

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 7 September 2023

Report of the Director of Strategy and Performance

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Corporate Priorities:
Delivering better services;

Transport Asset Management Plan Phase 2 Year 3 - Data Refresh 2023

(Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer)

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Brief Summary

The Transport Asset Management Plan 2015-2030 was approved by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport on 10 June 2014 and identified the key strategic priorities of the county council.

It is proposed to publish a review of the progress made during year 3 of Phase 2 of the Plan and refresh the data to show the latest condition of the county council's assets and progress in a number of key areas in highway asset management over the past 12 months and to use the Data in the delivery of the Transport Asset Management Plan.

This is deemed to be a Key Decision and the requirements of Standing Order C19 have been complied with.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Note the update on progress outlined in the Transport Asset Management Phase 2 Year 3 – Data Refresh 2023 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 approve and publish the full and final version of the 'Transport Asset Management Plan Phase 2 Year 3 -

Data Refresh 2023'.

- (iii) Approve the use of the data for lifecycle modelling and allocation of funds in line with the Transport Asset Management Plan principles in the development of the county council's 2024/25 Highways Capital programme, which will be presented to Cabinet in March 2024.
- (iv) Approve the continued monitoring of performance against the standards set.

Detail

Phase 2 of the Transport Asset Management Plan started in April 2020 and runs until March 2025. Using the condition of the assets at the end of Phase 1, along with the results of Lifecycle Modelling, the original Transport Asset Management assumptions have been reviewed and have been used to produce revised standards and funding proposals for the period 2020/21 to 2024/25. The approach was approved by Cabinet in December 2020 and the Transport Asset Management Phase 2 document was published in March 2021.

The Phase 2 Year 3 Data Refresh 2023, as with previous years, presents the asset condition and update on other Transport Asset Management related aspects. The detail is set out in the report at Appendix 'A'. The main points are as follows:

- Good progress continues to be made in respect of maintaining the condition of the A, B and C road networks, and they are on track to achieve the standards set for the end of Phase 2.
- The condition of the Unclassified Road network, which is the focus of Phase 2 of the Transport Asset Management, shows there is a backlog. The Residential road condition appears to be holding steady compared with the base year.
- Street lighting column replacement and traffic signal replacement continue to be managed through a targeted risk-based approach to deal with the highest risk assets. However, the stock continues to age and both show a decline in condition compared with the base years, as there are insufficient funds available to replace the stock at an appropriate pace. A revised approach to traffic signal maintenance has been implemented that will focus on replacing the obsolete components, rather the renewing the whole junction, which will help to address this issue. This appears to be helping to reduce the backlog. Alternative strategies for street lighting column replacement are also being investigated through benchmarking with other authorities.

Appendix 'B' contains the detailed definitions of the condition measures.

The Phase 2 Year 3 - Data Refresh 2023 document will also set out the funding available from the Department for Transport and the approaches for maintaining each asset group with the funds available, using a risk-based approach based on asset condition and the results of lifecycle modelling.



As well as the asset condition data the Refresh document will demonstrate the development work being undertaken to deliver against the Decarbonisation Strategy, approved by Cabinet in April 2022, links with the emerging Local Transport Plan and the Highways and Transport Strategy 2023-2025, areas of development as a result of listening to customer feedback and show the performance against a range of Key Performance Indicators.

Appendices

Appendices 'A' - 'B' are attached to this report. For clarification they are summarised below and referenced at relevant points within this report.

Appendix	Title
Appendix 'A'	Standards and Condition Data
Appendix 'B'	Condition Measure Definitions

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

Financial Risks

Not reviewing progress in year within Phase 2 would lead to inefficiencies in the allocation of capital funds, increased costs due to preventative maintenance not being undertaken at the correct stage in the life cycle of the asset, and anticipated asset condition deterioration.

The Transport Asset Management Plan is a key document setting out the strategic intent of the council for investment in its highway assets. It underpins the self-assessment, which Highway Authorities are required to submit to the Department for Transport annually and is considered by the Department for Transport as a corner stone of good asset management. It is one of the three essential areas without evidence of which it is not possible to achieve Band 3 status and benefit from Challenge Fund and other grant funding streams.

The other two essential areas are Life Cycle Planning and Communication. The Data Refresh 2023 document provides necessary supporting evidence for several areas of the Department for Transport Self-Assessment including both Lifecycle Planning and Communication, as well as the performance management. It shows that the authority seeks to avoid using outdated condition information and is being open and transparent in communicating performance with stakeholders. Not doing so would result in the county council failing to achieve a Band 3 ranking which in turn would not attract the full £3.201m Incentive Fund allocation to keep roads and infrastructure such as bridges and streetlights in good repair.



Phase 2 of the Transport Asset Management Plan will need to take into account the Capital Strategy 2020 and subsequent updates and fit within the financial envelopes available to ensure the overall capital strategy is deliverable and sustainable.

The amounts of funding to be received will dictate the levels of interventions that can be delivered within the highways capital programme.

It should be noted that in current years the highways maintenance grant has been supported by additional council borrowing of circa £10m per annum and a grant only based capital programme would deliver lower levels of intervention within the priorities set by the Transport Asset Management Plan.

Legal

The Transport Asset Management Plan is an important document explaining and justifying work done and expectations. That it, and the data, is reviewed and updated is important and it informs the county council's position with regard to challenges and priorities.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

