

Subject:	Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy		
Date of Meeting:	29 November 2016		
Report of:	Executive Director, Economy, Environment and Culture		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Christina Liassides	Tel: 29-2036
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 This report presents the Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy (HAMS), developed by Brighton & Hove City Council over the previous two years, in line with requirements from the Department for Transport (DfT).
- 1.2 The purpose of the HAMS is to enable the Council to manage and maintain the City's highway network in a way that best meets the needs of the present without passing on unaffordable costs to future generations. The Council is also required to have an updated and approved HAMS in order to avoid financial grant funding reductions from Government that are worth £1.231M over the next 4 years (to 2020/21), with particular requirements that the HAMS must be based on long term forecasting of maintenance funding needs.
- 1.3 Brighton & Hove City Council's HAMS reflects the national context for local roads and other highway assets. Funding for all local highway authorities has reduced over several years with a subsequent impact on the condition of these assets and the cost to repair them. The adoption of an asset management strategy enables smarter working with the funding available.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Members approve the Highway Asset Management Policy at Appendix 1 and the Highway Asset Management Strategy at Appendix 2
- 2.2 That Members authorise officers to further develop proposals with the Highway Asset Management Strategy to facilitate progression through the DfT's Incentive Fund banding in order to secure additional maintenance funding.
- 2.3 That Members note that the HAMS will be regularly updated to include investment strategies for other highway infrastructure including footways, highway structures, drainage, street lighting and traffic control systems

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Highway Assets

- 3.1 Brighton & Hove City Council's highway assets comprise:
- 624km carriageway
 - 1024 km footway
 - 25,903 lighting units (including subway lights, lit bollards, floodlights and illuminated signs)
 - 375 sea-front structures, bridges, subways, retaining walls
 - Traffic management systems including cameras, lights, crossings
 - Street furniture including safety barriers, pedestrian barriers, bollards
 - Signage and lining
 - Grit bins
 - Grass verges
- 3.2 The total Asset Value is £1.703bn. The biggest and most expensive assets are carriageways (£0.97bn); structures (£0.47bn); footways and cycleways (£0.17bn).
- 3.3 Brighton & Hove is a busy, compact city with extensive bus routes. This means that some B and C roads are as heavily trafficked as our A roads. It also means that many of our local roads carry heavier bus traffic than equivalent roads in other Local Authority areas.

A Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Strategy

- 3.4 Brighton & Hove's Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy is a set of documents that establish how the Council will maintain the City's highway network to ensure that it is safe and reliable now and for the long term.
- 3.5 It also sets out how the Council's approach to maintenance will, as far as possible, underpin the Council's wider aspirations for economic growth, social equality, independent living and environmental sustainability.
- 3.6 Crucially, recognising the unprecedented financial challenges faced by all Council services, it considers how the Council can balance these needs within limited budgets both at the present time and over the long term.
- 3.7 The document acts as a record of the best evidence available at the time to support the Council's decisions. It therefore includes technical information on performance trends and forecasts that have been produced to inform the strategy.

Funding

- 3.8 Capital investment contributes towards maximising the life of the asset and is used for preventative maintenance, such as surface dressing of carriageways and for resurfacing/structural refurbishment.
- 3.9 Revenue budgets are used to repair or carry out some preventative maintenance on highway assets.

- 3.10 As a result of financial pressures across local government, the revenue budgets for most highway assets have been reduced in recent years.
- 3.11 The main revenue budget for these assets is the reactive maintenance one, which ensures the highway remains as safe as possible and is estimated to save circa £5 million in liability claims to the council.
- 3.12 The Council receives capital funding for highway maintenance primarily from the DfT through the LTP Block Maintenance Fund. Other opportunities are sought through bids for additional grant funding such as the Highway Maintenance Challenge Fund or through the Local Enterprise Partnership. The 'Invest to Save' borrowing proposal for street lighting forms an alternative approach.
- 3.13 The LTP Block Maintenance Fund forms the main source of highway maintenance funding. Funding is calculated using a Needs-based formula related to the length of carriageway, number of lighting columns and number of structures with a span greater than 1.5m.
- 3.15 The Incentive Fund was introduced in 2016/17. To maximise funding, councils need to demonstrate: approval of a highway infrastructure asset management strategy; input of stakeholders into the process; collaborative working with construction partners; standard specifications; joint contracts and collaboration with other local authorities.
- 3.16 Following a phased introduction over 3 years, 15.5% of total highway maintenance capital funding will be allocated through the Incentive Fund. BHCC's allocation for both Block Maintenance and Incentive Fund, depending on ranking, is:

	Block Maintenance (£)	Incentive Fund (£)		
		Band 3	Band 2	Band 1
2015/16	2,623,000			
2016/17	2,404,000	146,000	146,000	131,000
2017/18	2,332,000	218,000	196,000	131,000
2018/19	2,110,000	440,000	308,000	132,000
2019/20	2,110,000	440,000	220,000	44,000
2020/21	2,110,000	440,000	132,000	0

- 3.17 In 2016/17, BHCC scored itself in Band 1. This present edition of the HAMS (Appendix 2) contains detail on investment requirements for the City's carriageway surfaces. Alongside other work to achieve the Government requirements, this is sufficient to enable the Council to meet Band 2 requirements for 2017/18.
- 3.18 However, in order to progress to Band 3, or at least retain the current Band 2 status beyond 2017/18 the Council must extend the scope of the HAMS to cover other highway infrastructure including footways, highway structures, drainage and street lighting.

Actions to date

3.19 The Highway Maintenance section is responsible for delivering asset management across Transport. Roles within the team are not exclusive to asset infrastructure management alone; thus, the staff resource is still very small to cover the volume of work required.

3.20 Progress to date includes:

- Analysing and improving accuracy of data on highway assets, particularly carriageways and footways, in order to calculate the value of the assets, provide information for the Whole of Government Accounts and obtain an accurate picture of condition and likely deterioration of highway assets.
- Introduced specialist software and a data management plan to collect and manage data, enabling modelling and analysis of asset condition and deterioration and planning for optimum treatment interventions.
- Ensuring other aspects of the DfT's requirements are met such as analysis of customer feedback through NHT surveys and in-house reviews
- Produced an overarching asset management policy and first version of an asset management strategy focussing initially on the highest value asset (carriageways)
- Setting up a data management group across Transport to monitor and manage highway assets and to ensure accurate recording of any changes to highway infrastructure
- Undertaking regular detailed surveys to establish asset type and condition

Carriageways summary

3.21 Conclusions arising from analysis of the largest highway asset, the carriageway, are as follows (greater detail is contained within the Asset Management Strategy, Appendix 2):

- A detailed study of the entire road network has identified routes that are most critical to the well-being and economic resilience of the City. This is referred to as the Resilient Network and includes areas of economic growth, important routes for emergency services, routes that carry high volumes of traffic, HGVs and buses and also those where the condition of the road and associated infrastructure can have a major impact on residents and business in the vicinity. These are mainly the A, B and C roads.
- Evidence from condition surveys strongly indicates that the condition of the network as a whole has been declining since 2002/03 and at a faster rate since 2008/09
- The medium term (5 year) strategy is to make effective use of available capital budgets to hold back decline in the condition of the major road network whilst investing an average of 0.18M-0.24M in preventative treatments to secure longer term benefits for the unclassified roads. During this period, officers will continue to progress asset management for the majority of highway infrastructure, and will work with contractors and other partners to optimise best value for money.
- Analysis of the safety (reactive) repair regime has shown this to be good value for money by providing a cost effective means of addressing immediate safety risks on the network and this work will continue.
- There is no quick realisation of investment payback to provide a sound 'invest to save' borrowing case.

- 3.22 The decline in road condition is a national situation and an issue for all local authorities. Band 1 status is widespread across England, with many unitary authorities assessing themselves as Band 1. In the South East, the larger county authorities of Kent and West Sussex are in Band 1.
- 3.23 Locally within Brighton & Hove, the council has good strategies to deal with reactive maintenance, such as first-time permanent repairs rather than temporary pothole repairs, and these strategies are in place to progress us to Band 2.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The council could decide not to endorse a Highway Asset Management Strategy. However, this would mean that there was no long-term planning for highway infrastructure, making it harder to obtain best value within available budgets as well as losing capital funds year on year from the Department of Transport.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 A report was presented to ETS Committee in March 2015 raising awareness and setting out our general approach. The involvement of representative organisations of the Transport Partnership was also invited in November 2013
- 5.2 A update briefing for Members was provided in November 2015
- 5.3 Customer comments and feedback are reviewed regularly as part of the asset management strategy.
- 5.4 The Council participates in the annual National Highway and Transportation survey. In comparison with other Unitary Authorities the Council fares well with good levels of satisfaction for the condition of road surfaces and speed/quality of repair. In particular, the survey revealed that residents in Brighton & Hove believe that maintenance of roads, pavements and drainage should be the top priority when protecting Council budgets within transport and highways services. Only 3% of respondents believed that it is acceptable to reduce funding for roads, drainage and pavement maintenance which was the lowest level across all Council transport and highways services.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 There is a need to invest in highway assets to avoid deterioration of the network and the impact that will have on the economic, social and environmental well-being of the city.
- 6.2 The case for adopting a positive approach to Highway Asset Management has been identified by DfT as the most efficient means of work planning over the longer term. DfT have provided an inducement to adopt asset management practices by introducing an Incentive Fund to be awarded to Councils following this approach.

- 6.4 It is proposed that the Council aims to manage the deterioration in the current condition of road surfaces by targeting resources as efficiently as possible, and, if funding permits, target improvement at key parts of the network. This could be via major schemes or through grant funding such as the Challenge Fund as well as via available Maintenance Block Funding.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 Costs associated with the delivery of requirements set out in the Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy will be subject to available and approved revenue and capital budgets. The Policy and Strategy provides a framework to manage and maintain highways assets in a way that meets the city requirements and how to allocate available funding to achieve value for money.
- 7.2 It is anticipated that the Policy and Strategy will contribute to maximising the grant made available from the DfT and assist in making funding applications for external resources to deliver the identified requirements. Officers will continue to identify opportunities to maximise external funding sources. External funding is potentially an important source of income, but funding conditions need to be carefully considered to ensure that they are compatible with the aims and objectives of the council.

Finance Officer Consulted: Steven Bedford

Date: 09/11/16

Legal Implications:

- 7.3 The Council as a highway authority has a statutory duty under the Highways Act 1980 to maintain publicly adopted highways. The actions detailed in this report will assist in demonstrating how the Council is allocating funds to enable it to comply with this statutory duty.

Lawyer Consulted: Stephanie Stammers

Date: 08.11.16

Equalities Implications:

- 7.4 A well maintained highway provides a good level of service for all users but with particular impact on more vulnerable groups such as people with mobility difficulties, cyclists, etc.
- 7.5 When undertaking specific maintenance schemes the needs of the local community are considered from the outset to ensure accessibility for all.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.6 Asset management planning enables optimisation of maintenance treatments, both in the longer-term and in yearly works planning, thus providing the most sustainable approach to maintaining highway assets, depending on the level of funding available.

- 7.7 Sustainable techniques are used during construction and repair such as using recycling materials. Contractors on the Councils framework are appointed on the basis of their contribution towards achieving the Council's One Planet Living targets.

Any Other Significant Implications:

- 7.8 These are set out in the Highway Asset Management Strategy document at Appendix 2.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Brighton & Hove City Council Highway Asset Management Policy
2. Brighton & Hove City Council Highway Asset Management Strategy
3. Maintenance Treatment options

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. Highway Asset Management report to ETS Committee in March 2015

