

**Wards Affected:**

All Wards

**ITEM 14****CABINET****9 NOVEMBER 2015****HIGHWAYS ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Responsible Cabinet Member: Councillor Legg, Cabinet member for Public Realm

Report Sponsor: Mike Hainge - Service Director, Public Realm Service Group

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**Executive Summary:**

The Highway infrastructure is the most valuable asset under the Councils control. The Highway infrastructure is key to the achieve the future vision of Milton Keynes. The Highways Asset Management Strategy details how we will deliver the Highways Asset Management Policy and in doing so the Council Plan Vision and Local Transport Plan.

The Highways Asset Management Strategy (HAMS) will govern how Highways Asset Management will be delivered in Milton Keynes. This strategy will take into account financial pressures and outline how the available resources will be utilised/prioritised in order to maximise the benefits and minimise whole life costs.

This is a systematic and strategic approach that will enable us to make decisions over what services we want to provide and what we can achieve within our financial resources. It enables us to identify the best allocation of our resources for the management, operation, preservation and enhancement of the highway infrastructure to meet the needs of current and future demands.

**1. Recommendation(s)**

1.1 That the Highways Asset Management strategy be approved.

**2. Issues**

2.1 The Council's largest asset in value terms is contained in the highways infrastructure which consists of: - 56,000 street lighting columns:

14,000 illuminated signs and electrical units

1170 km carriageway

1800 km footways

791 bridges

300 km redways

115 structures (mainly retaining walls)

As well as this there are significant numbers of street nameplates; un-illuminated traffic signs, traffic signal junctions, bus shelters and highways drainage systems. Also the asset will continue to grow in size year on year with the planned population growth for the borough to 300,000 people between now and 2026.

A highway must be available in perpetuity, so the council as the highway authority cannot allow the network to deteriorate to point where it becomes unsafe to use.

Like all assets that are subject to constant use by traffic of varying intensity from a young child pedestrian through to an abnormal load the asset suffers from wear and tear. It is also constantly exposed to the weather so suffers from UV degradation, rain water attack, and corrosion as a result of ground conditions and the use of rock salt. All of these things mean that the highway network needs constant attention to maintain it in a satisfactory condition for its use by residents to safely pass and repass along it. Periodically more sustained attention is required than simply a 'patch up' and major interventions are either required to extend the life of the asset through preventative maintenance such as surface dressing (tar and chip) or major reconstruction.

The current Transport Asset Management Strategy is no longer valid. The focus from the Department for Transport has dramatically changed since it was produced. The focus is now on whole asset costs and how best to manage this.

The self-assessment questionnaire that we are required to submit in order to receive any funding is now banded from Central Government. In order to still receive 100% of what we are entitled to we need to evidence that we are looking at life cycle management and ensure Asset management is the key focus in our programme selection and infrastructure management.

Whilst the current Highways Contract is delivering best value, high performance and significant efficiencies for Milton Keynes the Highways Asset Management Strategy will allow us to evidence this and become eligible for future funding.

### 3. **Options**

- (a) Do not approve the Highways Asset Management Strategy- this will result in a significant funding loss. As the money received from Government is based on having an Asset Management Strategy and a life cycle management approach. This would impact the prioritisation of future works.
- (b) Approve the Highways Asset Management Strategy

### 4. **Implications**

#### 4.1 Policy

This strategy will support the Highways Asset Management Policy and has direct links in to the Council corporate Plan and the Local Transport Plan for Milton Keynes. The Local Transport Plan builds upon the boroughs Sustainable Community Strategy.

#### 4.2 Resources and Risk

There is a need to ensure that our IT systems are upgraded in a timely manner so we stay compliant financially, as well as ensuring all Asset data can be held.

The 25 year investment programme is directly linked to the Highways Asset Management strategy. By approving this strategy it ensures that we have a clear comprehensive asset management process, which will identify future schemes and programmes of work which will be published on the internet.

Y	Capital	Y	Revenue	N	Accommodation
Y	IT	Y	Medium Term Plan	Y	Asset Management

#### 4.3 Carbon and Energy Management

With the implementation of this Strategy it means that we will manage the whole life cost of the asset rather than purely be responsive. This will mean fewer visits to sites and road closures for repairs. This allows Milton Keynes to improve the asset before it becomes significantly defective. The better the road surface the less carbon emissions are emitted. This also supports our investment plan for all of our illuminated assets, which will have a significant energy reduction, therefore saving on revenue spend on energy.

#### 4.4 Legal

Milton Keynes Council as the Highways Authority has a statutory duty under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980, to maintain adopted highways in a safe condition for all users.

#### 4.5 Other Implications

One of the objectives of the Highways Asset Management Strategy (HAMS) is to consider sustainability in the context of minimising the whole life costs of the assets and also to maximise the value of the asset to the environment and community.

N	Equalities/Diversity	Y	Sustainability	N	Human Rights
N	E-Government	N	Stakeholders	N	Crime and Disorder

Background Papers: Highways Infrastructure Asset Management- HMEP

Annex: Highways Asset Management Strategy