

**Executive**

**24 September 2015**

**Report of the Acting Director City and Environmental Services**

**Highway Asset Management Report**

**The Executive is recommended to:**

- i. Note the review and update of the existing CYC strategy, policy and service delivery methods relating to highway maintenance in this paper and accept them as a sound basis for developing an evidence led programme. Policy will be updated biannually and any changes will be brought before the Executive Member. Any significant changes will be brought before the Executive.
- ii. Confirm that the annual programme of maintenance works will be developed via the following process:
- iii. An evidence led list of schemes will be generated in accordance with Policy for approval by the Director for City and Environmental Services
- iv. Members will allocate budget for highways maintenance in the annual budget process and identify local schemes as part of the Ward Highways Programme
- v. Final programme of affordable schemes will be generated and approved by the Director of City and Environmental Services and ratified by the Executive
- vi. Note and support the work of the council with its partners in the Yorkshire Alliance to deliver shared approaches and efficiencies
- vii. Note and agree the Streetlighting Policy document at Annex 1

**Reason:** To ensure delivery of highway maintenance services in an efficient and cost effective manner.

## **Summary**

1. This report provides an overview of the strategy and approach that we take in the management of our highway assets. The highways network is the most valuable asset that most local authorities own, our highway assets are valued at more than £2bn.
2. The work of the Highways section is governed by a range of guiding codes of practice, an explanation of the key documentation and the way in which we have adopted these is given. Our work with partners across the Yorkshire Alliance ensures that we deliver efficiently and effectively and we are working together with these partners to identify future best practice.
3. The report highlights the way in which the codes of practice are expected to change, the review of our ways of working that will be required to adopt this and how the governance of highway investment decisions will be managed. A recent review of Streetlighting Policy is included as Annex 1 to the report.

## **Background**

4. Our highway maintenance programme is an evidence led process which is governed by a range of national codes of practice and internal plans and strategies that have been developed to adhere to these codes. We currently develop the annual programme in the autumn of the preceding year, the programme is formalised through decisions taken by the Executive Member or Director of City and Environmental Services in December and March.

## **Internal Strategies and Plans**

5. The third version of the City of York Council Local Transport Plan (LTP) was adopted in 2006, the plan sets the high level policies and measures for all transport management activities for the period 2011-2031. The Department for Transport (DfT) recommends that authorities develop a Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP), our plan develops the ideals of the LTP and outlines the way in which we will manage our highway assets to achieve its aims.
6. The TAMP was adopted in 2009, the plan details the whole life cycle of the highway assets and the maintenance regimes required to maintain the assets to a desired condition, optimising budgets and minimising

risk. The TAMP forms the basis of future maintenance linking asset condition to resources and budgets.

7. The TAMP identifies a range of service plans that are key to deliver its aims and the guiding codes of practice that are to be incorporated within our service delivery.

### **National Codes of Practice**

8. Highway Asset Maintenance is informed through a suite of Codes of Practice published by the UK Road Liaison Group, four main documents cover the majority of activities:
  - 'Well-maintained Highways': Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management
  - 'Well-lit Highways' Code of Practice for Highway Lighting Management
  - 'Management of Highway Structures' Code of Practice
  - 'Management of Electronic Traffic Equipment' Code of Practice
9. The Well Maintained Highways Code of Practice covers all aspects of highway maintenance, from day to day small scale repairs to long term strategic planning. Its recommendations are not mandatory, and it does not set prescriptive standards, however, it is widely accepted that authorities should incorporate its recommendations or detail why alternate approaches have been locally adopted. The Code is accepted as the underpinning guidance behind all legal challenges surrounding highway maintenance activities.
10. The Code emphasises the use of asset management, risk management, whole life costing and sustainability in the development of highway maintenance programmes and procedures. Our TAMP details the way in which these ideals have been incorporated into our processes and service delivery.

### **Adoption of the codes**

11. We have adopted the below arrangements for regular basic maintenance of York's highway network which are based on the recommendations of the national code:
  - a network hierarchy based on the recommendations in the Code of Practice and local knowledge

- monthly, six monthly or annual safety inspections by dedicated inspectors, with frequencies determined by the network hierarchy. All frequencies are fully in line with the requirements of the code and seen as best practice by many of our peers
- members of the public and other users defect reports are received and acted upon - area based reactive inspectors respond to all reported defects on the highway within a specified time
- supervision and monitoring of all new development work which is subject to a section 38 (1980 Highways Act.) agreement
- dedicated utility inspectors to monitor and inspect work carried out by the public utilities within the public highway
- specified investigatory levels for defects used by all inspectors to ensure consistency and effective use of resources:

Carriageway pothole - depression  $\geq 40\text{mm}$  deep extending  $\geq 300\text{mm}$  in any one direction

Footway trip - abrupt level difference  $\geq 20\text{mm}$

- inspector carries out a risk assessment on site to decide specified response times for defects based on the risk posed to highway users
  - inspectors are proactive and respond to any defects which pose an immediate risk to the public noticed during other inspections
12. A specific manual formalises our highway maintenance policy and ensures we comply with the Code of Practice. Our Highway Survey, Inspection and Repair Manual which details all surveys, inspections, categories and investigatory levels and is issued to all CYC staff directly involved in highway inspection.
  13. This manual is also used as the main evidence base in any defence against third party highway insurance claims.

## **Programme Development**

14. We use a Highway Management System to record all aspects of the make up and condition of the assets that form our highway network. The Exor system is also used to manage our street asset records monthly returns, production of Best Value Performance Indicators, issuing of streetworks notifications and asset valuation information.
15. Annual repair and renewal programmes are developed from a range of data sources:
  - Detailed annual condition survey of all our roads and footways
  - Visual safety survey of all our roads and footways
  - United Kingdom Pavement Management System (UKPMS) visual and machine surveys
16. The surveys record five condition categories:- grade 1 (very good), grade 2 (good), grade 3 (fair), grade 4 (poor) and grade 5 (very poor). A further survey is undertaken in September and October of each year considering the below sub set of highways:
  - Streets identified as grade 4 and 5 by the annual condition survey
  - Streets where the UKPMS survey showed that sections of them breached national intervention levels
  - Requests by Members, requests by residents
17. Each road and footway is assessed and given a ranking (score) based on engineering criteria and experience, with a treatment solution determined. This process is currently supported by two reports – the Highway Maintenance Advanced Design on Programmes Report and the Annual Highways Maintenance Report – in December and March respectively. Recommendations are made to amend this process and members are asked to approve these.

## **Future Changes to the Codes**

18. As the national codes are updated we are required to interpret how the changes affect our service delivery and change our procedures accordingly. The Well Maintained Highways Code of Practice is currently under review and is expected to be published in the autumn with a requirement that all highway authorities adopt the principles within two years of publication. Once the reviewed document is

available a summary of its requirements will be communicated with a plan detailing how the amendments will be adopted by the Executive.

19. We have developed our streetlighting policy in accordance with the Well Lit Highways Code of Practice, the document is appended at annex 1.

### **Partnership Working – Yorkshire Alliance**

20. Our work within the Yorkshire Alliance links our approaches to deliver asset management and maintenance activities, share good practice, procurement and develop joint working with the five other authorities in the alliance. Seven separate thematic groups – Highways, Streetlighting, Procurement, Structures, Urban Traffic Management and Control, Drainage and Works Delivery have been developed below a management board which is reportable to the combined authority led transport board.
21. Our delivery of actions from the Codes of Practice will be consistent with our partners and will develop strong outcomes and efficiencies. Future DfT funding will require all authorities to show evidence of joint working and collaboration in order to attract an incentivisation element of funding. We are working with the Yorkshire Alliance to develop our approach to the self assessment questionnaire that will need to be submitted to DfT in November, outputs from the thematic groups will be key to support the individual returns from each of the member authorities.

### **DfT Incentive Funding**

22. DfT funding has historically been distributed as block grant linked to the relative needs of authorities based on their network of highways assets. A new approach will distribute an element of this funding to authorities based on their adoption and delivery of highways maintenance codes and policies. A self assessment process will assess all authorities before distribution of the incentive element in 2016/17, a 'dry-run' of the assessment has been returned in July 15 and the formal return is required in November 15. A note on the process is included at annex 2.

## **Ward Highway Programme**

23. From 2016/17 £250k of highways funding will be distributed to Ward Committee's to be used on locally important schemes that would not be prioritised through the wider evidence led maintenance programme. Information on highway condition scoring will be made available to wards in late November of each year to allow the consideration of local schemes that are unlikely to be supported in the main highway renewal programme. The list of locally important schemes will be agreed with wards and drawn up alongside the wider programme in January/February of each year.

## **Consultation**

24. This report is intended as an update of the existing strategy and policy already approved by City of York Council – LTP, TAMP, Highway Survey, Inspection and Repair Manual – and to provide an overview of how these documents drive our highway maintenance programmes. Prior consultation has already taken place during the process of adoption in all cases.
25. Members will receive communications on highway condition and priorities for works through the ward highway process and ratification of the programme with the Executive. Localised needs and priorities can be communicated directly to the Highways team through the [ycc@york.gov.uk](mailto:ycc@york.gov.uk) email address and investigation works will be carried out. Changes to policy and process will be consulted with the Director, Executive Member and Executive as outlined in the recommendations.
26. Highway programmes and policy will be communicated through improved website content.

## **Corporate Priorities**

27. Through the proposed measures CES supports delivery of the Create jobs and grow the economy, Get York moving, Build strong communities, Protect vulnerable people and protect the environment priorities from the Council Plan. All measures will be developed to deliver the priorities in the emerging revised Council Plan.

## **Implications**

### **Financial Implications**

28. The first Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance endorsed by the local government associations was published in 1983 and has subsequently been revised twice to take account of new and emerging developments in technology, policy and good practice. DfT funding has become strongly linked to the Codes and it is essential that we continue to evidence how we understand our highway assets, assess their condition and plan their maintenance into the future.

### **Human Resources (HR) and other implications**

29. The work and resources of the highways section is defined by its funding, good asset management information is key to the identification of need which is essential evidence to secure DfT, grant or CYC funding.

### **Equalities**

30. All highway assets are considered in a risk based and prioritised manner based on asset information gathered and managed by trained highways inspectors and managers, no bias or inequalities are evident in this evidence led process.

### **Legal**

31. The Council has a statutory duty to carry out highway maintenance under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 and this report sets out the policy and strategy developed by City of York Council to deliver this role.

### **Crime and Disorder**

32. There are no crime and disorder issues.

### **Information Technology (IT)**

33. There are no IT implications in this report.

### **Property**

34. There are no property implications.

### **Other**

35. There are no other implications in this report.



## Risk Management

36. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy, the main risks that have been identified in this report are:

- Strategic Risks, arising from judgements in relation to medium term goals for the service
- Physical Risks, arising from potential underinvestment in assets
- Financial Risks, from pressures on budgets
- People Risks, affecting staff if budgets decline

37. Measured in terms of impact and likelihood the risk score for all of the above has been assessed at less than 16. This means that at this point the risks need only to be monitored, as they do not provide a real threat to the achievement of the objectives of this report.

## Contact Details

<b>Author:</b>	<b>Chief Officer Responsible for the report:</b>		
Steve Wragg Flood Risk and Asset Manager City & Environmental Services Tel: (01904 553401)	Neil Ferris Director City & Environmental Services		
	Report Approved	√	Date
<b>Wards Affected:</b> All Wards	All	√	
<b>For further information please contact the author of the report</b>			

## Background Papers:

### Annexes:

Annex 1 - Street Lighting Policy

Annex 2 - Note on DfT Self Assessment Process

Annex 3 – Community Impact Assessment