

Highways Asset Management Policy

2016

DRAFT

Document Control

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Date Authorised	
Signature	

Version	Status (Draft/Approved)	Date	Author/Editor	Details of changes
3	Draft	20/06/16	Ayesha Basit	Formatting
3.1	Draft	23/08/16	Ayesha Basit	Header & Footer changed

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1. Introduction

It is recognised that good transport links are essential for a successful economy and society for Thurrock. Our highway network provides access to jobs, services, schools, aids delivery of goods to the various stores and allows us to make the most of our free time. Our local roads are at the heart of the transport network and have a key role to play in ensuring that transport in Thurrock delivers the services our communities require. A well maintained highway network is imperative for the future economic regeneration and growth of Thurrock.

In order for the transport network to meet these requirements, this policy for Highway Asset Management addresses the Council's key outcomes, and the challenges identified in the Council's Transport Strategy. These challenges are designed to address our economic, social and environmental priorities and are explicitly geared towards growth and regeneration as well as enhancing the local environment, the health and wellbeing of our residents and helping to meet our environmental commitments.

As a Highway Authority, we have a duty to act as stewards and custodians of the highway infrastructure assets. We must ensure they are fit for purpose and maintained with consideration to whole life costs, whilst taking associated risks into account and aligned to our corporate objectives. This policy has been created to give guidance and direction to this process.

2. Objectives

2.1. Value for Money

Thurrock Council intends to take a long term view on investment decisions. This approach will maximise the benefits for future prosperity and quality of place by ensuring the right investment decisions are made in our transport network.

We fully recognise the vital role transport has to play in Thurrock's economic vitality. For the long term health of the local economy growth has to be sustainable. Growth aspirations will rely on effective transport links to enable employees and visitors to access new homes and workplaces.

2.2. Looking Ahead

By ensuring a clear understanding of current and future requirements for the highway infrastructure, we will promote levels of service and maintenance priorities for our local transport network that are consistent with our stakeholders needs.

As well as providing links to workplaces there is a need to transport people to training and education sites where they can learn and up skill to meet the needs of new emerging local industries.

Social exclusion is a significant issue, particularly among the elderly. Providing access for all at an affordable rate to education, healthcare, employment, leisure and social opportunities enables people to make the most of life, supporting stronger communities.

2.3. Investment

Through taking a long term view in making informed maintenance and investment decisions relating to our local transport network, Thurrock Council's investment decisions will be prioritised against safety, serviceability, sustainability and accessibility.

The challenge for transport is to support the improvement of the local area and contribute to the improved health and well-being of local people. Delivering economic growth in parallel with guarding and enhancing the environment is an important part of building a sustainable economy. Thurrock must enhance its natural assets, guard against environmental degradation and reduce its dependence upon fossil fuels in order to make it an attractive place to live, invest, work and visit.

3. Achieving Objectives

We aim to achieve these targets by implementing Asset Management principles to the highway infrastructure assets. Whilst taking whole life cost, risk management, demand analysis, optimisation, performance monitoring and annual reviews into account. We aim to replace critical assets at their economic optimal period in their life cycle, identifying key levels of service, carry out continuous performance reviews and provide feedback to our stakeholders. In addition to this we will actively seek out opportunities to increase our maintenance allocation by encouraging innovative measures to improve the efficiency of our services.

Going forward we will manage and regularly update the Asset Management Policy and the Assets Management Strategy, making sure these documents are aligned to our corporate objectives and current recommendations from: PAS 55 from the Institute of Asset Management, Highway Maintenance Efficiency Programme (HMEP) Infrastructure Asset Management Guidance, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Infrastructure Assets 2013.