



Strategic Communications Plan

Hampshire Highways Service Contract

2019/2020

1. Background

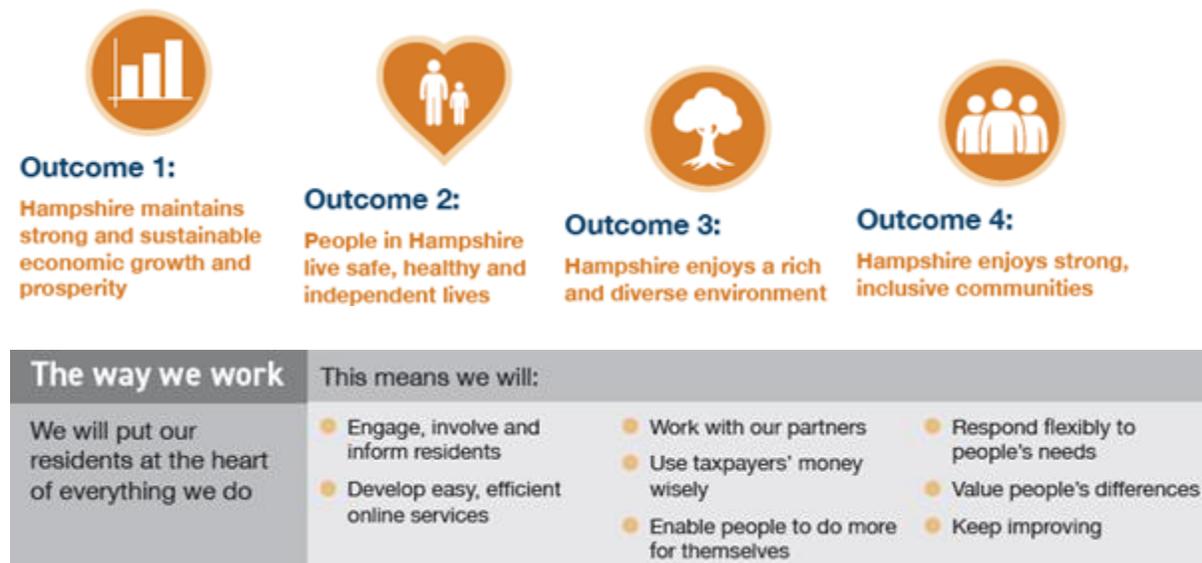
Good roads are a vital part of Hampshire's infrastructure and essential for the county's economic progress and future prosperity. Hampshire County Council maintains over 5,300 miles of road, one of the largest road networks in the country.

This plan is developed with Skanska and shared with the Highways Service.

Hampshire County Council has appointed Skanska to deliver highways maintenance services in Hampshire over the next seven years. The service is a collaboration with a one service, one team ethos – Hampshire Highways.

This follows a thorough contract procurement process that included detailed negotiations and assessed quality and price. It takes effect from 1 August 2017 and has an option to extend for a further five years past 2024 based on successful performance.

This plan will operate alongside the Customer and Stakeholder Engagement Plan delivered in collaboration by Skanska's Customer Liaison Officer and the Highways Operation Centre (attached), the HHSC Internal Communications Plan and the Hampshire Highways brand guidelines (attached). It supports the outcomes of Hampshire County Council's Strategic Plan 2017-2021:



2. Communication aims and objectives

To provide clarity and transparency in the approach to asset management and highway maintenance in order to:

- Inform and support decisions that affect highways management.
- Improve the reputation of Hampshire Highways, and maintain a high profile and positive image.
- Demonstrate that, as a responsive organisation, we have acted quickly and decisively, and are putting enormous efforts into managing the situation, including ensuring strong evidence is submitted for national funding.

To help people understand the policy approach to asset management - where and why roads are being repaired - and to improve their understanding of how repairs are being made to their roads. This is to be achieved through:

- Communicating to residents and all interested stakeholders that we will continue to explore innovative techniques while delivering a value for money service.
- Emphasising that we are continuing with the asset management approach, which is more cost effective in the long term.
- Ensuring residents feel resources are being well used, are well informed of the facts, understand the issues, and have realistic expectations.
- Engagement and consult with stakeholders, listening to feedback.

To develop a performance management framework to highlight the work of the county council in:

- i) Managing resources and targeting priorities to achieve the above.
- ii) Making the road network more resilient to extreme weather for the long term.
- iii) Responding to immediate safety concerns.

3. Key messages

Well maintained roads and pavements are vital for the continued economic prosperity of Hampshire and continued quality of life.

The county council is committed to providing the best possible highways service to residents and businesses.

It has an excellent track record in taking an innovative, long term and effective approach to looking after Hampshire's roads.

The new contract is competitive, offers good value for money for Hampshire's council taxpayers and can deliver the quality of work Hampshire's residents expect and deserve.

Skanska's purpose is to build for a better society and to help achieve this it is committed to using local contractors. This will create new job and training and apprenticeship opportunities across Hampshire. This reinforces its focus on sustainability and the benefits from engaging with the local supply chain to deliver a high-performing contract and economic prosperity for the residents of Hampshire.

4. Principles of good communication

- All communications to carry the key messages across all of the county council's internal and external communication channels.
- All key stakeholders and audiences will be kept informed of work on the network [see customer and stakeholder engagement plan].
- Use a variety of existing databases and communications channels to communicate with all media, residents, communities, voluntary and other public sector partners, stakeholders and businesses.
- Use plain English, avoiding technical and engineering terms to residents.
- Safeguard and maintain the reputation of the county council and Skanska.
- Demonstrate our ethical duty to be open and transparent.

5. Key audiences

- Hampshire residents
- Hampshire business
- Hampshire county councillors
- Hampshire staff – highways and wider
- Hampshire town and parish councils
- Hampshire district and borough councils
- Hampshire MPs
- Local and trade media
- Other interested organisations, eg cycling, motoring organisations

6. Communication tools/tactics/channels

External communications for the public including residents, businesses, communities, parish, district and borough councils and MPs:

- Media releases and interviews, including branding as appropriate [see branding guidelines]
- Media briefings
- Your Hampshire (e-magazine)
- Hantsweb
- County councillors regular e-updates
- Hantsdirect (contact centre) briefings
- Town and parish council newsletter
- Parish council stakeholder event
- Community and parish magazines
- Social media: Facebook / Twitter @hantsconnect / @hantshighways / LinkedIn
- briefing for Hampshire MPs
- ROMANSE & BBC Travel information
- Internal communications channels for HCC staff (many of whom are residents)
- Industry Awards

Internal communications:

- Hantsnet news / Sharepoint communications sites
- Plasma screens in buildings
- Director's communications, eg: blogs, briefings
- Social media, eg: Yammer

7. Communication roles and responsibilities

All general communications to the audiences specified to be generated via Hampshire County Council's communications team and in accordance with the corporate communications protocols. HCC Executive Member is official media spokesperson for Highways in Hampshire, in line with the media protocol set down by Hampshire County Council's Leader and Cabinet.

Press releases, web copy, parish council updates supplied by HCC to be approved by the Deputy Director - Highways, Traffic & Transport. Quotes from Skanska to be included where appropriate, supplied by Skanska's communications team and approved by the account director. Likewise, Skanska press releases to include quotes from the HCC executive member where appropriate.

Press releases and social media posts to be shared with the collaboration hub and customer liaison office to ensure consistency of messaging and timing.

Communications plan to be approved by key decision makers – deputy director, director and executive member.

Communications plan to reviewed and approved by Highways, Traffic and Transport Service Stream Board and published annually by 1 April each year.

8. Evaluation of communications plan

The success of activities within the communications plan can be measured in the following ways:

- Number and reach of social media interactions.
- Evaluation of media coverage by tone of positive/neutral/negative.
- Number of interactions via internal online channels.
- Feedback from the highways operation centre and collaborative hub.
- Feedback from the annual NHT survey.