

Highway Asset Management Policy

What is the purpose of this document?

This document sets out the high level principles by which Brighton & Hove City Council will maintain the city highway network and associated assets over the short, medium and long term. As such it will guide the development of our Highway Asset Management Strategy and the options that we consider for securing the long term sustainability of the network.

Scope

Brighton & Hove City Council is responsible for maintaining 624km of highway road network with 1026km of pavements. This policy covers the following infrastructure assets associated with the highway network:

- Carriageway and footway surfaces
- Surface water drainage infrastructure associated with highways
- Bridges, coast defence structures, cliffs and other highway retaining walls and subways
- Street lighting and traffic control systems
- Signs, bollards and other street furniture

Policy statement

Effective asset management will be at the heart of the Council's approach to maintaining Brighton & Hove's highway infrastructure and will reflect the core principles within the Corporate Plan, namely:

- **Public accountability:** Using the best evidence locally and nationally to drive our decisions on investment in our highway infrastructure and demonstrate value for money. In doing so we will encourage creativity and alternative approaches to find solutions to the challenges that we face.
- **Citizen focused:** By focusing on improving the real world outcomes of our services and the condition of our highways for the people who use them and those who live and work by them.
- **Increasing equality:** By considering how the overall condition of our highways and our approach to maintenance affects people with different personal circumstances and by recognising the important role that our highways play in enabling people to live independent lives
- **Active citizenship:** By informing and engaging with communities and partnerships on our long term options for investment and demonstrating how we have responded to their views in choosing our strategy.

We will also continue to fulfil our obligations set out in legislation (as summarised in the Annex) and have regard to national guidance and Codes of Practice in determining our approach to highway asset management.

Principles

1. Our first priority is to minimise risks to the safety of people using Brighton and Hove's highway network or who live and work nearby.
2. We recognise that our aspirations for the economy, community safety and resilience, health and well-being and environmental sustainability are dependent on the maintenance of a highway network that is resilient to major risks such as extreme weather events. We will prioritise routine and preventative maintenance operations on key routes (the 'Resilient Network') that enable us to reduce these risks over the long term.
3. Highway assets have long service lives and decisions that we make now about how we maintain these will affect the economic and social well-being of future generations. We will adopt the principle that decisions on budgets for highway maintenance must not result in unaffordable costs being passed on to future generations. This principle will reflect our UN Biosphere Reserve status.
4. We recognise that a well-maintained public realm can underpin our aspirations to attract inward investment, quality housing and sustainable transport. We will adopt an holistic approach to planning for highway maintenance alongside new infrastructure proposals to ensure budgets are targeted to achieve the greatest benefit for residents, businesses and visitors to Brighton and Hove.
5. We will support our objective for a sustainable economy by adopting a long term approach to maintenance planning in order to minimise disruption to traffic, residents and businesses over the whole life of our highway infrastructure. We will also develop medium term (3-5 year) programmes of work that enable us to co-ordinate works in a way that will minimise disruption to traffic.
6. We will select long term maintenance investment options on the basis of evidence that they will deliver high value for money for the Council and residents and businesses in Brighton and Hove. We will maintain accountability in developing our programmes of work by regularly reviewing and publishing the criteria for prioritising and selecting scheme proposals.
7. We will also monitor shortfalls in long term budgets for maintenance and manage risks arising from these shortfalls through the corporate risk management framework.
8. We will listen to the views of our residents and businesses when considering the allocation of transport budgets for maintenance and provide feedback to demonstrate how we have responded to those views.
9. We will continue to develop relations with our local contractors and the SE7 Highways Alliance to draw on their expertise and Research & Development in identifying new solutions that will reduce whole life costs, consumption of primary raw materials and other environmental impacts of our highway assets. We will also disseminate our own innovation and best practice through other Local Authority alliances.
10. We will establish all necessary protocols to ensure that our asset information and systems are fit for the purposes of supporting the principles listed above.

Policy Annex

Overarching legal requirements

Legislation	Requirements
Highways Act 1980	The Council has a duty to maintain public highways in the city and must take all reasonable action to keep them in a safe condition.
Road Traffic Act 1988	The Council has a duty to promote road safety, to undertake studies into the causes of accidents involving vehicles and to carry out measures to reduce the risk of accidents
Local Government Act 1999	The Council has a duty to deliver best value in its services and to consult with users of those services on the approach to delivering best value.
Civil Contingencies Act 2004	The Council has a duty as Category 1 responder to assess major risks and plan for emergencies including those associated with transport infrastructure. This may include preventative actions to reduce or mitigate those risks.
Traffic Management Act 2004	The Council has a duty to take all reasonable action to reduce disruption to traffic on the network in particular as a result of road works.
Flood and Water Management Act 2010	The Council has a duty as Lead Local Flood Authority to investigate the causes of flooding and to undertake measures to reduce flood risk.

Other legislation affecting the Council's highway maintenance service

Requirements	Implications for highway maintenance service
Equality	<p>The Council must not discriminate against any individuals or groups through its activities on the basis of identified characteristics such as gender, race or religion.</p> <p>The Council must take all reasonable action to mitigate any aspect of its highway service that puts people with identified characteristics at a disadvantage and to identify opportunities</p>

Requirements	Implications for highway maintenance service
	to advance equality of opportunity.
Health and Safety	<p>The Council has a duty of care to protect the safety of the public, its employees and operatives through its management of the highway network, design and delivery of highway maintenance operations.</p> <p>The Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015 clearly set out the duties of the Council and its contractors in relation to highway works.</p>
Environmental Protection	<p>The Council has a number of duties under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 relating to management of waste and minimising noise and pollution from highway maintenance activities.</p>
Natural environment	<p>The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 places restrictions on the timing of maintenance activities where they impact on natural habitats. It also places a duty on the Council to ensure that invasive non-native plants are not spread through maintenance and construction activities (such as transporting of contaminated soil).</p> <p>The Noxious Weeds Act 1959 requires the Council to control the spread of injurious weeds on highways and prevent its spread onto adjacent agricultural land.</p> <p>The Biodiversity Duty (Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006) requires the Council to show regard for conserving biodiversity through its highway operations.</p> <p>The EU Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC) places requirements on member states to achieve quality standards for inland watercourses</p>
Coast Protection Act 1949	<p>Designates the council as a Coast Protection Risk Authority, which gives powers (not duties) to take measures to protect the coast</p>