

Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Policy

Suffolk County Council has a clearly defined mission which is that “*We will make a positive difference for Suffolk. We are committed to working together, striving to improve and securing the best possible services*”. It recognises the vital role played by Suffolk’s local highway network in that one of its five corporate priorities is to “maintain roads and develop Suffolk’s infrastructure.”

The Council is committed to making best use of its resources and, accordingly, insists that an asset management approach should be taken with regards to highway maintenance activities, having due regards to available revenue budgets, current and projected financial pressures and stakeholder needs. Evidence-based decision making will underpin a preventative maintenance approach that seeks minimised whole life costs.

The Council’s Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Strategy will utilise recognised best practice (currently based on HMEP guidance), setting out how highways asset management will be delivered in Suffolk. It will take account of available funds and resources and explain how these will be utilised to maximise their benefit.

The Council will encourage and assist local communities and interested parties to participate in looking after local assets to improve local amenity. The Council will work to a ‘one team’ philosophy with its service delivery partner to fully explore available expertise and improve the service delivered.

Appropriate publicity will accompany the transition to ensure that all stakeholders understand the opportunities and constraints for the highway service and thus why certain activities occur or do not.

The Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Strategy will contribute to the Council’s aims in many areas:

Raising educational attainment and skills – the adoption of a Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Strategy will better safeguard the highway network and thus support an effective transport system that provides good access to education and commercial training facilities for individuals and businesses;

Sustainable economic growth – the adoption of a Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Strategy will guide the development of the highway network so it remains responsive to the needs of businesses and the local economy by:

- Maintaining and improving the condition of our highway network improving connectivity and accessibility;
- Maintaining core highway corridors;
- Reducing congestion through better planning;
- Improving access to jobs and markets.

Maintaining and developing Suffolk's transport infrastructure – the adoption of a Highway Infrastructure Asset Management framework is firmly addressing this issue. The framework will provide a holistic approach to maintenance and cost minimisation over the whole life of the asset. This will ensure effective and efficient maintenance, improving overall standards whilst minimising resources required, enabling the Council to maximise the available funding from central government for highway maintenance and improvement;

Supporting the most vulnerable people – the approach to Highway Infrastructure asset management will provide optimum levels of highway maintenance with effective co-ordination of works. This will maximise network availability/reliability, minimise road closures and their impact and support forward visibility of planned maintenance work;

Empowering local communities – the approach will be to encourage parish councils and other organisations and volunteers to contribute to highway maintenance through new initiatives to train and empower local groups to improve their environment and local amenities;

Creating the greenest county – a well maintained highway network reduces CO₂ emissions by users and improves air quality for all, as well as ensuring a resilient network in the face of extreme weather;

Health, safety and wellbeing – well maintained roads will actively contribute to reducing accidents, encourage walking and cycling and will support easy access to facilities that improve general wellbeing.