

**Open Report on behalf of Richard Wills,
Executive Director for Environment and Economy**

Report to:	Councillor R G Davies, Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT
Date:	06 March 2017
Subject:	Highways Asset Management Strategy
Decision Reference:	I012800
Key decision?	Yes

Summary:

Lincolnshire County Council are responsible for managing a large highway network comprising over 8700km of carriageway and its associated footways, structures, street lighting and signals assets. The management of this asset has a significant impact on the County's economy, residents, businesses and visitors.

The purpose of this Highways Asset Management Strategy is to:

- Formalise strategies for investment in key highway asset groups
- Define affordable service standards
- Improve how the highway assets are managed
- Enable a more effective and efficient highways service to be delivered

This document updates the previous Transport Asset Management Strategy and covers the period from 2017 to 2021 for which the Department for Transport proposals for the capitalised maintenance grant have been announced.

The strategy aligns with the Council's vision for Lincolnshire and describes how the highway assets contribute to achieving the Council's objectives. The information provided in the Highways Asset Management Strategy will allow the Council to make more informed decisions and ensure that the condition of our highway assets meets the Council's requirements into the future.

Recommendation(s):

That the Executive Councillor approves the attached draft Highways Asset Management Strategy at Appendix A.

Alternatives Considered:

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| 1. | The Highways Asset Management Strategy is not approved and adopted. Lincolnshire County Council will continue without a defined strategy for the management of its highway assets. This will impact on the level of "Incentive" funding available from the Department for Transport capital maintenance grant. |
| 2. | The Highways Asset Management Strategy attached at Appendix A is approved and adopted with amendments. |

Reasons for Recommendation:

Approving the proposed Highways Asset Management Strategy will ensure that the County Council's policies, in respect of its key assets, align with its longer term vision for a sound, asset management based approach to highway maintenance, as defined in the Highways Asset Management Policy.

1. Background

- 1.1. In 2006 the County Council's developed its first Highways Asset Management Plan which was the initial step towards an asset management based approach to highways maintenance.
- 1.2. In 2010, the CONFIRM asset management software was implemented, allowing better data capture, asset inventory and the tools to implement the vision of the Highways Asset Management Plan more effectively. This coincided with the commencement of the Lincolnshire Highways Alliance.
- 1.3. In 2012 the first Highways Asset Management Plan was replaced with the Transport Asset Management Strategy which covered the period for 2012 – 2016 and set out the strategy for the management of the highway asset for that period with a strong focus on preventative maintenance.
- 1.4. In December 2014 the Government announced the capital maintenance settlement for local highways authorities for the period from 2015-2021. This settlement provides some stability in the funding for local highway authorities and assists in the implementation of an Asset Management approach to maintenance works.

As part of this settlement the government introduced an "incentive" element to the funding whereby Authorities are assessed as being in one of three bands which determine the level of funding they will receive.

Below is a table which shows the impact of the incentive funding on Lincolnshire County Council.

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Total Funding at Incentive Band Level 1	£31.0m	£29.9m	£29.1m	£26.5m	£25.5m	£25.0m
Total Funding at Incentive Band Level 2	£31.0m	£30.1m	£29.9m	£28.6m	£27.6m	£26.6m
Total Funding at Incentive Band Level 3	£31.0m	£30.1m	£30.1m	£30.1m	£30.1m	£30.1m

The above funding levels exclude the £2.5m from the "Pot Hole" Fund for 2017/18 and any funding from the National Productivity Investment Fund

The banding level achieved by authorities is dependent on a self-assessment questionnaire and supporting evidence which is heavily focused on the implementation of an asset management approach to highways maintenance and the adoption of the national guidance produced by the HMEP (Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme).

Lincolnshire was one of only two authorities assessed as being in the highest "Band 3" category for 2016/17 and will submit documentation to maintain this position for 2017/18. Authorities without a current Asset Management Policy and Strategy are automatically placed in the lowest "Band 1" category.

1.5 The structure and purpose of our documents is set out below.

Highways Asset Management Policy;- Outlines the policy and principles that will be adopted for the management of the highways assets and how these align to the long term vision and purpose of the county council.

Highways Asset Management Strategy;- Contains descriptions of the key assets, future demands on the assets, investment strategies, service standards, finance and budget detail and an improvement action plan.

Highways Asset Management Plan;- Outlines the systems and processes that will be used to inspect, manage and maintain the highways network and associated assets.

1.6 The policy for the management of our Highways Assets was produced and approved in December 2015. A draft for the new Highways Asset Management Strategy is appended for member consideration and comment.

2. Legal Issues:

Equality Act 2010

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- * Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
- * Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- * Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The relevant protected characteristics are age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- * Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
- * Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it
- * Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low

The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities

Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to tackle prejudice, and promote understanding

Compliance with the duties in section 149 may involve treating some persons more favourably than others

The duty cannot be delegated and must be discharged by the decision-maker. To discharge the statutory duty the decision-maker must analyse all the relevant material with the specific statutory obligations in mind. If a risk of adverse impact is identified consideration must be given to measures to avoid that impact as part of the decision making process

The Equality Act has been taken into account in this instance and an Equality Impact Analysis is attached Appendix B. This review of the Highways Asset Management Strategy is considered to have no impact as the strategy is at a high level of generality and is neutral in its impact on people with a protected characteristic when compared with people who do not share that characteristic.

Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA) and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS)

The Council must have regard to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the Joint Health & Well Being Strategy (JHWS) in coming to a decision

The effect of revisions to the Asset Management Strategy on the JSNA and JHWS has been considered and deemed to have no direct impact.

Crime and Disorder

Under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Council must exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment), the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area and re-offending in its area

The duties under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1988 have been considered and it is deemed that the proposed changes to the Highways Asset Management Strategy will have no direct impact.

3. Conclusion

The Highways Service has adopted a sound asset management based approach for the maintenance of its assets and has already achieved the highest "Band 3" rating from the Department for Transport.

This Highways Asset Management Strategy is part of a continuing programme of work to ensure that the network continues to be managed in accordance with the principles of good asset management practice and that our position as a "Band 3" Authority is maintained.

4. Legal Comments:

The Council has the power to adopt the Strategy proposed.

The decision is consistent with the Policy Framework and within the remit of the Executive Councillor.

5. Resource Comments:

Capital maintenance settlement grant is received as planned for the current year as we comply with the grant conditions.

6. Consultation

a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?

n/a

b) Has Executive Councillor Been Consulted?

n/a

c) Scrutiny Comments

The Report will be considered by the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 27th February 2017 and the comments of the Committee will be reported to the Executive Councillor.

d) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?

Yes

e) Risks and Impact Analysis

See the body of the Report

7. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Highways Asset Management Strategy
Appendix B	Equality Impact Analysis for Highways Asset Management Strategy

8. Background Papers

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Highways Asset Management Policy	Lincolnshire County Council Web Site
Highways Asset Management Plan	Lincolnshire County Council Web Site

This report was written by Mike Coates, who can be contacted on 01522 555231 or mike.coates@lincolnshire.gov.uk.