

23 September 2020

Agenda Item: 7

## **REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, PLACE**

### **HIGHWAY ASSET MANAGEMENT – INTRODUCTORY REPORT**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To allow Members to review the information contained within this report – *and in the presentation to be available at the meeting* - and propose recommendations which officers will develop and present in a further report to this Committee.

#### **Information**

2. This report will be accompanied by a presentation which will provide Members with further information and details about each of the topics covered below.
3. The presentation will refer to the guidance document for '*Highway Infrastructure Asset Management*' produced by UK Roads Liaison Group. produced. This document sets out a series of recommendations which all local Highway Authorities should employ to demonstrate they are following Asset Management principles in all aspects of Highway Maintenance Management.
4. Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 places a duty on the County Council to maintain the highway in a reasonably safe condition so that traffic can pass along it during all seasons of the year.

#### **The County Council's Highway Assets**

5. The County Council maintains a large and diverse number of highway assets, these include:
  - 583 kilometres of A roads
  - 297 Kilometres of B roads
  - 821 kilometres of C roads
  - 2,737 kilometres of unclassified roads
  - 4302 kilometres of footway
  - 93,894 street lighting columns
  - 7,706 traffic signs
  - 5,927 bollards and beacons
  - 1211 bridges, subways, culverts & retaining walls
6. Nottinghamshire's highways are critical to the county's economic and social wellbeing, they provide access to employment, recreational, health and educational opportunities which are fundamental to our way of life. Virtually every journey made within Nottinghamshire and every movement of goods or commodities will require access to the highway network at some point.

## **The Purpose of Highway Asset Management**

7. The definition of Highway Asset Management as detailed in the UK Roads Liaison Group's guidance document is:

*'A systematic approach to meeting the strategic need for the management and maintenance of highway infrastructure assets through long term planning and optimal allocation of resources in order to manage risk and meet the performance requirements of the authority in the most efficient and sustainable manner.'*

8. The UK Roads Liaison Group's guidance document identifies the requirement for Highway Authorities to produce a Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (HIAMP) to embed the principles of asset management into their working practices. During development of Nottinghamshire's HIAMP, the UK Roads Liaison Group recommendations were used to determine good asset management practice.

## **The County Council's Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan**

9. The County Council's HIAMP was first published in 2015 and is specific to Nottinghamshire, it was updated in 2018 following the publication of the *'Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice document'* which advocates a *'Risk-Based'* approach to the maintenance management of highway assets. The HIAMP is written with these principles in mind and addresses the issues of network hierarchy and inspection frequency to build in the principles of the new code.
10. In addition to carriageways and footways the HIAMP also contains an embedded structures plan which sets out how the county's bridge stock and other structures are to be maintained. It is also notable that street lighting has been the subject of major innovation and development over the last decade and with the introduction of cost effective LED lamps, the maintenance of this asset group has changed significantly.

## **Highway Asset Management**

11. As time goes by Highway Assets that are currently in good condition will deteriorate. To mitigate this deterioration the County Council must continually invest in maintenance. Whilst the County Council is unlikely to ever be in the position where it has enough money to maintain every asset that forms part of the maintenance backlog in a single year, it is prudent to make the best use of the resources it has to get the best investment results for its stakeholders.
12. In a climate where budgets and resources are precious, the County Council is facing significant challenges in deciding how to manage its assets effectively. The adoption of Asset Management principles can deliver a systematic approach to this by planning well into the future and making informed decisions based on sound engineering.
13. It is recognised that adopting these principles will enable the County Council to identify the best allocation of resources for the management, operation, preservation and enhancement of the highway infrastructure to meet the needs of current and future customers. Asset management therefore supports business decisions and provides longer term financial benefits.
14. To supplement the approach described in the HIAMP – *and in direct response to concerns raised by residents* - the County Council has also committed to spend an additional £20million between 2018 and 2021 on the county's residential roads. This additional funding forms part of the £142million in capital expenditure which will have been invested in the county's roads during the same period and has allowed a significant

number of maintenance schemes to be undertaken at locations identified by Members and which were of concern to local communities.

### **Highway Maintenance Asset Management Funding**

15. In 2015 Department for Transport (DfT) announced a new funding model for highway maintenance across the country which consists of three key elements:
  - The Incentive Fund. (*Self-assessment questionnaire*)
  - A revised 'Needs-Based' Funding Formula. (*Based on Network Length*)
  - The Challenge Fund. (*Separate large scheme bid process*)
16. The purpose of the '*Incentive Fund*' introduction was to promote the adoption of good Highway Asset Management practice and drive efficiencies across all local authorities to ensure value for money.
17. Over the last few years, the '*Needs-Based*' Funding Formula has been reduced with an expectation that continuous improvement in efficiencies of delivery would continue. This level of improvement was then reflected in the funding awarded for the Incentive Fund to each Authority, through the size of the funding received.
18. The DfT Incentive fund places the requirement for a robust HIAMP at the heart of its self-assessment methodology. It is an essential requirement of the Incentive Fund that all highway authorities must have a HIAMP which demonstrates how they employ asset management principles in all areas of their highway maintenance activities.

### **The Role of Other Organisations and Individuals.**

19. The County Council works with its neighbouring authorities to ensure that its infrastructure hierarchy is similar and that similar roads are treated in similar ways. As each authority has developed its own Policy, Strategy and Plan to manage the Highway Asset, it is completely acceptable that there will be some variation.

### **Other Options Considered**

20. The option to not maintain the Highway Asset is not possible due to other duties under the Highways Act 1980 and the requirements of the Department for Transport.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

21. 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**

22. The financial implications of this report will be dependent upon the findings and recommendations of the Committee. Any findings may form future recommendations to the Communities and Place Committee.

## **Implications for Sustainability and the Environment**

23. The implications for sustainability and the environment are set out in the report and will be discussed during the presentation.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

It is recommended that Committee:

- 1) Review the information contained in this report, its accompanying presentation and propose developments which will be subject to a further report for this Committee to consider.

**Adrian Smith**  
**Corporate Director, Place**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

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## **Constitutional Comments (RHC 02/09/2020)**

24. This decision falls within the Terms of Reference of the Communities & Place Review & Development Committee to whom falls responsibility for the review and development of all functions falling under the remit of the Authority's Communities & Place Committee.

## **Financial Comments (RWK 26/08/2020)**

25. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from the report.

## **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.

- Nottinghamshire County Council's '*Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan*'

## **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All