

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET****DATE: 24 MARCH 2025**

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: MATT FURNISS
CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

LEAD OFFICER: OWEN JENKINS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR HIGHWAYS INFRASTRUCTURE & PLANNING

SUBJECT: HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

ORGANISATION STRATEGY PRIORITY AREA: Growing A Sustainable Economy So Everyone Can Benefit
 Enabling A Greener Future

Purpose of the Report:

The Highway & Transport Asset Management Strategy (The Strategy, Annex 1) sets out how Surrey County Council (SCC) manages its highway infrastructure assets with consideration to whole life costs, associated risks and alignment with Surrey's corporate objective.

Best practice guidance suggests that a Local Authority's Highway Asset Management Strategy should be reviewed, updated and approved every two years.

This report outlines updates to the Strategy and recommends approval of updates to the Highways & Transport Asset Management Strategy.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member:

1. Approves the updated Highways & Transport Asset Management Strategy

Reason for Recommendations:

The updated Strategy reflects changes that have already happened or are in progress. The new Strategy reflects progress that has been made in the 2 years since the 2022 Strategy was approved. The Asset Strategy outlines how the Council approaches management of highway assets and demonstrates how we strive to deliver an effective and joined up service for residents that recognises the need for delivering value for money, balancing spending to target both safety and condition of

the road network, and alignment with the STP (Surrey Transport Plan) ambitions, focussed on the user hierarchy pyramid and carbon reduction.

Executive Summary:

1. The Highway Asset Strategy sets out Surrey County Council's approach to the maintenance and future investment decisions for all infrastructure we have responsibility for within the highway boundary. The strategy is a key part of our Asset Management Framework and the policies and strategies that help deliver it, including the Capital Prioritisation Policy, Safety Inspection Policy, Highway Hierarchy Policy, SKID Policy, Survey Strategy and Asset Data Strategy, amongst others.
2. This report outlines updates to the well-established Strategy document.
3. Best practice guidance and the DfT (Department for Transport) Incentive Fund assessment requires the Strategy is updated and signed off by the Cabinet Member every 2 years.
4. Changes to this version of the strategy since the 2022 version include:
 - a. Reference to the updated Highway Hierarchy Policy, in which the main changes are to the Footway Hierarchy
 - b. Updates to the service wide alignment section referencing the groups that feed into the improvement programme
 - c. Update to 'How we plan investment' section to reflect current processes and network condition
 - d. Update to reflect progress on how we are using image recognition survey (Route Reports and Vaisala Road AI) to inspect our roads and collect condition data
 - e. Reference to new PAS 2161 Condition Standard
 - f. Update to include reference to the Asset Strategy Delivery Plan
 - g. Updated reference to Performance Indicators (PIs) to reflect current number of metrics
 - h. Update to 'Future Opportunities & Demands' section to reflect current status and include reference to Road Markings, Vegetation and Drainage and cycle asset management
 - i. Update to 'Considering the Environment and Sustainability' section referencing the introduction of Climate Change Risk & Vulnerability Assessments.
 - j. Reference to ongoing work to improve management of Passenger Transport data

- k. Updates to old URL links and references to outdated directorate, team and position titles
- l. The Asset Strategy is routinely reviewed on a 2 year cycle and updated to reflect changes over the past 2 years. Areas of the Strategy are regularly reviewed with resources prioritised based on need. Changes may prompt cabinet member reports for approval more regularly than every 2 years - Improvement work around cycle and drainage infrastructure, as well as road markings, are expected to prompt new updates to the strategy within 12 months.

Consultation:

- 5. Because this is a relatively limited update of a well-established strategy, consultation has been limited to internal teams. The updates also take into account the findings of a review workshop with an industry specialist consultant.
- 6. The reason for this 'light touch' update is to ensure that we undertake a review and Cabinet Member sign off every 2 years, which is a requirement of best practice guidance and a requirement of the DfT (Department for Transport) Incentive Fund assessment.
- 7. The Asset Strategy is one part of Surrey's Asset Management Framework. As part of the work responding to the new Surrey Transport Plan (STP) consideration all aspects of the Asset Management Framework have been considered and reviewed for improvements, and we have consulted with colleagues about them. For example the Highway Hierarchy Policy paper is being brought to the Cabinet Member for approval in March 2025. Other documents that support the Asset Strategy include the Capital Prioritisation Policy, SKID Policy, Survey Strategy, Asset Data Strategy. These documents all sit under the Asset Strategy and have areas identified for review and improvement in the future, at which point they will undergo their own consultation. The Asset Strategy will be further updated as required by changes to other strategies and policies.

Risk Management and Implications:

- 8. No new risk implications are introduced by this Strategy update

Financial and Value for Money Implications:

- 9. There are no new costs resulting from this Strategy update. The Highway & Transport Asset Management Strategy refers to how maintenance programmes are prioritised and how budgets are allocated to schemes within the agreed Highways capital budget allocation. There is a separate governance process in place for reviewing, prioritising and agreeing the overall capital budget with decisions being taken within the overall affordability constraints of the council's budget. Highway's capital budgets are reviewed and scrutinised by an

Infrastructure board who make recommendations to the Capital Programme Panel (CPP). The CPP reviews the overall County capital programme which is then agreed during the annual budget setting process for the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

Section 151 Officer Commentary:

10. The Council continues to operate in a very challenging financial environment. Local authorities across the country are experiencing significant budgetary pressures. Surrey County Council has made significant progress in recent years to improve the Council's financial resilience and whilst this has built a stronger financial base from which to deliver our services, the cost of service delivery, increasing demand, financial uncertainty and government policy changes mean we continue to face challenges to our financial position. This requires an increased focus on financial management to protect service delivery, a continuation of the need to deliver financial efficiencies and reduce spending in order to achieve a balanced budget position each year.
11. In addition to these immediate challenges, the medium-term financial outlook beyond 2024/25 remains uncertain. With no clarity on central government funding in the medium term, our working assumption is that financial resources will continue to be constrained, as they have been for the majority of the past decade. This places an onus on the Council to continue to consider issues of financial sustainability as a priority, in order to ensure the stable provision of services in the medium term.
12. Approval of the updated Highways & Transport Asset Management Strategy will not expose the council to any additional costs. Instead it will strengthen the Council's approach to managing highways assets within existing approved budgets, and as such will enhance value for money to residents.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer:

13. A range of powers and duties relating to the maintenance of a safe network are available to responsible highway authorities.
14. The Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Guidance Document ("HIAM"), developed under the Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme and endorsed by the UK Roads Liaison Group assists those delivering highway services to embed asset management principles within their organisations. It is recommended that the advice within the HIAM should be adopted by those involved in delivering the highway service to support decision making relating to managing infrastructure assets.
15. SCC's Highways Transport Asset Management Strategy aligns with the HIAM, utilising an approach which brings together a range of factors influencing asset management priorities.

Equalities and Diversity:

16. Following completion of the EIA screening tool, the proposals do not significantly or disproportionately impact on any of the groups protected under the Equality Act 2010. Equality impacts will be considered throughout related workstreams and where relevant an Equality Impact Assessment will be produced
17. An EIA screening tool has been completed for the strategy and is attached as Annex 2

Other Implications:

18. The potential implications for the following council priorities and policy areas have been considered. Where the impact is potentially significant a summary of the issues is set out in detail below.

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant impacts arising from this report
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant impacts arising from this report
Environmental sustainability	No significant impacts arising from this report
Compliance against net-zero emissions target and future climate compatibility/resilience	No significant impacts arising from this report
Public Health	No significant impacts arising from this report

What Happens Next:

19. Following approval by the Cabinet Member, the updated document will be added to the web site by 4 April 2025 to replace the existing document that it supersedes:
[Roads and transport policies and plans - Surrey County Council](#)
20. The next scheduled review will be for approval by 24 March 2027
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Report Author:

Dan Squibb, Asset Planning Team Manager, Network & Asset Management Group, Highways and Transport (The person who has written the report and can answer questions on the report)

Contact through MS Teams

Consulted:

Asset Planning Team Manager (Author – Network & Asset Management (NAM))

Asset Planning Policy & Programme Team Leader (NAM)

Asset Systems & Analytics Team (NAM)

Amanda Richards (Assistant Director Highways NAM)

Annexes:

Annex 1 – The updated Highway and Transportation Asset Management Strategy

Annex 2 - Equality Impact Assessment Screening Tool Highway & Transportation Asset Management Strategy

Sources/background papers:

[Well Managed Highway Infrastructure - a Code of Practice](#)

All background papers used in the writing of the report should be listed, as required by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

A copy of any background papers which have not previously been published should be supplied to Democratic Services with your draft report.
