

# **Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Policy**

**2018**

**Version 1.0**

**21 August 2018**

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## **Introduction**

Somerset County Council considers that proactive asset management of its highway network will help to deliver the authorities' vision and strategic objectives set out in the County Vision (May 2018):

**A thriving and productive County that is ambitious, confident and focussed on improving people's lives** - A good highway network is vital for business to thrive and prosper in our rural county. It provides access to education, employment, shops and other services as well as enabling tourism. The investment in the highway network, consisting of the carriageway, footways, bridges and retaining walls, highway drainage systems, street lighting, traffic signals, signs and lines must be planned to facilitate the needs of the economy. A detailed knowledge of the highway network, including quantities, condition, use and performance of its assets will be used for decision making for infrastructure investment. By taking a long term approach we will provide better value for money.

**A County where all partners actively work together for the benefit of our residents, communities and businesses and the environment in which we all live** - Somerset County Council is customer focused and actively engages with stakeholders in setting levels of service within the budgetary constraints. As the highway authority for Somerset, the County Council has the statutory duty to keep the network safe for communities and service users. The primary document detailing safety defects and their treatment is the Highway Safety Inspection Manual which also sets out how the network is inspected. As well as dealing with safety issues as they arise, Somerset County Council uses asset management principles and maintenance techniques to help prevent safety defects forming in the first place.

**A County of resilient, well-connected and compassionate communities working to reduce inequalities** - Somerset's highway infrastructure assets provide a vital contribution to the economic health of the county and the quality of the environment, as well as providing a range of social and recreational benefits. Somerset County Council has recognised the benefits of asset management for some time and in 2009 was one of the first authorities to produce a Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP). Effective asset management continues to be used to target the allocation of resources to where they can be most effective. It should be noted that the application of asset management principles could mean that some roads in poor condition are a lower order of priority for maintenance than a road in better condition; prevention is a more cost effective approach than addressing the symptoms through reactive maintenance.

## **Purpose and aim of the policy**

Transport asset management is a methodology of running the 'business' of operating a highways and transportation network. This policy has been guided by the corporate objectives of the Council, as outlined in the County Vision and the Government's five national goals as reflected in Somerset's Future Transport Plan:

- Support Economic Growth
- Promote Equality of Opportunity
- Contribute to Better Safety, Security and Health
- Improve Quality of Life and a Healthy Natural Environment

- Reduce Carbon Emissions

Somerset's asset management approach is set out in the Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Strategy (HIAMS) 2018 document

### **Scope**

This policy is applicable to all public highways infrastructure managed and maintained by the Council

### **Policy statement**

The Council believes that effective asset management is fundamental to the delivery of its services and the delivery of its long term vision.

### **Policy detail**

In adopting an asset management approach for our entire infrastructure we will be implementing a methodology which includes:

- A systematic approach which takes a long term view
- The consideration of the whole of life costs of maintaining an asset
- The consideration of customer expectations and defined levels of service
- The optimisation and prioritisation of works based on assessed needs derived from the defined levels of service
- The use of lifecycle planning to inform the optimal treatment at each stage of the assets life
- Optimal level of service within the constraints of the current financial position of the Council.

### **Consultation and engagement**

In drafting this policy we have taken note of the public perception surveys, internal and stakeholders and views expressed at a range of public engagement events held in Somerset.

### **Performance and risk management**

The maintenance and management of public infrastructure has been undertaken for many years and in the drafting of this policy we have identified and taken note of all likely risks and performance issues. The mitigation and management of risk have previously been developed in the TAMP 2009 and 2010. These have been reviewed and updated for the HIAMS 2018.

The effectiveness and application of this policy will be monitored as part of the on-going management of the service.

### **Communicating the policy**

This policy is available on the Council's website

### **Evaluation and review**

This policy will be reviewed in June 2020