

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, PLACE**REVISED HIGHWAYS CODE OF PRACTICE****Purpose of the Report**

1. To consider an integrated, risk-based approach to highway asset management, in line with the Well Managed Highway Infrastructure publication and recommend the adoption of a revised Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan Highway Inspection and Risk Manual, along with a new document the Highway Infrastructure Maintenance Plan.

Information

2. The publication of 'Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice' (WMHI), has given the County Council the opportunity to review its highway policy documents. The code applies to the whole of the United Kingdom and is designed to promote the adoption of an integrated asset management approach to highway infrastructure, based on the establishment of local levels of service through risk-based assessment.
3. A risk based approach to managing the highway assets in Nottinghamshire allows the Authority to reconsider how the risks associated with the management of a large and varied dynamic highway network are managed. In line with the Place Departmental Strategy, it is important that Nottinghamshire maintains its highway network in a condition which is safe, resilient and free-flowing for all road users and that Nottinghamshire remains a well-connected place to live, work and visit.
4. The main change to managing how Nottinghamshire roads are considered for maintenance, is to have a road hierarchy based on usage; vehicle and pedestrian flow, accidents, schools, hospitals and accidents on that road, rather than on road classification; A, B, C or unclassified.
5. The development of the Highway Infrastructure Maintenance Plan (see **Appendix 1**) for Nottinghamshire has allowed the Authority to incorporate and engage with the 36 recommendations contained in the WMHI, and also to undertake a review of the policies, strategies and plans associated with the service. This will allow the guidance contained in the new code to be implemented, considering local needs, priorities and cost of the service.
6. The Authority has also increased the visibility of its capital maintenance programme by publishing a interactive map which allows the public to view locations of proposed works in their vicinity or on they routes travel. This interactive map can be found by at internet address below.

<http://www.improvingyourroads.co.uk/>

7. The Highway Infrastructure Maintenance Plan document outlines Nottinghamshire's approach to the adoption of risk-based principles in accordance with the national guidance contained in the WMHI, and acts as a reference between the Code of Practice and the County Councils existing highway documentation;
 - Highway Network Management Plan (HNMP)
 - Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (HIAMP)
 - Highway Inspection & Risk Manual (HIRM)
8. The WMHI provides guidance to enable local authorities to develop their own levels of service in accordance with risk, local needs, priorities and affordability. Zurich, the Authority's insurance provider, endorses a risk based approach to managing highways, and refers specifically to the merits of the WMHI Code of Practice in it's Fluidbook training resource.
9. In considering changes to existing policies the County Council, has reviewed the approaches of other Highway Authorities and engaged with the Midlands Service Improvement Group to gather a wide collection of experience and approaches.

Highway Inspection and Risk Manual

10. The Highway Inspection and Risk Manual (HIRM) provides guidance to highway inspectors and others, when carrying out highway inspections. The main changes from the previous version are as follows:
 - A complete review of the Highway Inspection Manual since it was last updated in 2014 and throughout the document, a revision of the risk management aspects associated with the highway, in accordance with the recommendations of the WMHI.
 - Consider the implications of the WMHI and amend the HIRM to reflect these:
 - ♦ Includes an explanation of how a clear line of sight exists between the HIRM and Local policies such as NCC's Strategy Plan, Service Plan, the Local Transport Plan, and the Highway Network Management Plan plus the Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice document.
 - ♦ A detailed explanation of the Highway Inspection regime and the types of inspection undertaken.
 - ♦ The Network Hierarchy and Inventory sections have been amended in line with the proposals contained in the Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (HIAMP).
 - ♦ Inspection tolerances have been included for both Safety and Service inspections.
 - ♦ Risk management, defect risk assessment and the defect category elements **have been rewritten in line with the WMHI. However the investigatory levels** remains the same and response time have been amended to allow the incorporation of an additional Defect Category – Emergency (2 hour response).
 - ♦ New sections detailing the expected outcome of an inspection, along with the provision of audit inspections and a review of highway inspector competency requirements, with a defined minimal training requirements.

It is intended that this HIRM is adopted from 1 October 2018, following a period of training for highway inspectors. The HIRM is included at **Appendix 2**.

Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan

11. The Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan identifies the County Council's approach to the maintenance of its highway assets. The main changes from the previous version are as follows:

- A complete review of the HIAMP since it was written in 2015 to bring it in line with changes in Asset Management both nationally and locally.
- Consider the implications of the WMHI and amend the HIAMP to reflect these:
 - ♦ Includes an explanation of how a clear line of site exists between the HIAMP and Local policies such as NCC's Strategy Plan, Service Plan, the Local Transport Plan, and the Highway Network Management Plan plus the Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice document.
 - ♦ Update financial figures and include references to increased highway maintenance funding in Nottinghamshire.
 - ♦ The revised Network Hierarchy which is based on usage rather than road classification is set out in detail (in accordance with Risk evaluation detailed in the WMHI).
 - ♦ Expansion of the sections on Whole Life Costing, Life Cycle Planning and future programming for the main highway assets.
 - ♦ Enhanced level of detail explaining Asset Management Plans for the main highway assets and the highway maintenance strategy and treatments.

It is intended that the HIAMP is adopted from 1 October 2018. The HIAMP is included at **Appendix 3**.

Incentive Fund

12. The Incentive Fund is additional money awarded by the DfT to Authorities who adhere to a good practice approach to highway maintenance. Nottinghamshire County Council submitted evidence to the DfT in February 2018 to be rated at the highest ranking of Band 3. One of the requirements of achieving a Band 3 rating is for the authority to undertake life cycle planning as part of its highway infrastructure asset management, and the adoption of the proposed suite of documents will significantly assist this process. The monetary value associated with achieving Band 3 is detailed below;

| Year | £000k | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 |
| Block Allocation* | £14,921 | £13,679 | £13,265 | £12,006 | £12,006 | £12,006 |
| Band 1* | N/A | £745 | £745 | £750 | £250 | £0 |
| Band 2* | N/A | £828 | £1,118 | £1,750 | £1,250 | £750 |
| Band 3* | N/A | £828 | £1,242 | £2,501 | £2,501 | £2,501 |

(* Allocation values from DfT.'s initial consultation)

Other Options Considered

13. The other option considered is not to adopt the nationally recommended guidance and continue with the policy documents and guidance currently used by Nottinghamshire County Council for highway maintenance. This would result in the County Council potentially losing government funding and having policies which would weaken our defences in public liability claims.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

14. Local authorities across the country are being encouraged to adopt a risk based approach to asset management, and the monetary reward for engaging in this process is significant.

Statutory and Policy Implications

15. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

16. Life cycle planning is one of the requirements of reaching the highest band in the DfT Incentive Fund. Adopting this practice over the time frame 2018/19 – 2020/21 equates to an additional £3.753m being awarded to the authority (moving from Band 2 to Band 3).
17. As Zurich is also advocating the merits of Well Managed Highway Infrastructure, it is anticipated that adherence to the Code of Practice will positively affect the insurance premium.

Implications for Service Users

18. Service users will receive a safer highway network through a risk based approach to maintenance, based on the latest national guidance.

RECOMMENDATION

That Committee approve:

- 1) The adoption of a revised Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan and Highway Inspection and Risk Manual along with a new document the Highway Infrastructure Maintenance Plan, with these documents to be adopted by NCC from 1 October 2018.

Adrian Smith
Corporate Director, Place

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Constitutional Comments [SLB 13/06/2018]

19. Communities and Place Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments [RWK 07/06/2018]

19. The financial implications are set out in paragraphs 15 and 16 of the report.

HR Comments [JP 13/06/2018]

20. There are no specific HR implications to note.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Highway Infrastructure Maintenance Plan(2018)
- Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (2018)
- Highway Inspection & Risk Manual (2018)

Previous Versions

Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (2015)

Highway Inspection Manual (2014)

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- 'All'