

Highway Network Management Plan 2008 to 2017

PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITY: HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

CABINET

29 MAY 2008

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To adopt the Highways Network Management Plan 2008 to 2017 as Council policy.

Key Decision

This is a Key Decision because it is likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in Herefordshire in an area comprising one or more wards. It was included in the Forward Plan.

Recommendation(s)

THAT the Highway Network Management Plan be adopted as Council policy.

Reasons

In adopting the Highway Network Management Plan, Herefordshire Council will be better able to demonstrate and evidence that the Network Management Duty, imposed by the Traffic Management Act 2004 is being fulfilled as part of the Council's overall transport strategy.

Considerations

1. The Traffic Management Act 2004 was introduced to augment existing powers under which local authorities maintain, improve and manage the highway network. It is intended to provide the basis for better conditions for all road users through proactive management and control of the road network.
2. The Act imposes a major new duty on Local Authorities, the Network Management Duty. This Duty requires that, so far as it is reasonably practical, all traffic on the authority's road network and neighbouring networks should be kept moving.
3. The Traffic Management Act enables intervention by the Secretary of State should the authority be seen to be failing to meet its Network Management Duty. The Traffic Management (Guidance on Intervention Criteria) (England) Order

2007 sets out the criteria for deciding whether to issue an intervention notice or make an intervention order.

4. To comply with the Network Management Duty and avoid intervention the Traffic Authority has a duty to; identify congestion and disruption to traffic flow, monitor the effectiveness of actions and assess their performance in managing the network.
5. In order to be able to demonstrate and evidence that this new duty is being fulfilled, it is recommended that a Highway Network Management Plan is adopted setting out the approach to be taken in the context of the Council's overall transport strategy.
6. The network management operations in Herefordshire have been reviewed in light of the Traffic Management Act. The Highway Network Management Plan has been developed and outlines the organisation, procedures, monitoring and key actions needed to fulfil the Council's responsibilities in relation to the Network Management Duty.
7. The State of Herefordshire Report identified that traffic congestion is the top aspect in terms of quality of life and the issue that most people felt needed improving most. The Council's Local Transport Plan recognizes the importance of tackling traffic congestion and sets the overall transport strategy for the County. The Highways Network Management Plan has been developed to set out in detail the approach that will be taken to managing the network, contribute to addressing traffic congestion and meet the requirements of the Traffic Management Act.
8. The Plan covers the period to 2017. It is a living document that will develop during the period. The Plan includes an initial action plan to tie in with the current Local Transport Plan period to 2011. The overall aims of the Plan are to:
 - Achieve an easy to use, consistent and functional road network which links well with its neighbours
 - Facilitate the efficient and safe movement of people and goods whilst protecting the quality of life within communities.

Risk Management

The adoption of a robust Highway Network Management Plan will clearly demonstrate the Council's approach to meeting the new Network Management Duty. The effective delivery of this plan will reduce the risk of intervention by the Secretary of State.

Alternative Options

There are no alternative options as the Council has a statutory duty to produce a Highways Network Management Plan.

Consultees

Extensive consultation with stakeholders was undertaken during the development of the Council's Local Transport Plan. This identified the importance of effectively managing the highway network and reducing congestion. As a result a statement in relation to the new Network Management Duty was included in the Local Transport Plan and has led to the development of the Highway Network Management Plan. In taking forward the implementation of the Highway Network Management Plan, it will be necessary to work closely with partner agencies such as the Highways Agency and emergency services to meet the overall aims of the plan.

Appendices

Appendix A – The Highway Network Management Plan 2008 to 2017

Background Papers

The Traffic Management Act 2004
The State of Herefordshire Report
The Local Transport Plan 2