

Transport Asset Management Strategy

Newcastle City Council

2024/25 – 2039/40

April 2024



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Document Information

Title	Transport Asset Management Plan
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Description	This document details all aspects of the City Councils Transport Asset Management Plan and associated practices.

Document History

Version	Status	Date	Author (s)	Changes from Previous Version
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1.1	Revised after review	20/03/24	Dave McCourt Michael Richards	Content changes following cabinet meeting.
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Document Distribution

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Introduction

Asset management is widely accepted by central and local government to deliver a more efficient and effective approach to the management of highway infrastructure assets through long term planning, ensuring that standards are defined and achievable for available budgets.

The demand for a more efficient approach to the management of highway infrastructure assets has been identified in both central and local government.

Therefore, Newcastle City Council have developed our approach to asset management in highways in recent years, including introducing measures to implement the Well-managed Highway Infrastructure, A code of practice.

Despite making substantial progress in recent years, we recognise we are in an increasingly challenging environment, with deteriorating assets, increasing traffic volumes, uncertainty around future funding and, more recently, coronavirus impacts.

We have therefore developed a new Transport Asset Management Plan covering the next fifteen years (2024 – 2039).

Our transport asset management plan is made up of the following documents:

- **Transport Asset Management strategy (this document)**
The Transport Asset Management Strategy sets out how we will deliver effective maintenance of the highway network in the most efficient way in order to optimise the way funding and resources are allocated.
- **Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP)**
The Highway Asset Management Plan details how we hope to achieve the targets set out in our Transport asset management strategy
- **Resilient Network Strategy**
The Resilient network strategy details how we have defined a minimum resilient network which will be prioritised during periods of severe weather or other emergency situations.

- **Winter Services Policy**

The winter services Policy details how our resources are allocated during the winter period and what level of service residents can expect.

- **Skidding policy**

The Skidding Resistance Policy details how we undertake and report network SCRIM skidding resistance surveys across the city in accordance with DfT guidance and identify and deliver intervention maintenance measures in accordance with those set out in the Highway Asset Management Plan Operations Manual.

- **Inspection Policy**

The inspection policy details our highway inspection procedure and gives details of the type of inspections, frequency of inspections and network hierarchy.

Newcastle City council has a vision for the city to be a great place to live, work and visit. We are ambitious for our residents and the outcomes they deserve.

The Council Plan is a high-level strategic document that provides a framework for council staff, residents and partners to better understand the role of our organisation and how we will deliver improved outcomes for our city.

Our overarching priorities are;

INCLUSIVE ECONOMY - We will be a city where opportunity flows to all, and everyone in our city can contribute and benefit from Newcastle's success.

ANTI POVERTY - We will be a fair and inclusive city where everyone is free to live healthy, happy lives.

NET ZERO - We will be a city of the future, providing high- quality, sustainable housing and growing an inclusive, low-carbon economy.

We are working to create a fairer, more inclusive city with an economy that works for everyone. This means we are focused on tackling structural constraints to unlock investment, jobs, innovation, and social outcomes which are crucial to long-term prosperity

Our Council Plan recognises that we have a statutory duty to maintain the highway and we must continue to deliver this going forward. It also details that we are committed to driving transformational change to meet the needs of our city and maintain the financial sustainability of vital local services.

Our Transport Asset Management Plan will align with the council's other plans and objectives to ensure a collaborative approach to overall asset management is achieved.

Background

Our highway network enables safe and reliable journeys to be made across the city of Newcastle, and in doing so supports social wellbeing and economic growth of the city and surrounding region.

The highway network is also essential for emergency services to execute their work effectively which includes policing, healthcare, fire, and emergency response provision.

Furthermore, the highway network is critical to the NHS emergency medical response, and enables patients, medical supplies and equipment to be transported quickly and safely. These services are a key part of a functioning society and cannot exist without well-maintained and well-managed highway assets.

Newcastle City council is committed to ensuring our highway network is fit for purpose, not only in order to meet the present needs of our residents, businesses, visitors and communities, but also taking into account future growth and climate change, therefore planning ahead for the needs of future generations.

Despite significant investment over the years, our highway assets are continuing to deteriorate. An ever-increasing number of repairs, renewals and improvements are required and the city-wide maintenance backlog for our roads alone is estimated to be £185 Million.

Legal Obligations

Local authorities have legal obligations to keep public highways safe for the passage of the travelling public.

The statutory duties for local authorities are outlined in several pieces of legislation including:

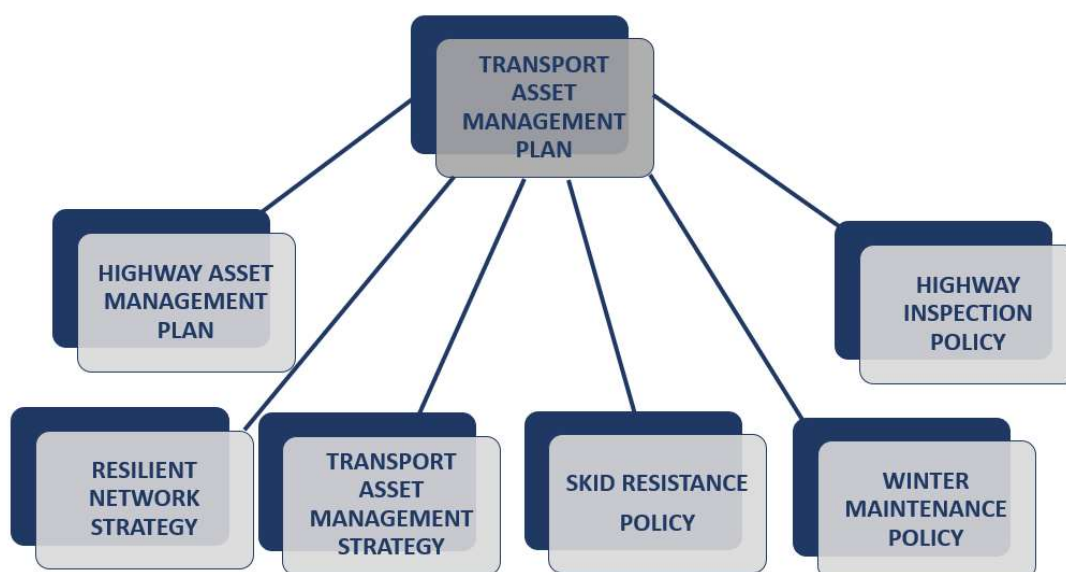
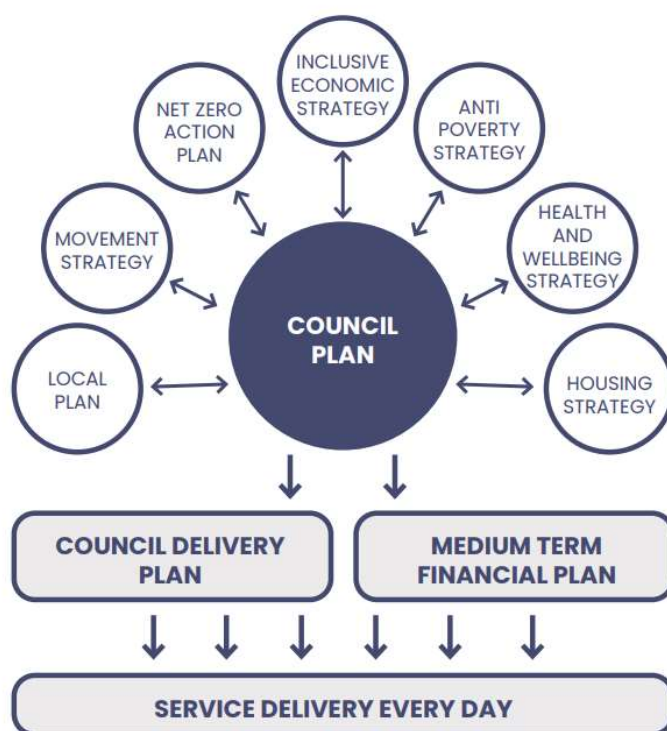
- **The Highways Act 1980** – Section 41 gives us a statutory duty to maintain highways, maintainable at public expense. The act outlines our duty of care to maintain the highway in a safe condition and protect the rights of the travelling public to use the highway.
- **The Traffic Management Act 2004** – This conveys a network management duty whereby we are required to facilitate and secure the efficient movement of traffic on the highway network.
- **The New Roads & Street Works Act 1991** – This gives us a statutory duty, which requires us to co-ordinate road works and to protect and make best use of the existing network.
- **The Road Traffic Act 1991** – This describes our statutory responsibility to promote road safety and take measures to prevent collisions.
- **Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016** – This prescribes the design and conditions of use of traffic signs on or near roads in England, Scotland and Wales. All of our signs and road markings are designed and installed in line with this document.
- **The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015** – This details our duties to ensure that the work we do is designed and built competently and that risks to the work force and road users are properly considered and effectively managed throughout the lifecycle of a highway asset. These regulations places controls on how and when works are carried out.
- **The Equality Act 2010** – This details a public equality duty which requires us to have due regard for advancing equality by removing or minimising disadvantage, encouraging participation and taking steps to meet the needs of all people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- **Town and Country Planning Act 1990** – This provides planning protection to trees in conservation areas or protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).

- **The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981** – This details the environmental legislation that we need to follow to ensure that we minimise our impact on local biodiversity whilst carrying out highway asset maintenance. Public Nuisance – an action without lawful cause or excuse which causes anger, injures health or damages property. A systematic, asset management and risk-based approach contributes to our ability to meet our legal obligations and to deliver and develop our services.

Purpose of the TAMP Strategy

The purpose of this strategy is to detail how Newcastle City Council maintain our highway assets and how funding will be allocated in order to keep our assets in a safe and serviceable condition for residents and visitors to use.

Our Transport asset management plan will align with the city councils' other plans as shown below.



Our Transport asset management plan will ensure that our assets are managed and maintained the most efficient manor, giving value for money and ensuring stakeholder requirements are fulfilled.

This will be achieved by ensuring that;

1. Assets continue to deliver a service to the community at an agreed level of service.
2. There is clear direction for staff to make informed decisions.
3. Legislative requirements are satisfied, this includes legal requirements and recommendations outlined in the well managed highways infrastructure.
4. Exposure to risk is limited to acceptable levels.
5. Asset purchases or construction are only approved after whole of life costs and benefits are assessed.
6. To give clear allocations of responsibilities for the management of each class of asset.

Scope of our Transport Asset Management Plan

Newcastle City council's Transport Asset management plan details how council owned asset are maintained over the next fifteen-year period.

Assets covers by this plan are:

- Carriageways
- Footways
- Bridges and Structures
- Highway drainage
- Traffic Signals
- Street Furniture

- Road markings
- Cycle Paths
- Street lighting

Newcastle have adopted a risk-based approach as part of our Transport Asset management plan based on recommendations detailed in the Well Managed Highways Infrastructure as detailed earlier in this document.

Our Transport Asset Management Plan sets out how we will achieve the following:

- Predicted future changes in demand.
- Levels of service required.
- The investment required in the maintenance, renewal and replacement of assets required to meet the levels of service.
- Methods of performance monitoring and appraisal.
- Financial projections
- Life Cycle Plans
- The risks associated with the plan.
- Contribute to the councils Net Zero target and have a key focus on Climate change.

Funding

The Department for Transport (DfT) is committed to allocating this funding to local highways authorities so they can most effectively spend this funding on maintaining and improving their respective network, based upon their local knowledge, circumstances and priorities.

DfT strongly advocates a risk-based whole lifecycle asset management approach to local authority highways maintenance programmes. This considers all parts of the highway network, such as bridges, cycleways and lighting columns – and not just the fixing of potholes.

It is up to the respective highway authority how best to spend this funding to fulfil their statutory duty under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980

In recent years, our approach to delivering highway maintenance has evolved dramatically as we have sought innovation and efficiency, undertaken intelligent commissioning and procurement exercises and built productive and positive working relationships with partner organisations.

It is recognised by national commentators that in the past few decades government funding for local highway maintenance has been insufficient. This has in turn led to the rate at which local roads, footways and other highway assets deteriorate exceeding the rate of investment. This has led to a decline in road condition and has meant that funding allocation has been undertaken using a risk based approach onto the areas in the worst condition to try and manage deterioration as effectively as possible.

Performance measurement

Across the directorate there are a range of KPI's and performance measurements which are particular to each section and asset type. One of the most significant measures of success for a lot of highway assets is feedback from the general public and public perception. A performance framework will be developed which will oversee these KPI's and measures.

We use performance data to determine whether assets are doing what we need them to do to keep to the highway safe, reliable, and meet the needs of our residents, businesses, visitors, and local communities.

The data we use is condition surveys, routine inspections and testing, customer enquiries, third party claims, crash records, traffic flows and energy bills.

This data helps us to understand where we need to carry out maintenance activities, where our assets are going to need replacing now or in the future and where we need to think about changing, adding or removing assets. It also helps us to understand the cost of replacing an asset with its modern equivalent, less deductions for all physical deteriorations.

An Annual Status Report will be produced at the end of each financial year. This report will include updated figures of inventory, works undertaken and details of budget allocation.

End of Report