

REPORT TO:	Environment and Regeneration Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	11 th February 2026
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director Environment and Regeneration
PORTFOLIO:	Environment and Urban Renewal
SUBJECT:	Highways Asset Management Plan
WARD(S)	Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek endorsement the Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP). This will enable the plan to be taken forward to the Executive Board for approval to allow subsequent adoption and publication of the HAMP. This will allow the Council to be compliant for Department for Transport Highway (DfT) maintenance funding requirements known as Annex B.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the PPB endorse the Highway Asset Management Plan and its forwarding to the Executive Board for approval and give delegated powers to the appropriate director and portfolio holder to approve necessary updates.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 On the 18th June, this board noted the report for Funding for local Highway maintenance – Incentive element. This followed the letter from DfT on the 20 December 2024, which announced the 2025/26 highway maintenance funding allocations for all eligible highway authorities and mayoral combined authorities. This included additional funding announced by the Chancellor as part of the 2024 Budget and came with two sets of requirements of local Highway Authorities, the second of which, known as Annex B, requires the publishing of this HAMP.

3.2 Members will recall the approval by Executive Board in March 2017 of the last edition of the HAMP, a new plan was prepared for 2023 however changes to funding overtook the adoption of that plan and has resulted in this subsequent updated plan. In that earlier report, the importance of asset management and the maintenance of our highway network were emphasised, as was the need for a Highway

Asset Management Plan that has the support of the Council's senior management and Executive Board.

3.3 **What is and why do we need Highway Asset Management?**

1. Highway asset management is a way of running the '**business**' of operating a highway network. The 790km highway network (605 km of roads plus 187km of independent footpaths) in Halton, comprises a number of diverse assets and all of these need managing as a whole and individual basis.
2. Highways are by far the most valuable asset the Council has (the WGA Gross Replacement Cost of this asset was estimated as approximately £2.5 billion in 2024), and as such, managing the maintenance of this asset is crucial. The highway network is used by, or on behalf of, every single member of the Community, often many times a day. One of the keys to improving value for money in highways maintenance is knowing and understanding when and how to intervene. By applying asset management principles and considering an asset over a whole life cycle, it is possible to select the best time to intervene. This will maintain condition and preserve the asset in an economically viable way.
3. Good asset management is about making best use of available funds. It also provides a clear evidence base to justify the need for investment in highway maintenance. Applying the principles of asset management will help the Council achieve a more structured long term approach to maintaining the network and to resist expensive, short-term actions.
4. Some of the potential benefits of adopting asset management practices are that it:
 - Formalises and documents standards and processes.
 - Helps us provide an informed response to budget pressures.
 - Records what assets we have and what condition they are in.
 - Allows us to understand how much infrastructure is aged and the risk associated with it.
 - Leads to consistency of practices.
 - Provides an audit trail.
 - Assists with managing public expectations.
 - Acknowledges that future spending requirements are not

always the same as historical ones.

3.4 **What is a Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP)?**

A Highway Asset Management Plan identifies the current assets and develops a **framework for asset management** to enhance existing good practices and improve the management of the network. A HAMP is a guidance document used by the Council's Highways service in managing the highway network as an asset and addressing maintenance challenges moving forward. In addition, the HAMP provides information regarding the highway asset base, its implications and identifies the need for funding that could be utilised in addressing maintenance issues. The HAMP also demonstrates to stakeholders how the Council manages highway assets and proposes to face the challenges of managing these assets in the future.

3.5 **Why do we need a Highway Asset Management Plan?**

1. The Highway Asset Management Plan supports an evidence based approach to maintaining the highway network and sets out how it can be maintained strategically and efficiently in order to protect the assets and provide the best possible service with the resources available. Its purpose is to identify and set out the maintenance requirements for the highway network within Halton, in a clear and consistent nationally recognised framework.
2. In 2025 the DfT wrote to all Council Chief executives stating 25% of the additional highway funding was contingent on local authorities demonstrating that they are complying with certain criteria aimed at driving best practice and continual improvement in the highway maintenance practice. This demonstrates more clearly than anything how important it is for the Council to develop and sustain its highway asset management capability.

3.6 **Where we are and where we want to be**

1. The Council published its first 'Transport Asset Management Plan' (TAMP) in 2007 at the Central Government's initiative and funding. The subsequent HAMP was published in 2017
2. This revised document has been compiled to answer the questions that were at the heart of the Government

highway questions.

3. The ratification of the HAMP will serve as a foundation for other detailed plans and strategies based on the principles and objectives contained within the HAMP.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The approval of the HAMP will allow the Council to be compliant with the requirements of government guidance included in Annex B of the Transparency requirements.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Halton Borough Council will understand the value and costs of its highway assets and the financial resources required to appropriately sustain these (short and long term). It will seek to make its decisions based on Total Whole Life Cycle costs and appropriate funding strategies that match its business needs and targeted levels of service. Halton Borough Council will link the condition index to customers' expectations, its financial capacity and its levels of service goals; (for example, service levels for the high footfall pedestrianized town centres will have a higher rating than little used rural footpaths)
- 5.2 The Council are working towards a better understanding of the Carbon footprint associated with highway infrastructure not only its use by vehicles but also that of its maintenance processes.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 6.1 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**
Provision of safe, reliable and accessible routes to all destinations by Active travel modes such as walking and cycling is vital to the future of Halton's residents and the quality of its environment.
- 6.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**
It is recognised that a good transport network is essential for a successful economy and for the efficient and effective movement of people and goods in and through Halton.
- 6.3 **Supporting Children, Young People and Families**
The Highway network is utilised and relied upon by Children and Young people in similar ways to any other demographic of the population.

6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need
Our highways provide safe and reliable access to jobs, services, schools, get goods to the shops and allow us to make the most of our free time.

6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future
None identified.

6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community
Highway asset management will help meet the Council's aims and objectives for positively shaping Halton's future supporting other Departments with Urban Renewal aspirations and targets.

7.0 Risk Analysis

7.1 As the status of the HAMP as current was one of the requirements of Annex B, without an updated, agreed and published HAMP, future funding maybe impaired.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 There are not any equality and diversity issues in relation to this report.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None identified.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
All Party Parliamentary Group on Highway Maintenance – Managing a valuable asset: improving local road condition	Municipal Buildings	Ian Jones
Transport Asset Management Plan - 2007	Municipal Buildings	Ian Jones
Self-Assessment Questionnaire - DfT	Municipal Buildings	Ian Jones
“Better Local Roads” speech, Andrew Jones MP	Municipal Buildings	Ian Jones
“Going the distance, Achieving better value for money in road maintenance,” Audit Commission, May 2011	Municipal Buildings	Ian Jones
Executive Board Thursday, 7 th April 2016 Transportation Portfolio 147. Highway Asset Management Plan	Halton Borough Council web site.	Ian Jones

Executive Board Thursday, 16 th March 2017 EXB111. Highway Asset Management Plan	Halton Borough Council web site.	Ian Jones
Letter to local authorities about local highway maintenance funding in 2025 to 2026 24 th March 2025	<u>Letter to local authorities about local highway maintenance funding in 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK</u>	

<http://councillors.halton.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=292>