.5 Public Health Implications

The Strategy covers the maintenance of existing highway assets. As such any changes put in place that adjust maintenance budget disaggregation across the county, will not impact on the County Council's commitment to deliver new infrastructure to appropriate areas where it will help people lead healthier lives.

Source Documents	Location
None	