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Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Policy

December 2024



Purpose

The purpose of the Highways Asset Management Policy is to support the Council's priorities and outcomes through the management of its physical highway assets. This policy defines the statements for the management of all the West Sussex County Council highway assets.

Introduction

The Council's highway network plays a strategic role in connecting people and places across the county. It supports the wellbeing of our residents, it enables our communities to thrive, and provides our residents with access to jobs, to learning and to business opportunities.



The highway network has a variety of assets with over 4000 km of carriageways, 880 highway structures, 131,000 gullies, 69,000 streetlights and over 75,000 signs and bollards. The highway network assets are ever changing in condition and intervention to manage this is critical through good practices and processes. To replace all the carriageways within West Sussex would cost in the region of £5.5bn and £695m for the footways.

Therefore, to make the most of these assets and deliver a good service for our customers and stakeholders, we make utilise data and information to ensure that we intervene at the right time with the right treatment.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees and suppliers of West Sussex County Council associated with the delivery of the highway service, and all physical highway assets under their control.

Benefits of Asset Management

The benefits of adopting good Asset Management includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Informed investment decision making for the management of the assets, balancing cost, risks and performance, improving financial performance and service delivery.
- Gives confidence to our communities through improved customer satisfaction, engagement and visibility.
- Allows the council to meet legal and statutory obligations and deliver organisational objectives.



Asset Management Policy

West Sussex County Council recognises that an Asset Management approach supports the achievement of priorities set in *Our Council Plan 2021-2025*, the *Climate Change Strategy* and the *West Sussex Transport Plan*.



The role of West Sussex’s highway infrastructure assets fundamentally underpins the ability of the Council to meet its vision and strategic aims set out in these plans. The highways network and associated assets supports many of the services provided by the Council and access for its residents, customers and stakeholders. This policy has a positive contribution to all the strategic aims however, there are a number where the impact is more significant as detailed below. The council will manage its highway infrastructure assets in accordance with the principles of this policy to deliver these priorities and agreed levels of service.

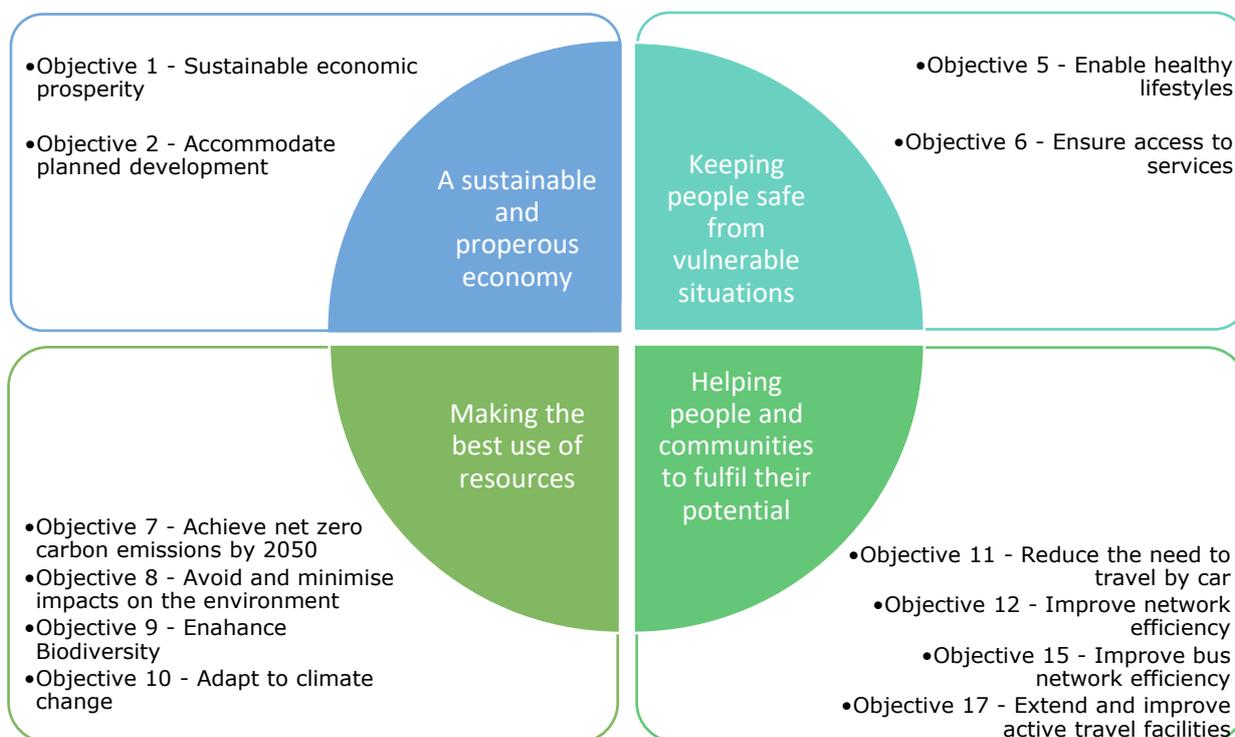


Figure 1 – WSCC Council Plan priorities and WSCC LTP Objectives

Asset Management Policy Statements

The following principles have been adopted to support the delivery of this Policy. The asset management principles have been linked to the key priorities in the West Sussex Plan, however many of these principles apply across multiple objectives.



Helping people and communities to fulfil their potential.

- We will engage with our community and stakeholders to ensure we are managing our assets to deliver a level of service that meets the needs of the network through active communication whilst understanding their expectations.



Making best use of resources.

- We will be prudent and utilise all resources efficiently within the available budgets.
- We will ensure our asset information is accurate, current and allows informed whole of life decision making. We are focused on making the right intervention at the right time.
- We recognise the implications of changes in demand and actively manage demands where practical.
- We will develop and implement a process for the evaluation and prioritisation of schemes, providing line of sight from organisational objectives to our activities.
- We will allocate resources appropriately, ensuring asset management practices can be undertaken, allowing timely interventions to our assets so lifecycle costs are optimised.
- We will consider whole of life costs when initiating any significant new schemes or renewals.
- We invest in our people, enabling training and development of so they have the capability to deliver their roles and support our asset management approach.
- We will monitor, measure and report on our assets and asset management performance, and identify areas for improvement, fostering a culture of continuous improvement.



Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations.

- We will identify risks associated with delivery of the agreed levels of service, manage them appropriately and consider risks, alongside performance and cost, in our investment decision making.
- We understand our statutory obligations and ensure that the safety of our community is key in decision making.
- We will ensure that mobility and accessibility needs are inherent in our decision-making processes.
- We will support the growth in active travel enabling choice, and enhancing the health and wellbeing of our community and stakeholders



A sustainable and prosperous economy.

- We will continue to invest in and maintain our roads to enable a safe and effective transport option that offers choice, is convenient to use, enhances the environment and enables economic growth.



Protecting the Environment

- We consider the environment and sustainability in our decision making to enable the objectives of the West Sussex Transport Plan, Climate Change Strategy and Delivery Plan and Carbon Management Plan to be delivered.

Context

This policy sits at governance level and provides strategic direction to Council officers on how asset management is to be delivered. The policy is informed by the Council's various strategic plans, and provides direction to the Asset Management Strategy, Asset Management Plan and other operational plans.

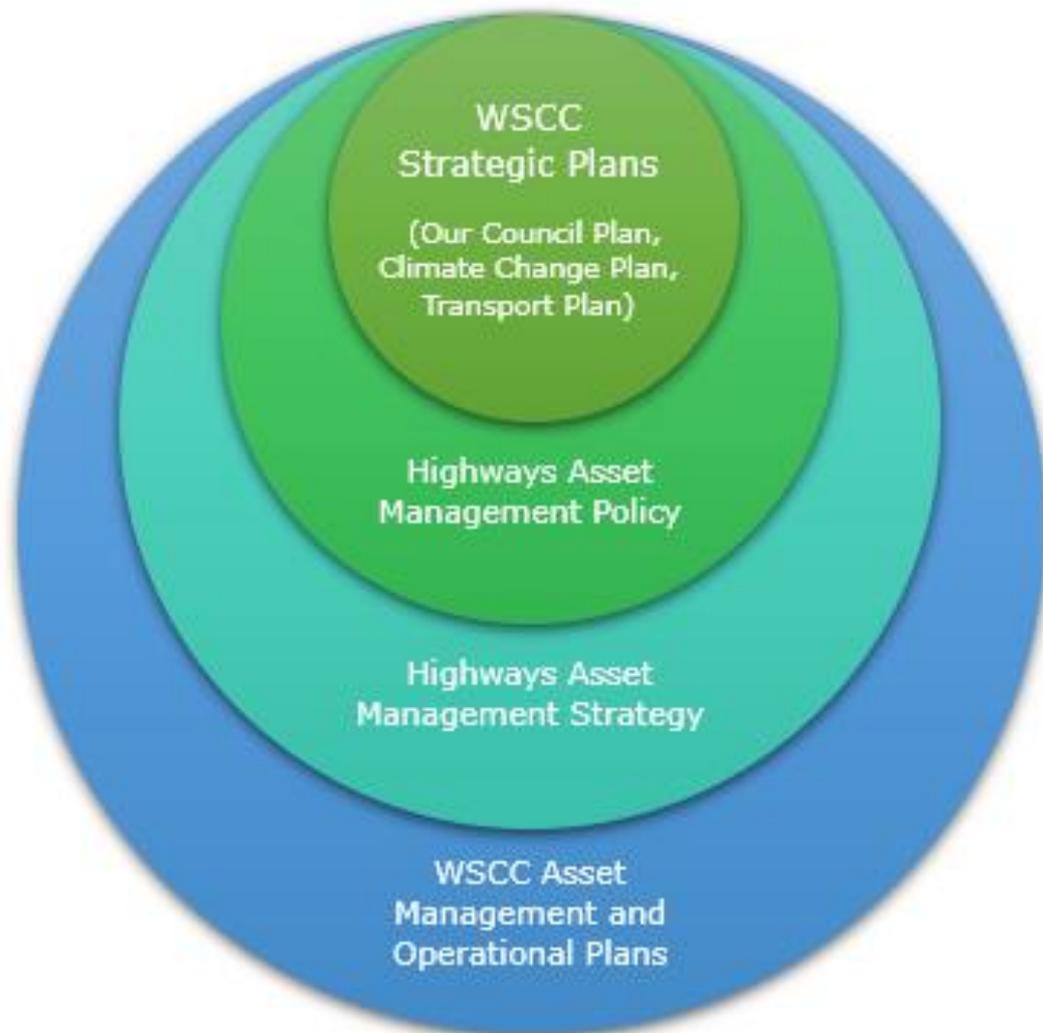


Figure 2 – WSCC Highways Service Document Hierarchy

Review and Evaluation

This policy will be evaluated and reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness and relevance in meeting the objectives of highways asset management. Changes to Councils strategic objectives, changes in legislation, technological advancements and emerging best practices will be continually reviewed throughout the lifecycle of the Asset Management Policy and Strategy.

Leadership Commitment

The Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Members and the Corporate Leadership Team recognise the benefits of Asset Management in delivering our highways services to our community. Through this policy, we are building a strong culture of asset management across council. We recognise that ownership at all levels of Council is key to success and support the implementation of this policy.

Related Corporate Documents

This Asset Management Policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Our Council Plan 2021-2025
- West Sussex Climate Change Strategy
- The West Sussex Transport Plan.
- West Sussex Council Network Management Plan
- West Sussex Council Highways Asset Management Strategy