

## Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 19 January 2023

### Report of the Director of Strategy and Performance

#### Part I

Electoral Division affected:  
(All Divisions);

#### Corporate Priorities:

Delivering better services;  
Supporting economic growth;  
Protecting our environment;

### Revised Estate Road Specification

(Appendix 'A' refers)

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#### Brief Summary

The Estate Road Specification applies to works in, under, or over an existing or proposed vehicular highway by a third party under an agreement with the highway authority under S278 or S38 Highways Act 1980. It specifies the design criteria, the standards of materials and workmanship to be used, the ways and methods works should be carried out and the testing and quality standards that must be met in construction.

The existing Estate Road Specification was last updated in 2011. There have subsequently been significant developments in principles of design, in particular active travel and an increased focus on sustainability and carbon reduction. This proposed update to the Estate Road Specification is in line with these developments and supports the corporate priorities of delivering better services, protecting our environment, and supporting economic growth.

#### Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Approve the proposed revised Estate Road Specification as set out at Appendix 'A'.
- (ii) Authorise the Director of Strategy and Performance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, to publish the revised Estate Road Specification.

(iii) Authorise the Head of Service - Asset Management to approve ongoing revisions to the Estate Road Specification, as required as a result of revisions to national policy and standards.

## **Detail**

### **Background**

The existing Estate Road Specification was last updated in 2011. There have subsequently been significant developments in principles of design, in particular active travel and an increased focus on sustainability and carbon reduction. This proposed revision of the Estate Road Specification is in line with these developments and supports the corporate priorities of delivering better services, protecting our environment and supporting economic growth. The proposed specification revises the acceptable and preferred materials to be used for the construction of estate roads. Approval of this revision is sought in recommendation (i).

### **Standards**

The British or European Standards referenced within the document have been updated and amended as required to account for any changes, updates or more appropriate alternative standards. Following the UK's withdrawal from the European Union, changes have been introduced in regard to construction products certification, and additional changes are emerging. The previous requirements for construction products to be tested and pass a conformity assessment to European Union Construction Products Regulation 305/2011 and those covered by a European harmonised standard to carry a CE (i.e., conformity to European health, safety and environmental protection standards) mark has been amended to allow such products until 1 January 2023. From 1 January 2025 onwards any goods or materials to be manufactured or supplied subject to a quality management scheme or product certification scheme shall need to comply with United Kingdom Construction Product Regulations, as per Statutory Instrument No. 465 The Construction products (Amendment etc.) (Exit) Regulations 2019. For products covered by a UK Designated standard (formerly a European harmonised standard) then a Declaration of Performance and a UK Conformity Assessment (UKCA) marking is required.

### **Design Criteria**

Since the last update of the Estate Road Specification significant changes to the practice of estate road design have occurred. A focus on designing estates to better promote more sustainable ways of living and modes of travel have driven these changes. The main current document promoting this is Local Transport Note 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design.

The Department for Transport Manual for Streets document, currently in its 2<sup>nd</sup> version is also in the process of being significantly and fundamentally updated to better promote sustainable development. As such, in anticipation of the publishing of this document the new Estate Road Specification anticipates its release by making its necessary requirements mandatory upon release. There is no proposal to amend the requirements of Manual for Streets 3 when released as it has been extensively

consulted upon on a nationwide basis and will be considered absolute best practice that the county council should follow.

### **Materials**

The most substantial change to the Estate Road Specification concerns the choices of materials for carriageway and footway/cycletrack construction. Traditional hot mix asphalt, incorporating virgin materials for the lower layers of the roads and footways/cycletracks have been replaced as the preferred choice by cold mix, cold recycled and in-situ stabilised materials.

The switch to cold mix and recycled products will allow the reuse of existing high-quality aggregates that might have otherwise been downcycled or disposed of. This will, if adopted across the county reduce the demand on virgin aggregates reduce finite resource use (such as imported bitumen which is subject to volatile pricing in line with global oil demand), while also significantly reducing the carbon footprint of new developments.

The use of cold mix materials also has health and safety benefits to workers and communities. The ambient mixing temperatures eliminates the majority of fumes and emissions (such as Volatile Organic Compounds and Nitrous Oxides, etc.) produced during production and installation.

The use of in-situ stabilisation methods in-lieu of imported capping materials will significantly reduce vehicle movements, therefore reducing disruption to local communities, reduce damage to the local road network and again reduce the carbon footprint and material and resource use.

These materials have equivalent performance to traditional hot mix, virgin materials, as evidenced by successful use by the county council's local highways operations teams for the last 3 years.

Prescriptive testing requirements are included in the specification to ensure the quality of the produced and installed materials and means for dealing with any non-conformances are also included.

Durability is also a key consideration with discretion given to the county's engineers to request the use of alternative, more durable materials in certain situations.

### **Further revisions**

Where future revisions will reflect revisions to national policy and standards it is proposed that approving such revisions is undertaken by officers and that the Head of Service - Asset Management be authorised to approve ongoing revisions to the Estate Road Specification, as required as a result of revisions to national policy and standards.

### **Consultations**

Operational level management in Developer Support have been consulted throughout the development of the document. Comments received have been taken account of in the final specification.

**Implications:**

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

**Risk management**

It is considered that the implementation of this new, updated and more prescriptive specification will ease the approval of contemporary materials and methods of working. Therefore, if not implemented there will be an ongoing increase in officer time to manage scheme specific approvals of such materials and methods.

The existing Estate Road Specification does not include such prescriptive requirements with regards to materials quality management and testing. Implementation of the proposed Specification should therefore work towards highways which require less intervention over time

The proposed specification includes performance-based specifications for all products and does not include proprietary or branded products, therefore eliminating any potential issues or challenges relating to procurement or competition.

**Legal**

When works are done on highways maintainable at public expense the standard ought to be such that the county council's duty to maintain to appropriate standard is fulfilled. The standards of materials and workmanship can be required by the authority acting reasonably.

**List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
None		
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
N/A		