

North Tyneside Council

Report to Cabinet

Date: 23 January 2023

Title: Highway Asset Management Plan Annual Information Report 2022/23

Portfolios: Environment	Cabinet Member: Councillor Sandra Graham
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Report from Service Areas: Regeneration and Economic Development

Responsible Officer: John Sparkes, Director of Regeneration and Economic Development Tel: (0191) 643 6091

Wards affected: All

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to introduce the Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP) Annual Information Report for 2022. This fulfils the commitment to provide Cabinet with an annual information report outlining the highway and infrastructure work undertaken over the last 12 months. It includes future planned work activities as well as other items of relevant interest. The annual information report attached to this report is the sixth annual report presented since adoption of the HAMP.

1.2 Recommendation:

It is recommended that Cabinet note the content of the HAMP Annual Information Report 2022, attached as Appendix 1.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty-eight days' notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 19th August 2022.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

The proposals in this report relate to a number of themes in Our North Tyneside, the Council Plan 2021 to 2025, in particular:

- A secure North Tyneside
 - We will continue to invest £2m per year on fixing our roads and pavements
- A green North Tyneside
 - We will increase opportunities for safe walking and cycling, including providing a segregated cycleway at the coast
- A thriving North Tyneside
 - We will review how the council purchases and contracts for goods and services to maximise value for money, social value and environmental sustainability

1.5 Information:

Background

- 1.5.1 In September 2017, Cabinet adopted an updated Highway Asset Management Plan 2017 - 2032 (HAMP). This sets out the Authority's approach to maintaining the highways for which the Authority is responsible over a 15-year period and responds to the Elected Mayor and Cabinet's policy direction which included providing a greater emphasis on footways to help support walking and other means of active travel. It also responds to feedback from residents which has consistently told the Authority that the maintenance of roads and footpaths is a top priority. This is reflected in the Our North Tyneside Plan including a commitment to invest additional capital funding in repairing roads and pavements. A well-maintained highway network is vital for supporting the local economy and general wellbeing of the Borough.
- 1.5.2 The HAMP includes a commitment to provide Cabinet with an annual information report outlining progress and key issues associated with the maintenance of the Authority's public highway network which includes 900km of roads and over 2000km of footpaths together with more than 200 bridges, subways and other structures. The report has a particular emphasis around the condition of the network and the resources required to maintain it effectively.
- 1.5.3 Much has been achieved over the lifetime of the HAMP and around £90m has been invested in maintenance and improvement works. Investment in specialist ICT highway asset management systems has enabled the gathering of very accurate inventory and condition data which allows resources to be targeted in the most effective way. Other innovation includes systems to identify the best treatment options to maximise the life of the asset and get best value for money. The Authority has consistently achieved the highest banding in the Department for Transport (DfT) Highway Maintenance Incentive Fund which rewards highway authorities who can demonstrate excellent highway asset management practice. The following has been achieved over the lifetime of the HAMP:
- 160 km of road renewed and 90km of footways improved
 - 50 bridges repaired
 - 280 footway improvement schemes completed
 - 12 major highway projects delivered (e.g. A1058 Coast Road improvements)

1.5.5 Currently the highway maintenance capital improvements which are delivered through the HAMP are financed through the following funding streams.

- Government annual grants (Local Transport Plan Maintenance Block allocation). The 2022/23 allocation was £1.253m. This is used for planned maintenance such as road resurfacing and bridge refurbishments
- Government Highway Maintenance Incentive Fund. The 2022/23 allocation was £313k. This is allocated to Authorities that are able to demonstrate best practice in highway asset management. The funding is used to top up the maintenance block funding and associated work programmes
- Government Pothole Fund. The 2022/23 allocation was £1.253m. This is further funding allocated to local authorities for works to repair potholes or undertake works to prevent them forming in the first place
- Authority investment in additional highway maintenance. For a number of years now, £2m has been invested by the Authority to improve highways. The funding is spent on additional road resurfacing and footpath renewal work that could not otherwise be achieved through regular Government funding. The Authority's Investment Plan currently includes a commitment to continue with this additional investment.
- External grants. This is funding for specific projects acquired through bids to various external funders. The Authority has been highly successful in securing numerous capital grants for major highway improvement schemes totalling around £37million over the last 10 years. Grants have varied in value from £500k to £7m

1.5.6 Since the introduction of the HAMP, the Authority has been able to maintain the highway network to a good standard, mainly due to its commitment to provide additional investment. However, this has not been without its challenges, most notable of which is in adequate funding from Central Government coupled with increased costs of materials arising from inflation and other world events. Improvement of the network would not have been possible had the Authority been solely reliant on Government funding.

1.5.7 The requirement to operate within government funding restraints and the increased costs of highway maintenance due to recent world events are significant challenges. However, in response to these challenges, the HAMP provides a structured programme of targeted investment into the highway network with the objective of ensuring it is maintained in a serviceable condition to meet the needs of the travelling public and businesses.

1.5.8 The Authority has also seen a change in how it manages and invests in the highway network. In line with the Authority's commitment to increase active travel, the Authority has introduced schemes that have reallocated road space to cycling. This includes improvements to Rake Lane Roundabout together with the introduction of cycle lanes on Middle Engine Lane. These, together with other planned works will see a greater use of the highway by a broader mix of users.

1.5.9 The Authority has also secured around £5.5m funding for schemes through Active Travel England and Transport North East which has enabled delivery on the ground. This has ensured that active travel and the reallocation of highway space to

accommodate sustainable travel modes has been embedded in the Authority's regeneration plans for North Shields.

- 1.5.10 However, this opportunity to increase active travel and investment in the Authority's highway infrastructure will also bring increased maintenance liabilities that will need to be factored into the Authority's future financial planning. Based on current funding trends, there is a concern that it will be difficult to sustain the condition of the network in future years. In addition to limited Government funding for core maintenance works, the issue has been exacerbated by the sudden increase in construction costs due to the inflation crisis and the war in Ukraine. The cost of surfacing materials are now 22% higher than they were 12 months ago. This translates to around 10 less roads being resurfaced in 2022/23 compared to previous recent years. As such, as the Authority looks ahead, it will need to align its core maintenance funding with external investment and targeted interventions where they will have the maximum impact.
- 1.5.11 Over the last 12 months, a number of positive changes to the highway maintenance service have been made such as improvements to operational processes and initiatives that will assist the Authority in achieving its policy objectives around carbon reduction.
- 1.5.12 Cabinet is therefore invited to consider and note the contents of the HAMP Annual Information Report 2022, attached as Appendix 1. The report will be used to inform investment choices and address the current challenges of maintaining the highway network. The report is aimed at supporting those investment choices so that any decisions about changes in highway maintenance priorities and resources can be made in an informed manner having regard to the Authority's policy objectives.
- 1.5.13 Following the Cabinet meeting, all ward councillors will be invited to view the HAMP Annual Information Report via the members intranet. The report will also be published on the Authority's website so it can be viewed by the public.

Key Highlights of the HAMP Annual Information Report 2022

- 1.5.14 The following key highlights can be drawn from the annual report:
- The highway network is the most extensive and valuable asset in the Authority's ownership
 - The highway network is a strategically important asset and a well-maintained network is vital to support the local economy. Every day, thousands of residents are reliant on the highway network to travel to work and school. Visitors to the borough also use the network to access the Authority's various tourist attractions which further stimulates the local economy
 - The current total value of highway assets is **£1,840,000,000 (£1.84 billion)**
 - The successful implementation of the HAMP and the adoption of asset management principles by the Authority is demonstrating that, over the years, the condition of the road network is improving. However, the Authority is now at a point where if improvement is to continue on the current trajectory, further investment will be required.

- Due to continued additional Authority investment over the years, the highway network is currently in a serviceable state. However, the constraints around Government funding coupled with concerns around inflation and other recent world events will continue to have a serious impact on the cost of highway maintenance.
- The report suggests that consideration should be given to reviewing investment and maintenance priorities in light of the emerging funding and inflation issues. The report advises that highway officers will commence discussions with the Elected Mayor, the Cabinet Member for the Environment and the Senior Leadership Team around what options might be available for the future management of the network in the most effective way.
- With regard to reactive maintenance and core services, the Technical Services Partnership continues to largely achieve its Key Performance Indicator targets and through its Annual Service Plan is identifying innovative ways of working and service improvements which is evident in the report.
- Continued customer engagement is providing better intelligence concerning resident satisfaction and new initiatives are being developed to better understand customer priorities. Feedback received from customers on their investment priorities will be used to inform forward programmes of improvement work.
- The Authority has successfully delivered all programmed highway asset improvement schemes to date.

1.6 Decision options:

As this report is for Cabinet's information there are no decisions options.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

No alternative options have been outlined as no further direct decisions by Cabinet are sought in relation to the HAMP Annual Information Report 2022.

1.8 Appendices:

Appendix 1: Highway Asset Management Plan 2017 to 2032 Annual Information Report, January 2023

1.9 Contact officers:

Mark Newlands, Highways & Infrastructure Manager, 0191 643 6129
Nick Preston, Capita Operations Manager, 07594 522 116
Amar Hassan, Principal Accountant, 0191 643 5747

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

[North Tyneside Highway Asset Management Plan 2017 - 2032](#)

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

There are no immediate financial and resource implications directly arising from this report. However, there are a number of issues contained in the HAMP Annual Information Report which do themselves have long term financial implications for the Authority. Maintaining the highway in a good condition continues to be challenging at current levels of government funding and consideration now needs to be given to future funding and priorities in order to maintain the network to a high standard. Therefore, investment and prioritisation options will need to be reviewed and considered as part of the medium-term financial planning process.

2.2 Legal

Under section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 the Authority as a Highway Authority has a statutory duty to maintain highway maintainable at public expense, namely, roads, footways and cycle tracks.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

The Annual Information Report (at Section 10) describes the approach to customer engagement.

2.4 Human rights

There are no human rights implications directly arising from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

There are no equality and diversity issues directly arising from this report.

2.6 Risk management

The risks associated with matters in this report are managed in accordance with the risk protocols set out in the Highway Asset Management Plan 2017 to 2032.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no environment and sustainability implications directly arising from this report. However, the information report informs Cabinet of the condition of the built environment with regards to the Authority's highway infrastructure. Wherever possible, the Highways Service seeks to utilise sustainable methods of construction in order to support the Authority's Carbon Net-Zero 2030 Action Plan. This includes the use of recycled materials, low temperature asphalt products and so on. The report also reflects on the improvement to infrastructure that supports active travel and works that support the borough's adaptation to climate change, including drainage works, which improve flood resilience.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive X
- Director of Service X
- Mayor/Cabinet Member X
- Chief Finance Officer X
- Monitoring Officer X
- Assistant Chief Executive X