

HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET MANAGEMENT

To: Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee

Meeting Date: 13 March 2018

From: Graham Hughes, Executive Director – Place and Economy.

Electoral division(s): All

Forward Plan ref: N/A *Key decision:* No

Purpose: To consider the County Council's Highway Asset Management Policy, Strategy and Highway Operational Standards documents.

Recommendation: That the Committee:

- a) Approves the latest version of the Highway Asset Management Policy, Appendix 1
- b) Approves the latest version of the Highway Asset Management Strategy, Appendix 2
- c) Approves the Highway Operational Standards (HOS), Appendix 3

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy were approved by Cabinet in March 2014. The Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (HIAMP) was subsequently approved by Highways and Community Infrastructure (HCI) Committee in November 2014 and was fully implemented on 1 April 2015. Some minor amendments to the above suite of documents were approved by HCI Committee at its meetings held 3 November 2015 and 21 February 2017. For clarity, it is proposed to re-name the HIAMP as Highway Operational Standards (HOS); this better reflects the contents of the document.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 Many of the standards contained in the February 2017 version of the HIAMP were based upon the national Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management “Well-maintained Highways” 2005. A new national Code of Practice “Well Managed Highway Infrastructure” was published in October 2016, superseding the previous Code. The new Code contains fewer prescriptive standards and promotes a more risk based approach. The Highway Operational Standards presented with this report represents the proposed implementation of the new Code and the adoption of the risk based approach. The Authority must implement the risk based approach, in accordance with the new Code, by October 2018.
- 2.2 A key element of the risk based approach is the proposed on-site risk assessment of potentially dangerous defects in the highway. This would mean that defects which are less hazardous will have a longer timescale for repair than was the case previously. Defects not assessed as presenting lesser hazards will still be repaired within the pre-existing timescales. The appropriate adoption of longer timescales will maximise “first time permanent” repairs and assist in the efficient programming of works. These proposals are detailed in **Appendix A** of the HOS. These proposals and those outlined in paragraph 2.3 were developed in liaison with colleagues from Skanska and the Council’s Insurance Team.
- 2.3 In accordance with the new Code, it is proposed to introduce lesser reactive maintenance standards for very minor roads, i.e. those serving five or less properties. It is proposed that these roads be inspected less frequently and that potentially dangerous defects need to be of greater severity to attract reactive repairs. These proposals are detailed in Fig 5 and Appendix A of the HOS. Such roads serving properties that generate significant traffic will not be subject to these proposals.
- 2.4 Central Government’s commitment to highway asset management continues to be demonstrated via the incentive funding mechanism. The amount of funding that the Council will receive from the Department for Transport (DfT) via the Incentive Fund will continue to depend upon the extent that the Council implements and maintains highway asset management strategies and policies. The Council could lose up to £1,761,000 of this funding in 2018-19 if it fails to adequately and demonstrably implement a robust asset management approach.
- 2.5 The Authority is currently in the top tier (Band 3) of those assessed for Incentive Funding. The proposed updates to the suite of asset management documents and the implementation of these policies and strategies reflect the Authority’s approach to retaining this Band 3 status and maximising the capital funding that the Council receives via the

Incentive Fund in years 2019-20 onwards.

- 2.6 Further to devolution and the creation of the Combined Authority, it is anticipated that the Authority will automatically receive funding commensurate with being in Band 3 of the Incentive Fund assessment. However, the Authority is still expected to demonstrate to the DfT that it is appropriately implementing the asset management approach.
- 2.7 The work undertaken to achieve and retain Band 3 funding has extensive advantages for the Authority, over and above the capital funding it will deliver. The continuing development and implementation of the asset management approach will be essential in making optimal use of the limited revenue funds that are available to the Authority, via the adoption of whole life costing and life cycle planning principles.
- 2.8 A key element of the Authority's implementation of the asset management approach is a 3 year forward programme of transport capital maintenance schemes. In previous years, these maintenance schemes have been presented to this Committee as a component of the Council's Transport Delivery Plan (TDP). The TDP was a compendium of all transport capital works and included schemes that are subject to other governance arrangements and approval processes.
- 2.9 The 3 year programme of capital maintenance schemes is presented to the Committee as Appendix M to the HOS (**Appendix 3** to this report). The inclusion of the capital maintenance programme within the HOS reflects the linkage between the Asset Management Policy, Strategy and HOS with the resultant programme of works, which is predicated upon asset management principles. The Committee is asked to approve the HOS, including its associated programme of works.
- 2.8 All of the documents have been updated to reflect the latest information available and some minor textual amendments have been made to aid clarity. There are no substantive changes to the Policy document. The substantive changes to the Strategy and HOS documents are highlighted in yellow in Appendices 2 and 3 respectively.

The key changes contained with the HOS are as follows:

- Definition of Minor Roads and associated maintenance standards (please see para 2.3 of this report)
- Adoption of the risk based approach, in accordance with the new Code of Practice
- Introduction of Cat 1b defects and a response time of 21 days
- New Highway Standards
 - Definitive Map Modification Order and Public Path Order Statements of Priority
 - Road Classification Policy
 - Street Lighting Policy
 - Traffic Signals Design and Operational Guidance
- Amended Highway Standards
 - Disabled Parking Bays
 - Tables and Chairs
 - Vehicle activated signs

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

The following bullet point sets out details of implications identified by officers:

- The continued use of whole life costing and lifecycle planning principles will help ensure that well-maintained highway infrastructure is able to support the development of the local economy in the long term.

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

The following bullet point sets out details of implications identified by officers:

- The policies and standards set out in these documents support the provision and maintenance of highway infrastructure for all users, thus helping ensure that safe facilities are available for walking, cycling and other non-motorised forms of transport.

3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

- There are no significant implications for this priority.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

- The report above sets out details of significant implications in ***paragraphs 2.4 to 2.7*** regarding the Incentive Fund and its relationship to the adoption and implementation of highway asset management principles.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- The standards contained within the HOS, especially Appendix A to the HOS, will be key considerations in the Authority's statutory defence to third party claims, under Section 58 of the Highways Act 1980.

In accordance with the new Code of Practice, a more risk-based approach is proposed to the rectification of potentially dangerous defects in the highway. These proposed standards have been developed in liaison with the Council's Insurance Team and colleagues from Skanska. Further to detailed discussions with Insurance Team, they are content that these proposals fit well with the risk based approach. Insurance Team is content that the proposed revised standards represent good practice and will not hinder the Authority's ability to defend cases that might arise.

Whilst the Authority has to implement the new Code by October 2018, these principles are a departure from the previous prescriptive approach and will not have been tested when the Authority has defended third party claims to date.

Compliance with the Code of Practice is likely to assist the Authority's defence to third party claims and help to demonstrate that the Authority has taken such care as in all the circumstances was reasonably required, which is the key test for a defence under Section 58 of the Act.

4.4 **Equality and Diversity Implications**

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.5 **Engagement and Communications Implications**

There are no significant implications within this category

4.6 **Localism and Local Member Involvement**

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.7 **Public Health Implications**

There are no significant implications within this category

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Name of Financial Officer: Eleanor Tod
Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement?	Yes Name of Officer: Paul White
Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by LGSS Law?	Yes Name of Legal Officer: Satinder Sahota

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Tamar Oviatt-Ham
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	Yes Name of Officer: Joanne Shilton
Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Tamar Oviatt-Ham
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	Yes Name of Officer: Tess Campbell

Source Documents	Location
Code of Practice “Well-managed highway infrastructure” 2016	http://www.ukroadsliaisongroup.org/en/codes/index.cfm