

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Highway Asset Management Strategy

1. Introduction

The Council is responsible for maintaining highway assets within the Rotherham Metropolitan Borough boundary, except for those maintained by the National Highways. The highway network is the most valuable community asset for which we are responsible, it is therefore essential that it is well managed and maintained.

It is essential that the management of such a valuable asset is carried out in a systematic way, which takes a long-term view of our highway assets, our corporate objectives, maintenance requirements, customer expectations, service risks and funding availability.

The UK Government recognises that efficiencies can be made by employing asset management techniques and by applying the following principles:

- A strategic approach over the long term to manage the highway network
- Meeting stakeholders' needs
- A systematic approach
- Optimal allocation of resources
- Managing expenditure over the asset lifecycle
- Meeting performance requirements in the most efficient way
- Managing Risk
- Operational Delivery

By adopting these principles, we are able to set long term objectives to manage and maintain our highway assets; we will:

- Collect detailed asset information to make informed decisions for works prioritisation
- Develop and implement long term maintenance works programmes
- Provide levels of service that support corporate priorities and customer expectations
- Prioritise roads that would benefit from the use of cost-effective treatments (such as surface dressing, or micro asphalt) to prolong the life of our carriageway assets
- Where feasible carry out permanent first-time repairs to potholes
- Installation of energy efficient Street Lighting lanterns taking into consideration whole life costs

By achieving the above objectives will enable service improvements outcomes for the highway network:

- Provide a safe highway network for users
- Improved customer satisfaction
- Maximise funding to increase the length of network repaired
- Reduced number of properties that are at risk of flooding
- Delivered significant energy savings through the use of advanced technology

2. Highway Asset Management Strategy

The purpose of the Asset Management Strategy is to outline how the service will approach the task of managing our most valuable and important infrastructure.

This strategy should be read in conjunction with the council's Highway Asset Management Policy and further detail can be found in our Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP). The HAMP is our detailed working document containing asset data management, lifecycle plans, performance information, whole life costing principals, stakeholder expectations, statutory requirements and funding availability.

Strategic Framework

This strategic document together with the Highway Asset Management Policy sits within a wider framework and forms a link between our Corporate Objectives, Directorate Priorities and Operational Plans.

The benefits of such an approach are:

- A clear methodology for linking strategic objectives and priorities with levels of service
- A clear understanding of the extent and condition of the infrastructure
- A better ability to predict the levels of funding required to deliver desired levels of service and the potential impact of funding constraints
- A better understanding of risk and how it can be mitigated
- A consistency of approach which assists in managing the expectations and experience of service users



The Asset Management Policy, Strategy and HAMP are key documents relating to the council's highway assets are aligned to the council's objectives, the goals and objectives of the Local Transport Plan and other national and local requirements and guidance.

3. Asset Management Approach

3.1 Data Management and Information Systems

Asset inventory information is the foundation on which asset management processes are built. Accuracy and completeness of inventory and condition data, and the management of associated systems is essential. The upkeep of relevant, up to date information is the key to effective management of the network; for a data management system to be effective it is essential that priority is given to its development, operation and upkeep.

The Council has developed detailed inventory data for the following major asset types:

Asset Type	Information System
Highway Network	Symology Insight / (Aurora 2025) - United Kingdom Pavement Management System (UKPMS)
Drainage	MapInfo Database / Symology Insight / (Aurora 2025)
Street lighting	Deadsure
Structures	Bridge station Potential AMEX
Traffic Systems	Traffic Systems spreadsheet

Asset data is collected in-house by trained staff with the appropriate system being regularly updated. Continuous condition appraisal is carried out by those responsible for the individual asset groups.

The size and value of our major highway assets are as follows;

Asset Type	Quantity	Estimated Gross Replacement Cost (£)	Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC) (£)
Carriageways	1,191 km	£1,415bn	£1,295bn
Footways	1,663 km	£238m	£134m
Drainage	46,942 chambers, gullies etc. and 36 km of drainage pipes/chambers	Included in carriageway costs	Included in carriageway costs
Street Lighting/Furniture	36,645 streetlights columns	£59m	£41m
Structures	204 structures consisting of bridges, culverts and underpasses	£244m (2020 figures)	£159m (2025 figures)
Traffic Signals	132 traffic signalised junctions and pedestrian crossing	£21m	£9m
	Total Cost	£1.977bn	£1.638bn

Good asset information also supports the calculations required for Whole of Government Accounting (WGA) which has been introduced for highways local government accounting. There is a phased introduction of WGA moving away from the historical costing method. The figures required are the Gross Replacement Cost (GRC), which represents the value of replacing assets as new and the Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC) which represents the value of replacing assets in the current state of repair or age. For this to be achieved there is a clear need for accurate and detailed inventory information and performance data. This requirement supports asset management by providing an improved understanding of network deterioration and combining that with the levels of service to be achieved.

Rotherham embraces this approach and has developed processes for collating the data needed to meet the WGA requirements, whilst developing good asset management practices.

3.2 Performance Management

Performance management is coordinated by the Council's Performance and Intelligence Team and key performance indicators are reviewed quarterly and reports submitted to the senior management team. RMBC's performance management framework supports the asset management strategy by having a systematic approach to measuring performance.

The framework demonstrates how performance is managed to deliver the corporate vision to ensure roads are safe and well maintained.

We also recognise the importance of maintaining our strategic routes to avoid a negative impact on Rotherham's economy.

An example of this is the management of the principle and non-principal road networks. Performance data identified that these roads were not at a national average condition and also the funding requirement to achieve this standard. Subsequently, investment programmes have been put in place and the corporate priority has been achieved for these roads.

Performance indicators have been reviewed by Government and National Indicators have been replaced with alternative reporting requirements. These new requirements have been collated in a Government document entitled, The Single List of Central Government Data Requirements from Local Government and are referred to as the 'Single Data List' - Appendix A. These include road condition data, road lengths, winter stock holdings and a series of flood risk data requirements.

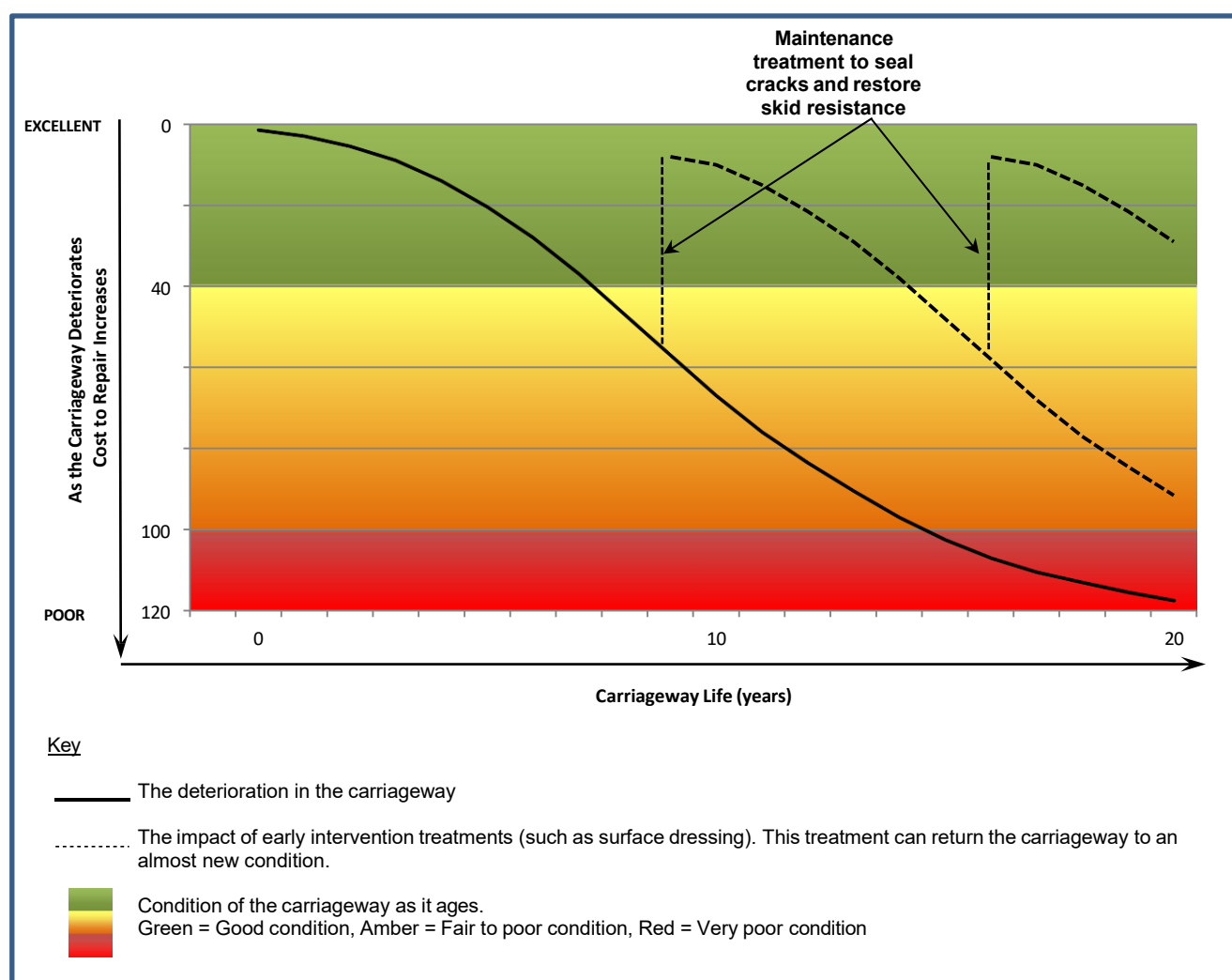
3.3 Asset Lifecycle Planning

Lifecycle planning is a technique which enables us to monitor and anticipate the future condition of assets and to know when we need to maintain or replace it. Through detailed knowledge of the size, safety, condition and value of our highway's asset enables us to take into consideration whole life costs when maintaining our assets.

Lifecycle planning tools have been developed which enable the development of work programmes which make best use of the available funding in meeting long-term objectives, mitigating the risk of failure by allocating funds to where they will be most beneficial.

It must be noted that this type of allocation moves away from a more traditional "worst first" approach and targets work programmes at those parts of the infrastructure which present the greatest risk and where timely treatment can achieve the most beneficial whole of life cost. This approach was advocated the Audit Commission, Going the Distance Report 2011. This is illustrated in the diagram below.

Carriageway Lifecycle Journey



The Council also uses lifecycle planning to develop investment strategies to deliver an agreed level of performance or, where funding becomes constrained, a prediction of the effect of particular funding scenarios on the levels of service that can be delivered.

By using this approach enables services to be delivered as effectively as possible, allows a clear and logical allocation of resources to those areas which will contribute most to the overall objectives and priorities of the Council and allow an assessment to be made of the residual risk.

3.4 Risk Management

Effective Risk Management is essential for any organisation and its partners to achieve strategic objectives and improve outcomes for local people. Good Risk Management looks at and manages both positive and negative aspects of risk. It is not about being risk averse but is the process whereby the Council methodically addresses the risks attaching to its activities with the aim of achieving sustained benefit within each activity and across the portfolio of all activities.

In response to the Corporate Governance Report published in February 2015 and the resultant Improvement Plan, the Rotherham Risk Management framework and responsibilities was completely renewed.

As part of the work required to meet these objectives a revised Risk Management Policy and Strategy was drafted, reflecting sector good practice and including the roles and responsibilities of members and employees.

Allied to this is a rigorous, ongoing development and training programme of middle to senior managers in risk approaches to management and decision-making. It is now also a corporate requirement that risk is discussed in MYAP's and 1:1 meetings, to ensure that every employee is aware of risk and has input to the risk identification process, with the aim being to fully integrate Risk Management into our culture, our everyday business operations and those of our contractors and partners.

By managing threats effectively, we are in a stronger position to deliver the Council's objectives. It is acknowledged that risk is a feature of all business activity, including highway asset management, and is a particular attribute of the more creative of its strategic developments. The Council accepts the need to take proportionate risk to achieve its strategic obligations but expects that these are appropriately identified and managed. By managing these opportunities in a structured process, the Council is in a better position to provide improved services and better value for money.

In keeping with the Council's approach and to ensure good management and maintenance of the council's highway network, we aim to: -

1. Identify, manage and act on opportunities as well as risks to enable the Council to achieve its objectives and include Risk Management into our culture and day to day working practices.
2. Manage risks in accordance with best practices and comply with statutory requirements.
3. Anticipate and respond to changing social, environmental and legislative requirements.
4. Maintain awareness of the need for Risk Management to those involved in developing highway asset management policies and service plans and in delivering those services.
5. Demonstrate the benefits of effective Risk Management by:
 - Cohesive leadership and improved management controls.
 - Improved resource management – people, time, and assets.
 - Improved efficiency and effectiveness in service and project delivery.
 - Better protection of employees, residents and others from harm.
 - Reduction in likelihood/impact of losses; and lower insurance premiums.
 - Improved reputation for the Council.

3.5 Decision Making Process and Works Programmes

Each of our major asset groups has a detailed decision-making process which takes into consideration.

- Asset condition

- Safety
- Whole life costs
- Stakeholder Interest
- Support Corporate Objectives
- Coordination

By the use of robust evidence-based decision-making processes we are able to optimise assets by the appropriate prioritisation of work within the available funding.

One significant element of the decision-making prioritisation process is the potential for schemes to be coordinated across asset groups, for example, resurfacing a road in conjunction with a road safety scheme. Such alignment of schemes within the works programmes is key to optimising available funding across Services.

To facilitate this Highway Asset Managers, meet regularly to review works programmes for each of the asset groups. Locations that appear near to the top of more than one of the priority lists are to be considered as to whether a joined-up scheme may be feasible.

Forward Works Programmes have also been developed for the next three years. They clearly illustrate what, where and when schemes are to be undertaken. This longer-term approach supports coordination of works and our longer-term financial planning.

An annual report is produced for Cabinet Member consideration for the forthcoming major highway schemes.

4. Review Process

The strategy will be reviewed annually taking into consideration Corporate Priorities, Government legislation and funding. Associated amendments and updates will then be carried out to the framework documents, such as the Highway Asset Management Plan.

5. Communicating the Strategy

This strategy is published on the Councils website (www.Rotherham.gov.uk) along with the associated Highways Asset Management Policy and Plan.

The Rotherham Highways Communication Strategy details the method of informing and notifying stakeholders of our proposed highway asset maintenance.

<https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/transport-streets/rotherham-highways-communications-strategy/5>

Date Revised	Date Approved	Summary of Changes	Author
26/08/2022		Annual Review.	Andy Saxton
15/11/2023		Annual Review	Andy Saxton
28/11/2024		Annual Review	Andy Saxton
November 2025		Annual Review	Andy Saxton