# Leicestershire County Council
# Highway Asset Management Policy

# Document Control

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# Foreword

The County Council recognise the important role that the highway network plays in keeping people and places connected, especially in a rural county such as Leicestershire. Keeping our highway network in good condition is important to support economic growth and a good quality of life for the residents, visitors and businesses of the county.

Providing a high quality highway network that meets the needs of our customers is something the County Council is committed to. However, we face the challenge of achieving this aim against a backdrop of a difficult economic situation as a result of the ongoing impact of austerity, increasing levels of use and increasing pressures on other County Council services.

The Highway Asset Management Policy and the Highway Asset Management Strategy have been developed to help us to take account of these challenges. The policy is designed to drive continuous improvement in the way we maintain our highway network to ensure that it continues to be safe serviceable and sustainable. It sets out the principles that will ensure we adopt and develop a strategic approach that takes account of the expectations of stakeholders and customers, and targets the council's resources to deliver a network that supports the future prosperity and wellbeing of the people of Leicestershire.

# 1. The Highway Asset Management Framework

The County Council has been applying the principles of a formalised approach to highway asset management for a number of years, implementing its first Transport Asset Management Plan in 2007. Most recently the direction and principles with which we have applied asset management were set out in our second Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP2) and supported by our Highway Maintenance and Street Lighting Policy and Strategy documents as well as a number of other underlying documents such as our Highway Inspection Operation Manual, Network Management Plan, Winter Service Operational Plan, Carriageway Skid Resistance Policy and so on.

The County Council continues to review its approach to highway asset management in the light of the Highway Management Efficiency Programme (HMEP) guidance and as a result we have developed a Highway Asset Management Framework which brings together the core elements of asset management. This framework places our approach in context, identifying the enablers that support asset management and the elements of asset management planning and delivery that contribute to our asset management approach.

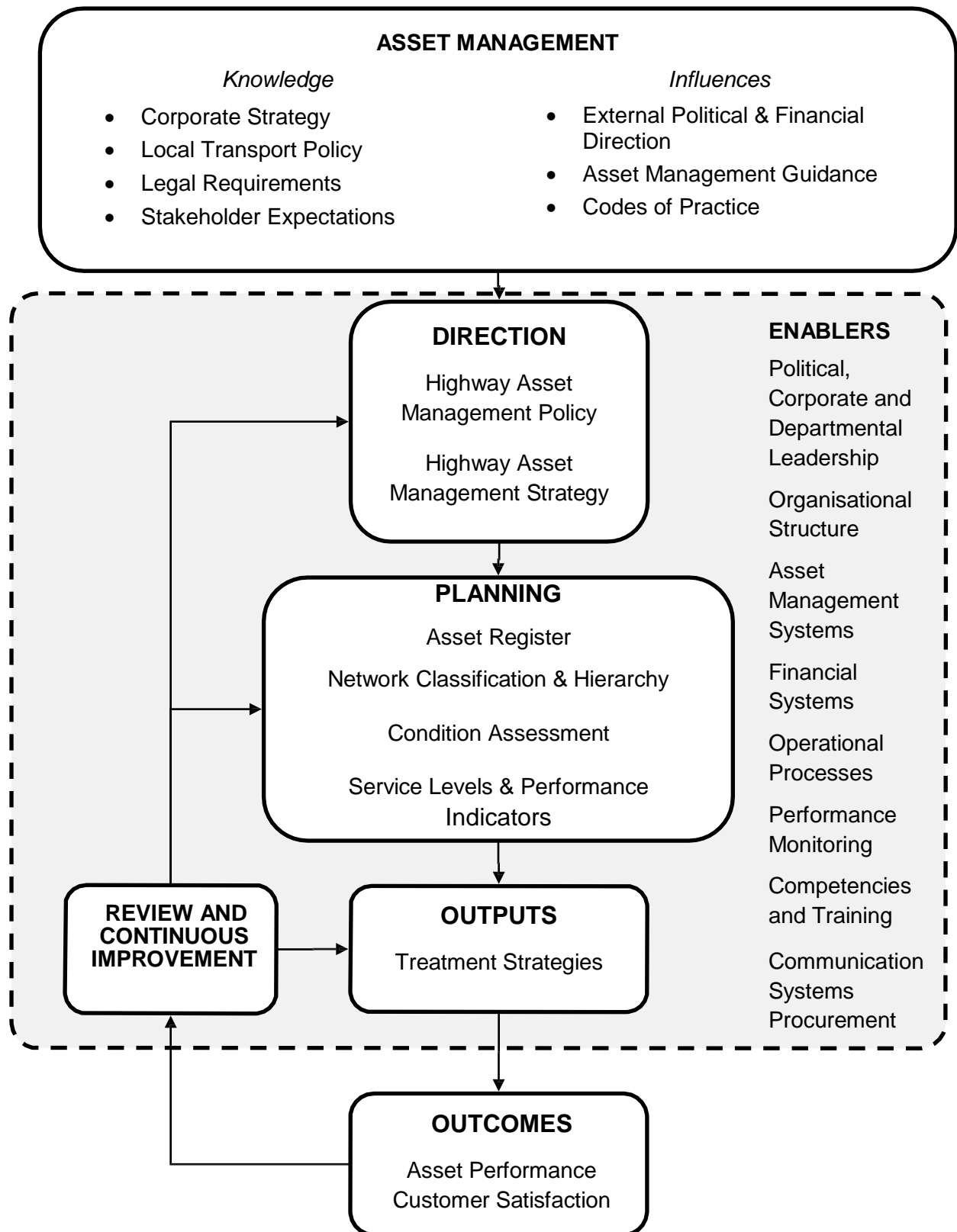Diagram 1.1 overleaf shows the Highway Asset Management Framework.

**ASSET MANAGEMENT**

*Knowledge*

- Corporate Strategy
- Local Transport Policy
- Legal Requirements
- Stakeholder Expectations

*Influences*

- External Political & Financial Direction
- Asset Management Guidance
- Codes of Practice

**DIRECTION**

Highway Asset Management Policy

Highway Asset Management Strategy

**PLANNING**

Asset Register

Network Classification & Hierarchy

Condition Assessment

Service Levels & Performance Indicators

**REVIEW AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

**OUTPUTS**

Treatment Strategies

**ENABLERS**

Political, Corporate and Departmental Leadership

Organisational Structure

Asset Management Systems

Financial Systems

Operational Processes

Performance Monitoring

Competencies and Training

Communication Systems Procurement

**OUTCOMES**

Asset Performance
Customer Satisfaction

*Diagram 1.1 The Highway Asset Management Framework*

# 2.  The Document Framework

2.1.  This policy and the associated Highway Asset Management Strategy document have been developed in accordance with the principles set out in the "Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Guidance Document" (May 2013) and the new Code of Practice "Well-managed Highway Infrastructure" (October 2016).

2.2.  Diagram 3.1 below shows the framework within which these documents will combine to steer the development of a new Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (HIAMP) to replace the current Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) and a suite of Operational Highway Processes which in turn will guide the delivery of asset management strategy across the network.
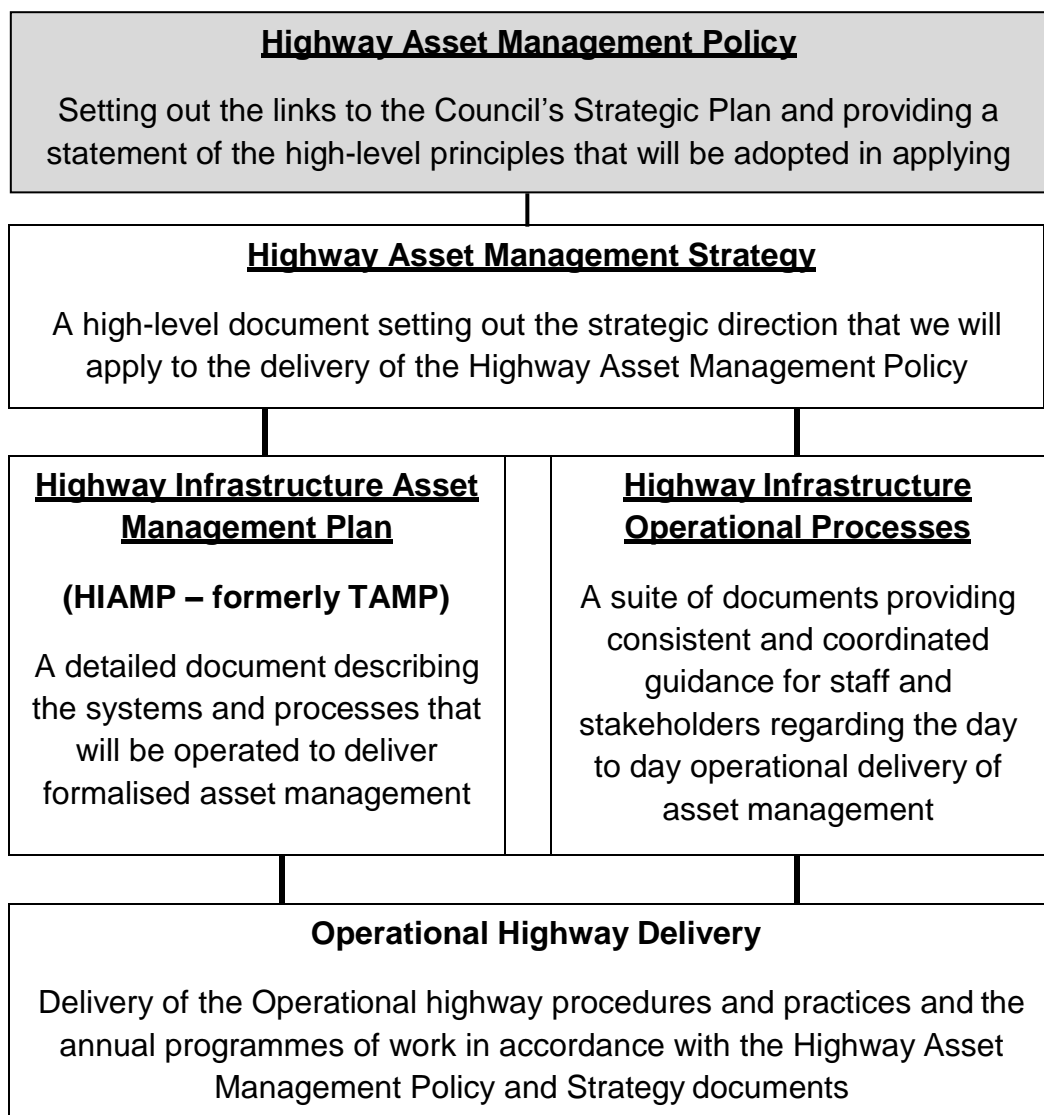
**Highway Asset Management Policy**

Setting out the links to the Council's Strategic Plan and providing a statement of the high-level principles that will be adopted in applying

**Highway Asset Management Strategy**

A high-level document setting out the strategic direction that we will apply to the delivery of the Highway Asset Management Policy

**Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan**

**(HIAMP – formerly TAMP)**

A detailed document describing the systems and processes that will be operated to deliver formalised asset management

**Highway Infrastructure Operational Processes**

A suite of documents providing consistent and coordinated guidance for staff and stakeholders regarding the day to day operational delivery of asset management

**Operational Highway Delivery**

Delivery of the Operational highway procedures and practices and the annual programmes of work in accordance with the Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy documents

*Diagram 3.1*

# 3. Purpose

3.1. This document sets out the policy and key supporting principles which define the broad objectives and the overarching structure and direction that the County Council will adopt in managing the condition of the county highway network.

3.2. This policy will allow better informed decisions to be made about the investment choices required to effectively maintain the whole network, both in the short and the long-term and directly supports the strategic aims of the County Council.

3.3. The policy also supports the County Council's statutory duty to maintain the highway through compliance with section 41 of the Highways Act (1980).

3.4. Finally, this policy aligns the County Council's approach to managing network condition with the principles set out in the national Code of Practice "*Well- Managed Highway Infrastructure*".

# 4. Scope

4.1. This policy is applicable to the entire infrastructure forming the highway network that is managed and maintained by the County Council with the exception of the public rights of way network. Management of that part of the network is dealt with in the Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

# 5. The Highway Asset Management Policy and Supporting Principles

**Policy**

AMP1. The County Council will develop and operate a formalised asset management approach to ensure the optimal use and direction of the County Council's resources in maintaining the county's highway assets for the benefit of current and future stakeholders.

AMP2. The County Council will prioritise available resources for maintenance interventions and treatment choices using a risk- based approach taking account of the safety of stakeholders, network hierarchy, levels of use, network condition, environmental impact, and customer expectations

## Supporting Principles

SP1.    The County Council will consult with stakeholders to support the identification of treatment priorities, levels of service and the management of risk.

SP2.    The County Council will aim to extend the operational life of highway assets through the use of appropriately timed preventative and restorative treatments to maintain safety and serviceability whilst minimising reactive repairs and environmental impact.

SP3.    The County Council will develop "life-cycle models" for all key assets to forecast the consequences of maintenance strategies on budget, and network condition (both short and long-term) and environmental impact. We will use these models to inform our decisions about treatment strategy, budget requirements and priorities.

SP4.    The County Council will publish an annual programme of planned works affecting key assets as well as an annual schedule of our key service levels and performance indicators.

SP5.    The County Council will review the benefits of non-statutory, low-priority assets against the cost of maintenance and where we identify redundancy or high cost linked to minimal benefits, we will seek to rationalise the asset by devolving, decommissioning or reducing the asset or its service levels. Rationalisation will be subject to an assessment of risk and consideration of the views of stakeholders.

SP6.    The County Council will use the outputs from our asset management processes to support measures that will focus on improving assets that encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport i.e. sustainable travel.

SP7.    The County Council will take account of the environmental impact of our maintenance treatments and services and where feasible, either reduce or mitigate these impacts.

SP8.    The County Council will work with regional partners in the emerging Midlands Connect Sub National Transport Board to review and coordinate maintenance and management strategies on the emerging Major Route Network for the Midlands.

SP9.    The County Council will review the resilience of our network to disruptive events, identifying the strategically critical links and recording these as the Resilient Network. We will prioritise the management and maintenance of this network to minimise the impact that severe weather and other disruptive events would have on economic activity and to maintain access to key services.

SP10.    The County Council will continue to ensure that as far as possible our Priority 1 and Priority 2 winter maintenance network is treated in advance of forecast snow or ice.

SP11.    The County Council will collaborate with others, particularly our supply chain, local communities and neighbouring authorities, to increase efficiencies, reduce costs and sustain local service levels.

SP12.    The County Council will continually review and develop our asset management approach across all service areas and seek ways of working more efficiently.

# 6. How this Policy Supports the County Council's Strategic Aims

**6.1.** Our corporate vision, set out in the County Council's Strategic Plan is **"that Leicestershire is the best place to be, a place to work and prosper with a strong economy and good transport links, a place to bring up children and for families, a healthy place which supports ageing well and provides joined up health and care services for vulnerable people and a safe place with a good natural environment."**

6.2. The Strategic Plan recognises that in the foreseeable future the County Council is facing major challenges dealing with the most difficult funding position that it has faced since World War II, with significant reductions now needed in our spending, due to budget deficit reduction requirements. The Strategic Plan sets out how the County Council will continue to support the corporate vision through this period of austerity by focussing on five strategic priority areas. **The Highway Asset Management Policy** will directly contribute to objectives supporting three of these strategic priorities;

- **Leadership and Transformation**

- **Enabling Economic Growth**

- **Safer Communities – A Better Environment/Place**

6.3. To support these priorities the County Council will need to take hard decisions about transforming existing services. We will need to reduce and replace some services whilst other services will need to be more targeted. We will also need to explore new ways of commissioning services to improve value and quality. Decisions about these changes will be better informed by the development of a formalised asset management approach.

6.4. The first of the priority areas, "Leadership and Transformation", recognises the need to change the way that we deliver services and to work more closely with communities and partners to preserve the vision through the current period of economic and social change. The Highway Asset Management Policy will underpin the principle of working in partnership with communities to sustain the local highway environment. It will also provide a cornerstone for the commissioning and procurement of more efficient and appropriately focussed highway maintenance services that take account of the challenging economic pressures faced by the County Council.

6.5. The second priority area within the Strategic Plan is "Enabling Economic Growth". The County Council recognises that well maintained highways directly benefit economic growth by enabling the efficient movement of people and goods. An efficient transport network, in good condition, where disruption and delay is kept to a minimum and where journey times are swift and reliable is essential to attract and support growth. The development of our asset management approach will ensure that we are able to make better informed strategic decisions to ensure that we make best use of reducing resources to support these objectives.

6.6. The Strategic Plan acknowledges that in order to support this strategic priority area, it will be necessary for our declining budgets to be increasingly focussed on keeping roads in good repair and that we will continue to place a high priority on delivering a high level of precautionary winter salting and snow clearance.

6.7. The Strategic Plan's fifth priority area "Safer Communities - A Better Environment/Place" includes in its aims the objective of making roads safer as well as protecting the environment.

6.8. The County Council recognises that a network in poor repair is likely to present increased risks to users. This asset management policy will support the development of an analytical "risk-based" approach to asset management to ensure that, within the constraints of reducing budgets, treatments will be more effectively directed to optimise the condition of the network.

6.9. Our street lighting strategy is already delivering major reductions in energy use and an associated reduction in carbon emissions as a result of switching lanterns to LEDs. By developing an evidence-based approach to the management of all key assets we will minimise the frequency of repairs across the whole network and will extend the life of existing assets. This in turn means less frequent renewal and therefore reduced demand for natural resources and reduced carbon emissions due to the processing and transport of materials.

6.10. Efficient maintenance of the network will result in less disruption and congestion, leading to reduced carbon emissions.

6.11. This policy supports the development of a Resilient Network which will focus resources on sustaining a functioning core network during extreme weather events and during major incidents and disruption.

# 7. Supporting Environment & Transport's Commissioning Strategy

7.1. The County Council recognises the significant challenge that it faces in delivering services against a background of austerity measures. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out this challenge and identifies where the County Council intends to deliver efficiencies and savings in the medium term. To help support these changes the County Council has developed a Corporate Commissioning and Procurement Strategy which was introduced in 2014/15.

7.2. The development of this Highway Asset Management Policy will support the Environment & Transport Department's Commissioning Strategy by setting out an evidence-based approach for commissioning appropriate work programmes that will meet the management and maintenance needs of the highway network.

7.3. The Environment & Transport Commissioning Strategy explains that whilst the authority's current Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) remains in place for the time being, as part of the development of service specific plans and strategies it  will be assessed and reviewed where appropriate to ensure that it remains fit- for purpose.

# 8. Policy Review

8.1.    This policy is closely aligned to other developing policy documents, particularly the Environment &Transport Department's Commissioning Strategy and the Network Management Plan. It will require regular review and sense-checking while these documents are in development.

8.2.    Thereafter it will be reviewed at least every three years or earlier if there are significant changes in national policy or guidance that affects asset management