

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 7 April 2022

Report of the Head of Service - Asset Management

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Corporate Priorities:
Protecting our environment;

Highways Decarbonisation Strategy

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

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Brief Summary

The Highways Decarbonisation Strategy will support the county council's Corporate Priorities, in particular the need to protect our environment by putting in place a Strategy to achieve a realistic carbon reduction from highways maintenance and highway related activities.

Progress reporting will be undertaken via Carbon Dashboards included in the annual Transport Asset Management Plan Refresh documents.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to approve the Highways Decarbonisation Strategy as set out at Appendix 'A'.

Detail

In December 2020, Full Council resolved to set out on an ambitious carbon reduction and nature recovery strategy that seeks to 'transition the Lancashire economy away from carbon by 2030 and address the biodiversity crisis'.

The Climate Change Act requires the UK government to set legally-binding 'carbon budgets' which act as steppingstones towards the 2050 target. A carbon budget is a cap on the amount of greenhouse gases emitted in the UK over a five-year period. Budgets must be set at least 12 years in advance to allow policymakers, businesses and individuals enough time to prepare. The Climate Change Committee advises on the appropriate level of each carbon budget. Once accepted by Government, the

respective budgets are legislated by Parliament. The budgets describe the cost-effective pathway to achieving the UK's long-term climate change objectives. They also take into account a range of other factors including scientific knowledge, technology, economic and social circumstances, amongst others.

The first five carbon budgets have been put into law and run up to 2032. The UK is currently in the third carbon budget period (2018 to 2022). The Climate Change Committee has published its advice on the [Sixth Carbon Budget](#) and [Government legislated for this in June 2021](#) to achieve a 78% Reduction of net emissions below 1990 levels by 2035.

The Highways Decarbonisation Strategy has been developed to reflect this 2035 carbon budget and the Full Council resolution and to support the Corporate Priorities, in particular the need to protect the environment by putting in place a Strategy to achieve a realistic carbon reduction from highways maintenance and highway related activities.

Strategy areas have been developed, which include:

- Promoting a low carbon approach to procurement.
- Measuring the impact of highway maintenance activities and publishing carbon baseline and impact assessments.
- Aiming for lowest carbon impact across the lifecycle of the asset by using carbon lifecycle modelling to inform decisions.
- Ensuring carbon impact of revenue and replacement activities are considered.
- Working towards Net Zero across depots and fleet operations.
- Working with partners to promote innovation.

These represent the county council's high-level commitment to decarbonisation.

The Highways Decarbonisation Strategy describe how the county council will go about delivering Highways' contribution towards the Council's strategy that seeks to 'transition the Lancashire economy away from carbon by 2030 and address the biodiversity crisis'; acknowledging the successes already achieved by converting street lighting to LED and utilising recycling opportunities.

In the shorter term, the county council must be proactive in targeting 'quick win' opportunities that reduce carbon in day-to-day operations, particularly amongst the most energy intensive operations; reviewing traditional highways operations and prioritising activities that have the greatest source of carbon footprint. For example, pavement renewal and surface dressing. The 'road map' identified activities that will help to work towards decarbonisation through to 2035.

Carbon Action Plans have been developed with specific activities to be delivered within the first five years of the plan. These will be closely monitored and reviewed. Progress reporting will be done via Carbon Dashboards included in the annual Transport Asset Management Plan Refresh documents.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

The Highways Decarbonisation Strategy sets out activities that will help work towards the county council's strategy that seeks to 'transition the Lancashire economy away from carbon by 2030 and address the biodiversity crisis' and will be monitored through the Transport Asset Management Plan. Without this plan it will not be possible to measure any progress towards the ambition to achieve 78% reduction of emissions by 2035, and the county council is unlikely to meet its aspirations.

Carbon reduction and availability of an approved decarbonisation strategy is increasingly becoming a requirement of Department for Transport and other funding bodies when being considered for grant funding and other funding streams, as well as being built into the Department for Transport's Self-assessment requirements. Without such a strategy it is unlikely that the county council would be successful in being awarded the optimum level of funding. This would put pressure on existing budgets for the maintenance of highway assets and result in unacceptable asset deterioration.

The Strategy will not mean that our duties to maintain publicly maintainable highways and other duties are unable to be fulfilled

Financial

The projects delivering this strategy will be funded within the existing budget and grant funded programmes for highways maintenance unless specific funding is approved by Cabinet for later specific projects which will need separate approvals.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A