

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member - Environment
Date:	14 October 2010
Title:	Highway Maintenance Management Plan – Review of Policies
Reference:	2004
Report From:	Director of Environment

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The development of a number of new national codes of practice has been underway since the introduction of Well-lit Highways in 2004 resulting in a suite of documents that, through a continual review process, have now been considered fit for purpose. The development of a defined suite of suitable documents, changes in legislation and Hampshire's preparation for its LTP3 submission has culminated in the need to seek approval for the Highway Maintenance Management Plan (HMMP) to be updated.
- 1.2. This update is a consolidation of existing policies and is to seek approval for a number of policy changes that have been introduced during the last year as well as a number of new and amended policies that reflect the changes necessary to ensure that the Authority's policy documents align with the revised national standards introduced through the publication of the following Codes of Practice:
- Well Maintained Highways (July 2005)
 - Well-lit Highways (November 2004)
 - Management of Highway Structures (September 2005).
- 1.2. This paper seeks to identify where changes in national standards and national approaches will influence policies and procedures undertaken in the management and delivery of maintenance across Hampshire's highway network. This will ensure that the Authority's policies and procedures provide a systematic and consistent approach to nationally recognised standards across the management of the entire network in Hampshire.
- 1.3. A developed HMMP is recognised as the cornerstone of an Authority's maintenance strategy and is recognised as a key document in the acceptance and implementation of asset management principles, including the

development of an Authority's Transport Asset Management Plan which will form an integral part of Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) submissions.

- 1.4. More recently the Transport Infrastructure Assets Valuation Code published by The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) places a responsibility to produce valuation information on the highway network for Whole of Government Accounting purposes. The HMMP is framed to accommodate concepts such as asset valuation and provides serviceability intervention levels that assist in calculation of Depreciation Replacement Costs required in future accounting submissions to HM Treasury.
- 1.5. A robust and up-to-date HMMP will allow the Authority to demonstrate good stewardship of the environment and, in particular, good management of its highway network which reflects in the overall performance of the County Council.
- 1.6. The HMMP will be subject to regular reviews to ensure that it continues to reflect any changes in national standards and guidance. The format of the existing HMMP is to be retained and the bulk of it remains unchanged apart from the modifications identified in the following section of this report.
- 1.7. The amended HMMP will be published on the Hampshire web site following approval and can be found at: www3.hants.gov.uk/transport/roads

2. Contextual information

- 2.1. Hampshire County Council introduced its HMMP in 1986. The HMMP outlines the Highway Maintenance Strategy of the County Council which is based on the recommendations of the available national codes of good practice, the latest being 'Well Maintained Highways' published in July 2005. The document sets out policies, standards and the Network Hierarchy of the County Council and their implementation through designated procedures which are also contained within the HMMP.
- 2.2. Since the introduction of the HMMP, advances in technology, maintenance techniques, legislation and environmental awareness have led to the need to regularly review, reformat and amend the document to reflect current practice as outlined in the various national standards published at that time.
- 2.3. The front pages of the document, including a **Forward, Introduction, Background** and an outline of the Authority's **Maintenance Strategy & Objectives**, have been refreshed to ensure that they align with the appropriate standards and legislation
- 2.4. During the current review all policies have been examined and this has resulted in some amendments to the document to ensure that it continues to align with the current standards and reflects any changes in legislation. The changes identified have been broken down into three distinct types as follows.

- 2.5. **Minor Text Enhancement** – 21 policies have been amended resulting in **no** policy change, but ensuring that the correct national standard is referred to, wording has been changed to provide clearer guidance or additional information has been added to aid guidance. A list of those policies with text enhancements can be found in Appendix 1 attached to this document.
- 2.6. **Major Policy Change** – four policies have been subject to major change and these are listed in Appendix 2 attached to this document.
- 2.7. **New Policies** – six new policies are proposed to cover a number of areas where policies either did not adequately exist or required significant change due to a change in legislation or standards. These are listed in Appendix 2 attached to this document. The full text is available on the Meetings Information System on www3.hants.gov.uk/councilmeetings.

3. Finance

- 3.1. The changes identified in this review will not have a direct financial impact on the department's budget but the recent Transport Infrastructure Assets Valuation Code published by CIPFA places a responsibility to produce valuation information on the highway network for Whole of Government Accounting purposes. The HMMP is framed to accommodate concepts such as asset valuation and provides serviceability intervention levels that assist in calculation of Depreciation Replacement Costs required in future accounting submissions to HM Treasury.

4. Performance

- 4.1. A robust and up-to-date HMMP will allow the Authority to demonstrate good stewardship of the environment and, in particular, good management of its highway network which reflects in the overall performance of the County Council.

5. Future direction

- 5.1. The HMMP requires an annual review, to ensure that the County Council continues to align its Highway Strategy with national codes of practice and that the Authority provides a systematic and consistent approach to nationally recognised standards across the management of the entire highway network in Hampshire.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1. That the amendments to the existing policies together with the new policies, as set out in paragraphs 2.5, 2.6 and 2.7 and Appendix 2 to the report, be approved.

6.2. That the Highway Maintenance Management Plan available on the Authority's web pages (www3.hants.gov.uk/transport/roads) be updated to reflect the changes necessary to align it with the guidance provided in the following national standard documents:

- "Well-Lit Highways – Code of practice for Highway Lighting Management" published November 2004
- "Well Maintained Highways – A Code of Practice for Highways Maintenance Management" published July 2005
- "Management of Highway Structures – Code of Practice" published September 2005.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes/ no
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	yes/ no
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes/ no
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
Well Maintained Highways Code of Practice. (July 2005)	Environment Department Library
Well Lit Highways (Nov 2004)	Environment Department Library
Management of Highway Structures (Sept 2005)	Environment Department Library
Code of Practice on Transport Infrastructures (March 2010)	Treasurers Department

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 1.1. Each of the policies that have been amended or introduced have been considered against the existing HMMP to ensure that there is no change in the equalities impact of this suite of documents.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1. The Changes to the HMMP are not considered to have any impact on crime and disorder in the County.

3. Climate Change:

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?
- There is no negative impact on the Authority's carbon footprint/energy consumption due to the proposed changes.
- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?
- There are no negative impacts on the environment created by the proposed changes to the HMMP and the amendments are intended to support the Authority's commitment to protection our environment..

HMMP – List of Minor Changes to Policy Documents

Policy	Change description
Network Hierarchy	Improved use of nationally published information and title of the relevant Code of Practice updated. Footway categories and HGV flow guidelines added.
Highway Inspections	Title of the relevant Code of Practice updated and the wording of some of the text improved. Three of the inspection schedules changed from fixed intervals to reactive checks. Inspection of culverts now in line with the changes made to the "Maintenance of Highway Drainage Systems" policy.
Highway Claims	Wording is improved and a paragraph added regarding handling of subsidence enquires.
Control of Weeds on the Highway	The Ragwort Act is now specifically mentioned.
Control of Ragwort	The Ragwort Control Act and associated Code of Practice are now referenced as governing documentation.
Skid Resistance	Title of the governing Code of Practice is brought up to date.
Kerbing and Channel Block Implementation	Much more technical information given.
Maintenance of Non Illuminated Traffic Signs	Title of the governing Code of Practice brought up to date.
Maintenance of Non Illuminated Traffic Signs	Minor policy changes adding the removal of obstructive vegetation and changing the frequency of sign cleaning on A roads.
Non Illuminated Traffic Sign Materials & Construction	Policy tightened regarding anti-theft measures, safety and use of existing poles.
Maintenance of Existing Road Markings	Category 3b roads removed from consideration of marking replacement (when more than 30% of area becomes ineffective). Clarification that mandatory markings will be considered for replacement (when 30% of area is ineffective) and that other lining will be replaced once ineffective or flagged by risk assessment.
Road Marking Implementation and Materials	Change of reference from "Specification for Highway Works" and "Departmental Standards Committee requirements" to the specification for the THC.
Fencing	Inspection details added for road restraint systems and priority changed for defects on pedestrian fences.
Dealing with Clinical Waste on the Highway	Minor change to wording, adding that district councils are responsible for Environmental Health and that some may have 24 hour collection and disposal facilities.
Environmental Factors	Hampshire County Council's sign-up to the Aalborg Commitments added. The Commitments are listed.
Structures Policy	CCTV masts are now included as ancillary structures. A typing error that noted the incorrect section of the Highways Act was corrected.
Commuted Sums	Layout of text improved but content remains the same.
Eviction of Trespassers on the Highway	Additions to relevant legislation and clarification regarding Hampshire County Council's Gypsy and Traveller Service.
Sponsorship of Roundabouts	Legislation clarified as District Councils may act under their own powers with HCC consent rather than as an HCC contractor. Minor additions to clarify District Authority powers.
Neighbourhood Watch Schemes and Signboards	Reference to relevant legislation brought up to date as the pertinent Act was amended.
Winter Maintenance	Addition of the "Community Route" treatment category and change to the title of HCC's annually reviewed document for winter planning. Text layout improved.

HMMP – List of Amended Policy Documents

Policy Name	Policy Description
Street Lighting Policy (Previously approved)	Changed to reflect the Public Finance Initiative (PFI) that is now in place for the delivery of the street lighting service across Hampshire.
Licensing and Consent.	Policy indentifying where licences or consents can be granted which allows groups or individuals to place apparatus/furniture on the highway or where activities can be carried out on the highway under licence.
Environmental Factors.	Policy enhanced to ensure it aligns with the Authority's Aalborg commitments and reflects changes in relevant legislation.
Management of Highway Verges.	This policy has been enhanced to improve the information on inspections of highway trees and work on undertaken on all trees, shrubs and verges.

HMMP – List of New Policy Documents

Policy Name	Policy Description
Enforcement and Prosecution	Policy identifying the action to be taken by the County Council where breaches of the relevant legislation occur, including prosecution when deemed necessary. These include the Highways Act 1980, the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, the Traffic Management Act 2004 and other applicable legislation.
Licensing and Consent	Policy indentifying where licences or consents can be granted which allows groups or individuals to place apparatus/furniture on the highway or where activities can be carried out on the highway under licence.
Gating Orders (Previously Approved)	The Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005 introduced new powers for County Councils to make gating orders to restrict some public rights of way. This policy lays out Hampshire's approach to gating orders.
Parking on Grass Verges, Footpaths and Pavements	This policy identifies the procedure for reporting instances where parking on grass verges, footpaths and pavements occur and identifies the various forms of action to be taken by the authority. Grass verges, footpaths and pavements all form part of the public highway which the County Council has a statutory duty to keep clear from obstructions..
Adopted Highways, Status Enquiries and Extinguishment of Highway Rights.	The policy related to the adoption of land as public highway, the rights of the public and other bodies to request information related to the extent of the highway and the consideration of applications to extinguish highway rights have been brought together in a single policy. This new policy tightens the requirements necessary for an application for extinguishment to be permitted, including the identification of criteria to be considered in terms of safety, environmental
Roadside Memorials.	This policy sets out the Authority's approach to placing of roadside memorials following accidents on the highway. The policy identifies the considerations that are necessary when placing memorials on the highway and the links with other Authorities such as the Police etc.