

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Environment and Transport
Date:	30 June 2016
Title:	Highways Materials Policy Statement - Capital Works
Reference:	7535
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report seeks approval of a new policy statement to reduce the use of high maintenance materials on the highway.
- 1.2. The aim is to maximise the use of materials that are durable, fit for purpose and sustainable, and to reduce the use of those that are expensive, high maintenance and difficult to obtain.
- 1.3. The departmental savings proposals agreed by the County Council on 22 October 2015, has led to a comprehensive review of services and the way that they are delivered. Savings will be derived from adoption of the materials policy statement to ensure that future maintenance costs can be minimised.
- 1.4. Whilst the overall aim is to reduce the use of high maintenance materials, work is also ongoing to review the County Council's commuted sums policy where there is an overriding need, in order to facilitate the use of more specialist materials on the highway subject to the scheme promoter funding extra cost of maintaining these enhanced materials.

2. Contextual information

- 2.1. Since the 2010/11 financial year, the County Council has been responding to the ongoing reductions in public spending that are required to close the structural deficit within the economy.
- 2.2. The Economy, Transport and Environment Department has already made savings since 2011 totalling over £26m. The requirement for 2017 is to identify and deliver a further £14.7m of savings against the net budget of £103.77m approved in February 2015.

- 2.3. The County Council annual programme of capital improvement has averaged nearly £100m over the past three years and given the significant level of investment, it is vitally important that this is focussed in 'spend to save' areas, by minimising medium to long term maintenance costs, in turn reducing the frequency of disruptive road maintenance works on the network.

3. Proposed new approach

- 3.1. In recent years the palette of materials used in Hampshire has been very varied, many being proprietary materials that are often difficult to source, and therefore difficult to match and maintain. This has resulted in poor quality unsightly reinstatements, often in the more sensitive areas of Hampshire. Providing a new approved palette of materials will enable contractors and utility companies to match surfacing materials when reinstating the highway following maintenance work.
- 3.2. Should approval be granted to the principles set out in this report, all of the operational guidance for designers and developers will be altered to reflect this approach. Appropriate materials for use in new construction and maintenance, to include footways, carriageways and other public realm improvements on the highway, will be specified and reviewed and updated regularly to allow new materials to be included where appropriate.
- 3.3. If approved, the new approach will minimise the need to stockpile special materials for maintenance work at area depots, thus freeing up storage areas and minimising administrative issues.
- 3.4. Whilst the new approach will require the use of materials that are easy to source and economical to maintain, it is recognised that there will be cases where the use of other materials will be appropriate, for example in historic towns and villages and conservation areas where enhancement is an important objective. However, the use of enhanced materials will require a commuted sum to cover the extra cost of their maintenance. The maintenance commuted sum should be calculated to allow for any reduction of life of the enhanced materials. Use of these materials will not be encouraged but it is important that the policy does not exclude them.
- 3.5. Just under one hundred of the schemes in the three year Capital Programme are already at the detailed design stage and in the majority of cases the material palette has already been set. It is recommended that where consultation on the detailed design has already taken place, materials will not be limited to the new approved palette of materials. Similarly, a number of housing developments are in the latter stages of design and where the Council has agreed to the use of non-standard materials, the developers should be allowed to implement the agreed solutions.
- 3.6. Developers, District, Borough, Town and Parish Councils may choose to provide a commuted sum in order to promote schemes using enhanced materials. Regardless, the enhanced palette will be limited strictly to good

quality easily sourced materials that can be easily matched to ensure the enhancement remains attractive over the lifetime of the scheme.

- 3.7. Online information will be developed to ensure that developers, contractors, utility companies, District, Borough, Town and Parish Councils can easily access clear operational guidance which will include the new palette of materials in order to make timely decisions on materials that will be acceptable to the Highway Authority in order to avoid delays in the scheme implementation.
- 3.8. As part of this work, the operational guidance will also be more specific on appropriate street furniture including benches, bollards, cycle racks and tree planters in a bid to minimise maintenance costs.
- 3.9. A progress report on the performance of this new approach will be brought to the Executive Member for Environment and Transport at an appropriate point in the future.

4. Further Work

- 4.1. Drainage features can be expensive to maintain and the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 now requires drainage solutions to be able to cope with more extreme flood events. In order to achieve this, developers are promoting innovative solutions which in some cases are extremely costly to maintain. It is therefore important that commuted sums are sufficient to cover full maintenance costs.
- 4.2. As part of the initiative to provide clear operation guidance for designers and developers, separate guidelines will be developed on Sustainable Drainage (SuDS).
- 4.3. In addition work is underway to develop an approach to fund the maintenance needs of new assets for the foreseeable future. It is intended that the calculations supporting the commuted sum requirements for this new approach will be based on asset management lifecycle principles, funding both routine, structural, and in some instances the renewal and replacement needs of the new asset over a considerable time period.
- 4.4. A further report covering both these issues will be presented in due course.

5. Finance

- 5.1. Whilst the new palette of materials for use on the highway will in most cases reduce the capital cost of schemes, the significant savings will be achieved in the medium to long term on maintaining the asset.
- 5.2. Whilst the use of standard materials will be encouraged, in some locations such as historic town centres, there may be a case for using enhanced materials. The Council's commuted sum policy will be key to ensuring that this

does not result in an additional pressure on the Council's maintenance budgets.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1. That the Executive Member for Environment and Transport approves the principles set out in this report for determining the choice of material for all highway works, new estate roads for adoption, and all future highway maintenance activity.
- 6.2. That authority be delegated to the Director of Economy, Transport, and Environment to apply the principles to the relevant County Council operational guidance, and to update guidance issued to developers and designers as necessary.

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

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u>
Transformation to 2017 – Revenue Savings Proposals	6888	15 September 2015
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	

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>
None	

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equality Duty

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

It is considered that the proposal will have a low or no impact on groups with protected characteristics. The use of standard materials that can be maintained at a reasonable cost with easy access to replacement materials will ensure timely repairs minimising the risk to cyclists and pedestrians particularly those with mobility difficulties. The policy will not restrict the use of materials such as tactile paving.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1. The provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 have no implications for this proposal

3. Climate Change:

3.1. How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

The proposal in itself has no impact on climate change.

- 3.2. How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

It is considered that the proposal will have no impact on the need to adapt to climate change and be resilient to its longer term impacts.