

Asset management communications plan 2018



SURREY

Background

Surrey County Council is responsible for £7.8 billion worth of highways 'assets' – which include 3,000 miles of roads, 1,800 bridges and structures, 3,262 miles of pavement and many thousand different drainage systems, street lights, crossings and other pieces of infrastructure. While the public are very aware of the roads, many of the other assets go largely unnoticed by the public but they all play a vital role in Surrey's highway network – one that is relied upon by residents and which supports the county's significant economic output.

All the roads and other assets need maintaining, with very few of them in a condition that could be described as 'new'. In fact it would cost £300 million to keep them in a new condition – vastly more than the maintenance budget- but all highways and assets are maintained to a safe standard.

The highways service has drawn up an Asset Management Strategy that identifies which assets should be the focus of maintenance and investment for the next 15 years. It references an inventory of all the county's assets with an indication of their condition and modelling that shows what the impact of having different assets in different states of repair would be. Importantly the strategy has recommended that the highways service should aim to rebalance its investment across the assets it owns beyond just the roads. That means residents will see less large scale work on the roads and more on other highway assets like pavements, traffic signals and bridges.

Communications are important to let residents know:

- What investment decisions have been made and why
- The benefits of and reasons for decisions that affect them
- What residents will see and experience (that's different from before) ➤ How residents have contributed to this process

Additionally, this project would meet a requirement of some Department for Transport funding to communicate about asset management.

Aim and objectives

The aim is to ensure residents and stakeholders know and understand how and why the county council prioritises investment in highways and related assets.

The objectives are:

- Help residents understand that Surrey County Council is working against a backdrop of increased demand and reductions in funding
- Explain the overall approach to investment – including how the council invests in planned maintenance to reduce the need for costly reactive repairs.
- Improve understanding of the range of assets that make up the road network that many of these assets exist to keep people safe and raise awareness that these assets need maintenance and investment
- To highlight that there is a transparent process for decision making. ➤ Consult on elements of the asset management strategy

Audiences

- All Surrey residents
- Surrey County Council members
- Stakeholders
- Staff

Key messages

- The county council owns and maintains many assets beyond just the roads. They all need maintenance and investment.
- Many of these assets are largely invisible but exist to keep people safe.
- Over the last five years we've rebuilt many of Surrey's roads and we are now doing less large scale work on the roads and more on other assets like pavements, traffic signals and bridges.
- Surrey highways works on a long term basis with its contractors to get better discounts and benefit from economies of scale.
- The council has to make sure roads and infrastructure don't deteriorate so much that they end up needing large costly repairs.
- The council is experiencing an increase in demand for its services and less money from Central Government.

Strategy

The current roads creative has been used since 2014 so this work is an opportunity to review and refresh the artwork so it remains fit for purpose, while adding further executions covering different highways assets.

This will include developing infographics which highlight the different assets, how many there are, what they do and what they cost to maintain. This will help people understand more about all the different roads and assets that are part of Surrey's highways.

The infographics will also form part of a web page on the council website which will provide more detailed information about roads and other assets. It will link to content from the highways and transport delivery plan which has been written specifically to give residents an overall view of everything the highways services does, including a lot of content on asset management.