

**TITLE OF REPORT:** Highway Asset Management Plan Update

**REPORT OF:** Peter Udall, Strategic Director, Economy, Innovation and Growth

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### **Purpose of the Report**

1. The report provides the annual update of the highway asset management plan (HAMP) 2018-30, which was initially approved at Cabinet in 2018 with subsequent updates in 2019, 2020 and 2021. It provides the latest performance information and details of progress with key targets in the plan.

### **Background**

2. Gateshead's road network provides a fundamental resource, essential to the economy of the area and for the quality of life for residents and visitors. Its effective management and maintenance have 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. The HAMP provides the strategic framework for the management of this resource.
3. To meet the Department for Transport's (DfT) performance guidelines the HAMP is required to be updated regularly. Failure to carry out the update could affect the Council's HAMP rating with consequent impacts on funding allocations.

### **Proposal**

4. The HAMP has been updated to reflect the outcome of the most recent monitoring and provide an update on progress with the key targets. These are summarised in appendices 2 and 3 respectively. Although the Council has made significant progress in most areas, concerns remain for the condition of the unclassified highway network (residential and industrial estates). The classified road network in Gateshead is ranked in the highest road condition quartile of local highway authorities across the country. However, the condition of the unclassified network is relatively poor, with over 136km of carriageway in need of repair (appendix 2 table 1). However, although we have targeted considerable resources using different methods and techniques in the last three years, the highway condition indicator for our unclassified roads has remained constant at 20%, indicating the extent of the problem. A further issue is the increase in material costs during 2022.

5. Appendix 2 table 2 provides information regarding the previous year's routine maintenance and inspection regime. Gateshead's highway and footpath network is inspected throughout the year based on the council's highway safety inspection policy available online:

<https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/4502/Highways-Asset-Management-Plan>

Reports from customers are also fed into the inspection system.

From the inspections the highway defects are categorised based on their risk to the public and this determines firstly the speed of repair and whether a repair is required at all. In 2021 3% of defects were categorised high risk, 74% medium risk and 23% low risk. Low risk defects may be left to be observed again at a future inspection if they do not present a danger to the public. The table shows a considerable drop in pothole defects and subsequent repairs from the previous year: this figure tends to fluctuate with the type and severity of winter weather. The new repairs policy adopted in 2020 continues to deliver savings whilst concentrating repairs in higher risk areas.

6. A key area of progress in 2022 relates to the management of the Council's traffic signals. A full inventory of all equipment has now been carried out and input to an asset management system, which identifies life cycle plans and subsequent repair and maintenance programmes. This was a key target from the HAMP and is important as the Council has over 180 sites with signalised equipment. Also, during the year officers have been negotiating a new mutual assistance agreement with the regional traffic signal team managed by Newcastle City Council to assist with traffic signal management: this will streamline and prioritise fault management and repairs to key junctions.
7. The Council's highway officers have established a carbon reduction group in partnership with Tarmac who have the Council's current term maintenance contract for carriageway resurfacing. This group's main aim is the sharing of good practice and latest ideas for carbon reduction in the construction / highways sector. A baseline of existing carbon measurement is being developed to allow us to monitor progress. We are already trialling warm lay road resurfacing materials (instead of high carbon, hot lay materials) and experimenting with thinner surfacing products that have improved finishes and better longevity. With all these materials there is a balance to be found between carbon generation, product suitability and cost.
8. Updates to the targets for the HAMP are proposed in appendix 3. New targets specifically relate to carbon measurement, the management of traffic signals and the management of highway drainage. These, together with updated information summarised in appendices 2 and 3 will be incorporated into a revised HAMP, the full version of which is available online at:

<https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/4502/Highways-Asset-Management-Plan>

## 9. Recommendation

It is recommended that Cabinet approves the updated HAMP targets 2018 to 30 as set in appendix 3.

For the following reasons:

- (i) to optimise investment in the local transport network;
- (ii) to provide the basis for improved management and maintenance of Gateshead's highway network and to ensure the effective use of resources;
- (iii) to maximise external funding streams awarded to highway authorities who carry out effective highway management; and
- (iv) to introduce measures to reduce carbon production in highway maintenance materials and operational maintenance procedures.

### **Policy Context**

1. The proposals support the pledges within Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives. They also support the aims and objectives of the Transport Plan for the North East and the Gateshead Highway Asset Management Plan (GHAMP).

### **Background**

2. The total length of the highway network in Gateshead is more than 560 miles (900km). The road network reflects the mixed character of Gateshead, ranging from major urban routes carrying large volumes of traffic to more lightly used rural roads providing access to outlying villages and farms. It includes 740 miles (1,191km) of footway, 32,000 streetlights, 289 bridges & other highway structures, and 180 traffic signalled junctions or crossings.
3. The purpose of the GHAMP is to ensure that available resources are directed to maximum effect. It seeks to identify the main difficulties and problems affecting maintenance of the network and how these should be tackled.
4. The Council's first HAMP was approved in 2014 and subsequently updated in 2016. In 2018 a new three-part strategy for the GHAMP was adopted by the Council for the period 2018 to 2030 comprising the highway asset management framework (HAMF), the highway asset management plan (HAMP) and the highway maintenance plan (HMP). All three documents are published on the Council's website. To meet the DfT's performance rating guidelines the HAMP is required to be updated regularly. Failure to carry out the update could affect the Council's rating with potential reductions on funding allocations.

### **Consultation**

5. In preparing this report the Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport have been consulted and agree with its contents.
6. The Council's highway asset management policies are available to view by the public on the Council's website.

### **Alternative Options**

7. There are no alternative options.

8. **Resources**
  - a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms that there are no financial implications arising directly from this report.
  - b) **Human Resources Implications** – there are no human resources implications.
  - c) **Property Implications** – no property implications have been identified.
9. **Risk Management Implications** – there are no risk management issues.
10. **Equality and Diversity Implications** – maintaining and improving the highway network through the schemes identified above will assist in reducing social exclusion by improving access for the young, elderly, unemployed/low waged and people with disabilities.
11. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – not applicable.
12. **Health Implications** – transport and highway improvements are vital in achieving Active and Healthy Gateshead.
13. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** – maintenance of highways, forms part of a sustainable transport system capable of supporting the borough's environmental, social, and economic objectives sustainably. The Plan has specific targets related to carbon reduction.
14. **Human Rights Implications** – there are no human rights implications.
15. **Ward Implications** – the policy affects all wards.

## Key Highway Performance Indicators

### 1 Annual Highway Maintenance Key Performance Indicators

(% of carriageway network needing immediate repair)

**Table 1**

Road Class	Length (km)	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Principal (A)	78	1	1	1	1	1
B & C	141	2	2	2	2	2
Unclassified	682	18	20	18	20	20

### 2 Annual Recorded Defects

(Repairs carried out after inspections)

**Table 2**

Defects	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Trips / footway kerb	7,456	5,576	4,023	3,484	3,433
Potholes	4,740	3,191	2,628	4,226	2,625
All Defects ***	18,104	13,469	10,563 *	12,937	12632**

\* Includes lockdown period in second quarter where no work was issued

\*\* up to 15/12 /2022

\*\*\* for traffic signs, lines, street-furniture, ironwork, kerbs

### 3 Carriageway length treated 2021/22 (km)

**Table 3**

Type Of Treatment	A Road	B Roads	C Roads	Unclassified Roads
Reconstruction	0.3	0.5	0.5	1.0
Overlay	0	0	0	1.3
Resurfacing	0.7	0	0	2.4
Surface <u>dr</u> essing	0	0	0	3.7
Thin surfacing*	0	0	0	6.7
Programmed patching	4.2	1.5	0.9	2.1
Total	5.2	2.0	1.4	17.2

\*Micro asphalt

## HAMP Targets and Progress 2021/22

	Action / Target	Priority	Progress 2021/22	Status
	<b>Strategic / General</b>			
1	The development of life cycle plans for different asset types in Gateshead.	High	Life cycle plans now added for traffic signals as well as all major assets. By the end 2022.	
2	Assessment of the impacts of climate change for future maintenance regimes. Development of carbon measurement (carbon calculator for materials).	High	Low carbon lighting now providing savings. Conversion of all lanterns to LED complete. Partnership now developed with Tarmac with a carbon calculator baseline of April 2022 to monitor carbon reduction. Where possible warm mix and ultrathin products will replace more traditional higher carbon materials. Trials with bio bitumen are also planned.	
3	Review inspection and repair policy to reduce repair numbers utilising new risk-based code of practice.	High	New risk related highway inspection policy now achieving target to reduce repair numbers and improve repair times. New policy continues to provide benefits in safety and cost savings in 2022	
	<b>Maintenance Programmes</b>			
4	To arrest the declining condition of the Council's unclassified carriageway network (residential estate roads) to bring it in line with other North East authorities. This will require targeted funding prioritised for this network and use of new methods/techniques.	High	Extra funding has been targeted into this area and although the decline may have been arrested, further resources may be required as materials become more expensive.	
5	Deal with the increasing incidences of potholes in carriageways using new methods and techniques where appropriate.	High	External funding provided to assist in 2022/23. Numbers have reduced in 2022 but are weather dependent.	

	Action / Target	Priority	Progress 2021/22	Status
6	Replace obsolete traffic signals equipment with new longer lasting and more energy efficient equipment.	High	Carry out further life cycle planning and development of maintenance regimes using the Imtrac asset management system.	
7	Develop evidence-based programme for improving footway condition.	Medium	Extra funding provided. New footway maintenance survey (FMS) analysis started in 2021.	
8	Assess and where necessary act to remedy geotechnical problems.	High	Priority areas addressed.	
9	Tackle problems relating to vehicle restraint systems.	High	Full survey carried out and repair programme commenced	
10	Develop programme for the continuous replacement of older lighting support columns.	High	1090 new lighting support columns have already been planted as part of the ongoing column support replacement scheme	
11	Structural testing of lighting columns.	High	Structural programme well underway	
12	Tackle deteriorating condition of signs and road markings.	Medium	Extra funding provided and programme of works ongoing.	
13	Improve the management of highway gullies using a new risk-based approach.	High	New risk based computerised management system procured and now operational (October 22). Analysis of first year's data and optimised routes will follow.	

	Action / Target	Priority	Progress 2021/22	Status
	<b>Information / Analysis</b>			
14	Improve links to actual cost information for schemes.	High	Some work completed.	
15	Link footway inventory data to asset database.	Medium	Completed.	
16	Identify future approach towards updating inventory information.	Medium	New asset information strategy completed.	
17	Develop new skidding resistance policy and work programme expanded to B and C roads.	High	Network analysis completed. 2nd year of B and C road surveys completed and remedial work underway.	
18	Update Imtrac traffic signals asset management system to manage performance and future maintenance programmes. Fault reporting system to be centralised.	High	Inventory now updated. Allowing accurate billing, life cycle planning and fault reporting. MAA (service level agreement) with regional traffic signals team to be finalised.	
	<b>Funding</b>			
19	Review capital and revenue allocations in face of changing budget pressures and emerging priorities.	High	Considered as part of capital and revenue budget setting and in identifying potential funding.	
20	Assess options for meeting funding shortfalls.	Medium	Continue successful capital bidding.	
21	Improve benchmarking of costs for maintenance and improvement works.	Medium	Work completed with Tyne & Wear partners in this area.	
22	Develop business cases for funding repairs to specific asset types.	High	Both street lighting and traffic signal maintenance have had successful bids.	
23	Investigating possible sources of funding to meet longer term maintenance and renewal needs.	High	Continue with capital bids.	