

Local Members Interest
N/A

Prosperous Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 28 February 2022

Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan

Recommendations

I recommend that the Committee:

- a. Considers the content and endorses the Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (HIAMP) for Staffordshire.
- b. That the Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the above in its wider context including for example the current and predicted condition of the asset, financial resources, customer demand and public satisfaction.

Report of Cllr David Williams, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

Summary

What is the Overview and Scrutiny Committee being asked to do and why?

1. Staffordshire's road network provides a fundamental resource, essential both to the economy of the area and for the quality of life for residents and visitors. Its effective management and maintenance have an impact on activity of all kinds, from day-to-day journeys to work, school, shopping or for leisure, through to the needs of the emergency services and the road freight industry. The appearance of our streets helps to shape the character and quality of the local environment in which people live.
2. Staffordshire County Council is responsible for maintaining over 6,200km of highway network and its associated assets. Our roads, footways, streetlights, street furniture, drains, trees, signs, road markings and bridges are just some of the different types of highway assets that are considered in our Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (HIAMP).
3. Like many councils, Staffordshire is facing significant challenges in maintaining a safe and reliable highway network during a time of

diminishing resources, ageing highway assets and increasing public expectation. In recent years the investment in highway Infrastructure and its performance has been increasingly under the spotlight. The current financial challenges and increased public demands and expectations have meant the management of our highway assets has never been more important to ensure we achieve our outcomes.

4. Having a documented approach to highway asset management is good practice. The Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan will ensure that the Council as the Highway Authority continues to meet its statutory duties under the Highways Act 1980, optimise the allocation of our resources and secures the maximum available funding from central government.
5. Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider and endorse the Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan; and the comments of the Committee will be reported to the Cabinet at their meeting on the 16th March 2022, for them to take into account in their consideration of this matter.

Report

Background

What is a HIAMP?

6. The Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Plan is the link between our strategic objectives and our operational activities. The HIAMP sets out in detail how the authority manages each of our highway assets to meet strategic goals in the most effective manner having regard to statutory requirements, customer expectations and funding constraints.
7. The HIAMP supports delivery of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and also ensures we are able to maximise DfT Incentive Fund resource, make the case for additional funding, and optimise our ability to defend claims. The format and content is based on national guidance, linking optimum allocation and resources to achieve the council's strategic ambitions.
8. For a connected Staffordshire, the HIAMP will help all those involved in delivering highway services, including members, senior decision makers, asset managers, service providers and practitioners, to embed asset management principles into the management of the asset.

The HIAMP for Staffordshire

9. The current HIAMP was approved by Cabinet in March 2019. Despite making significant progress in recent years, we, like other highways authorities, are in an increasingly challenging environment, with deteriorating assets, increasing demand, uncertainty around future funding and, more recently, facing the impacts of the global pandemic. It is therefore timely to develop a new single and updated HIAMP document, to identify a clear investment strategy and action plan for the future that is fit for purpose and recognises the challenges and opportunities ahead.
10. The new document is a forward-looking document covering the next three years which sets out:
- a. how highways asset management, as a key enabling service, contributes to achieving strategic outcomes and delivering Staffordshire Council's strategic plan
 - b. describes how we go about asset management and risk-based decision-making
 - c. explains what we know about the condition of our assets both now and going forward based on various investment levels
 - d. sets out our service levels in terms of what we do and what we do not, alongside an assessment of associated risks
 - e. outlines our progress in implementing the recommendations contained in Well Managed Highway Infrastructure Code of Practice which provides guidance to councils regarding the management and maintenance of local roads.

Link to Strategic Plan

11. Asset management supports making the case for funding, for better communication with stakeholders, and facilitates a greater understanding of the contribution highway infrastructure assets make to economic growth, climate change and social well-being of local communities, in line with the outcomes and priorities set out in the Council Strategic Plan.

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity

None

Community Impact

12. The HIAMP lays out SCC's approach to maintaining highway assets strategically and efficiently which supports communities to feel safer, happier and more supported.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan

Appendix 2 – Management of Highway Trees

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