

TITLE OF REPORT: Gateshead Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP) and the New Code of Practice for Well Managed Highway Infrastructure

REPORT OF: Tony Alder, Acting Strategic Director, Communities and Environment

Purpose of the Report

1. This report seeks approval of revised strategy towards Highways Asset Management 2018-30 in Gateshead, and associated documentation. It also confirms adoption of the New Code of Practice (COP) for Well Managed Highway Infrastructure 2016 which has provided the guidance for the development of the revised approach, including a new risk based approach to managing the highway network.

Background

2. Gateshead's road network provides a fundamental resource, essential both to the economy of the area and for the quality of life for residents and visitors. Its effective management and maintenance has an impact on activity of all kinds, from day to day journeys to work, school, shopping or for leisure, through to the needs of the emergency services and the road freight industry.
3. The Council's first HAMP was approved in 2014 and subsequently updated in 2016. In order to meet the Department for Transport's (DFT) performance rating guidelines it is required to be updated every two years. Failure to carry out the update could affect the Council's rating with consequent impacts on funding allocations. The new HAMP also provides the supporting documentation to help deliver the various elements of the new COP
4. The national codes of practice for highways provide the basis for the management of highway infrastructure. In order to introduce modern principles of asset management and introduce risk-based management principles in 2015 the DFT commissioned a review of the guidance. The new COP was published in 2016 with a deadline for local authorities to implement the 36 recommendations contained within it across their highway services by October 2018.
5. The new COP has been adopted by the DFT who have used their recent incentive block fund allocation to reward councils who demonstrate the good asset management practices detailed in the code. Adoption of the new code is expected to be tested in the Courts where local highway authorities seek to defend third party claims. The revised strategy towards highway asset management in Gateshead has been developed to comply with the new COP.
6. The Council currently receives the maximum available grant for highways maintenance, having achieved highways maintenance block incentive band 3 authority status for 2018/9 following the implementation of asset management

principles and policy. To continue and maintain the status the authority must be compliant with the new COP.

Proposal

7. The new strategy for Highway Asset Management in Gateshead for the period 2018 to 2030 is in three parts, replacing the previous single document. It now comprises; The Highway Asset Management Framework (HAMF), the Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP) and the Highway Maintenance Plan (HMP). The three documents include the following sections:

Highway Asset Management Framework:

- Asset Information Strategy
- Communication Strategy
- Performance Management Strategy
- Risk Management Strategy
- Resilient Network
- Competency Framework

Highway Asset Management Plan

- Objectives / policy
- Finance
- Life Cycle and forward planning
- Performance (annual monitoring report)

Highway Maintenance Plan

- Highway maintenance management procedures
- Bridges and structural maintenance procedures
- Street lighting maintenance procedures
- Highways Safety Inspection Policy
- Highways Inspection Manual
- Skidding Resistance Policy
- Highway Drainage Strategy
- Service Inspections

Full copies of the documents are available in the Members' Library and at:

https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/media/10478/Gateshead-Highway-Asset-Management-framework/pdf/Gateshead_Highway_Asset_Management_framework.pdf

https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/media/10479/Gateshead-Highway-Asset-Management-Plan/pdf/Gateshead_Highway_Asset_Management_Plan.pdf

https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/media/10480/Gateshead-Highway-Maintenance-Plan/pdf/Gateshead_Highway_Maintenance_Plan.pdf

Recommendations

8. It is recommended that Cabinet:
- (i) approves the revised strategy for highways asset management in Gateshead, including the Highway Asset Management Framework, the revised Highway Asset Management Plan and the Highway Maintenance Plan.
 - (ii) adopts The New Code of Practice (COP) for Well Managed Highway Infrastructure 2016

For the following reasons:

- (i) To provide the basis for improved management and maintenance of Gateshead's highway network and ensure the effective use of resources.
- (ii) In order to maximise external funding streams awarded to authorities who carry out effective highway management.

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Policy Context

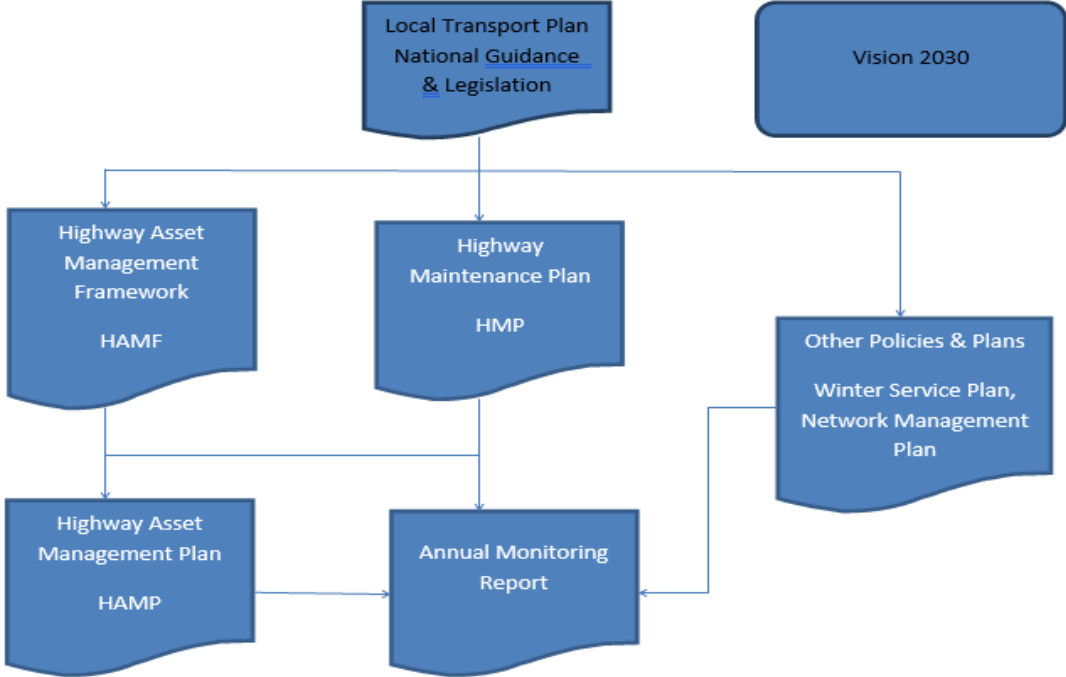
1. The proposals are in line with our long-term Vision 2030, and also support the Tyne & Wear Local Transport Plan (LTP). Maintenance of the highway network is an essential element in support of our strategic approach of making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives, supporting economic and social activity throughout Gateshead.

Background

New Code of Practice

2. The new Code of Practice for Well Managed Highway Infrastructure was published in 2016 by the UK Roads Liaison Group and supersedes all of the previous codes for managing highways structures and lighting.
3. The new code represents a significant shift away from the previous prescriptive approach to highways maintenance and introduces a risk- based approach to highway infrastructure maintenance. This approach is applied to levels of service, inspections, response times, priorities and programmes.
4. An authority is expected to have developed and documented its own risk- based approach to managing its highway network allowing the development of a more local approach based on evidence and allowing for efficiencies in service delivery.
5. Work to comply with the new code was carried out collaboratively with the other Tyne and Wear authorities to develop consistent policies and procedures particularly in the light of potential third-party claims relating to our duty to maintain roads under the highways act 1980.
6. The overarching principles and key aims of the new code are as follows:
 - development of a risk-based approach to asset management;
 - establishment of hierarchies and levels of service with appropriate funding;
 - competency within the field of asset management;
 - understanding of data asset management and inventory development;
 - development of performance management strategies;
 - development of a resilient network.

Figure 1 Relationship of strategic documents



Strategy for highway asset management 2018-30

- 7. The new strategy for highways asset management is split into 3 sections and demonstrates how the authority complies with all 36 of the COP recommendations. Figure 1 show how these relate to each other, and to other complementary documents.

The Highway Asset Management Framework (HAMF)

- 8. This document is an overarching framework for highway asset management including all activities and processes necessary to develop, document, implement and continually improve asset management. It contains strategies for dealing with data management and communications as well as performance management, general competencies, risk and resilience.

The Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP)

- 9. Financial and programming issues are within this section as well as overall policy objectives. A performance monitoring report is also provided which will be updated annually.

The Highway Maintenance Plan (HMP)

- 10. This plan is the largest of the documents and is an operational document which explains how the highway, lighting and structural assets are maintained. The Highway Safety Inspection Manual and policy have been carefully developed

with colleagues from the legal and insurance industry and with officers from both policy and frontline teams. The documents reflect the latest risk-based approach to highway infrastructure repairs.

Consultation

11. In preparing this report the Cabinet Members for Environment & Transport have been consulted and agreed with its contents.
12. A separate communications strategy has also now been prepared for the HAMP. This is a requirement of the DFT incentive funding process. Section 3 of the Highway Asset Management Framework (HAMF) contains the strategy.

Alternative Options

13. Not to approve the HAMP and comply with the new COP would put at risk elements of highway maintenance funding.

Implications of Recommended Option

14. Resources

- a) **Financial Implications** - The Strategic Director, Corporate Resources confirms that there are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
- b) **Human Resources Implications** - Nil.
- c) **Property Implications** - Nil.

15. **Risk Management Implications** – the revised HAMP will enable better identification of risks related to the highway network.

16. **Equality & Diversity Implications** - Nil.

17. **Crime & Disorder Implications** - Nil.

18. **Health Implications** – a well maintained highway will help support the promotion of active and healthy travel

19. **Sustainability Implications** - The HAMP will help protect the integrity of Gateshead's highway network.

20. **Human Rights Implications** - Nil.

21. **Area & Ward Implications** – The HAMP relates to all wards.

Background Information

22. The following background information has been used in preparing this report:
 - Gateshead Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP), November 2016.
 - The Code of Practice for Well Managed Highway Infrastructure 2016