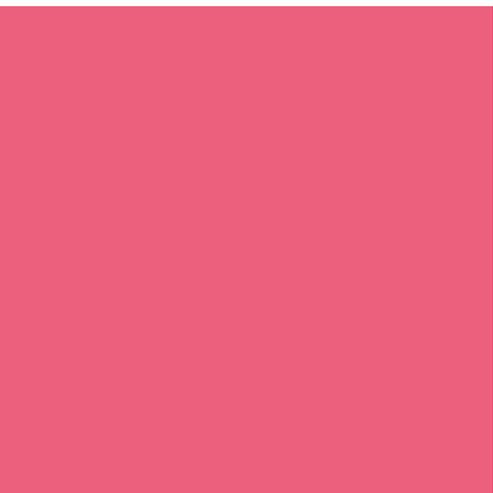




Highways Improvement Policy



Traffic & Highways

Highways Improvements Policy

Version	Date	Author	Rationale
V1	08/10/2021	Chris Read	New policy, replacing any previous policy in relation highways improvements

Authorised by			
Name	Date	Item	Ref
Cabinet	02/11/2021	418	Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 2nd November, 2021, 2.00 pm (southend.gov.uk)

Next review	Date
1	November 2022

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1. Introduction

Southend-on-Sea City Council's shared ambition to transform the city by 2050 is aligned to five themes, with related desired outcomes: -

- **Pride & joy** - By 2050 Southenders are fiercely proud of, and go out of their way, to champion what our city has to offer;
- **Safe & well** - By 2050 people in Southend-on-Sea feel safe in all aspects of their lives and are well enough to live fulfilling lives;
- **Active & involved** - By 2050 we have a thriving, active, and involved community that feel invested in our city;
- **Opportunity & prosperity** - By 2050 Southend-on-Sea is a successful city and we share our prosperity amongst all of our people;
- **Connected & smart** - By 2050 people can easily get in, out, and around our city and we have world class digital infrastructure.

This highways improvements policy supports the more specific desired outcomes for each theme, including: -

- Our streets and public spaces are clean and inviting and support the mental and physical wellbeing of residents and visitors.
- People in all parts of the city feel safe and secure at all times.
- Make it easier for residents, visitors and people who work here to get around the city.
- We are leading the way in making public and private travel smart, clean and green.

2. Aim

The aim of the policy is to detail how the Southend-on-Sea City Council (the Council) will assess and prioritise Highways Improvements, and the actions and process that will be undertaken before any improvements are approved and then implemented.

The Council understands that people should have the right to the safe use and enjoyment of the highway and ensure that all highway users are not put at risk. The Council has developed this policy to enable the clear assessment of issues, develop an evidence-based criteria and then subsequently a prioritised action plan relative to the available budget.

The policy outlines the process taken but more detailed implementation plans will be used by the service to facilitate the action response, using appropriate criteria and a risk-based approach. These plans will be approved and displayed on the Council's website.

This policy gives clear transparency on how we will make decisions for highway works and helps set the expectations of the residents and members of the City.

3. Council Position

Southend-on-Sea City Council is the Highway Authority for the purposes of the Highways Act 1980 (the Act). Section 41 of the Act puts a statutory duty upon the Highway Authority to maintain the highway and any other asset placed or installed within the public highway and are maintainable at public expense.

Therefore, this policy will look to address this requirement.

4. Scope of Policy

This policy is to be used by officers when an issue is highlighted on the maintainable highway by members of the public, members or from the highway inspections and the appropriate criteria applied, relative to the issue/asset highlighted to ascertain a need for action.

All the actions are dealt with under separate Implementation Plans but they all have common outcomes and allow the generation of a single 'Priority list' under the umbrella of Highways Improvements. The list can be actioned as a whole or via individual issues/assets depending on available budgets at that time.

If any issues arise that are not covered by an Implementation plan, then a new one will be developed for that issue as required.

These issues include but are not limited to:

- Speeding issues
- Verge damage and parking
- Small Works programmes – Patching/joint sealing
- Referred Works (from Highway Inspections)
- Carriageway and Footway resurfacing programmes
- Trees works associated with the FW/CW
- Enforcement schemes

Any issues highlighted that don't fit the current available criteria sets and require a new one to be setup, will be reviewed by the Asset Management team and the appropriate criteria developed if applicable.

As mentioned, this policy will ensure that all highway maintenance works will follow a coordinated and consistent approach. The current Codes of practice for highways 'Well-managed Highway Infrastructure', details a recommendation that 'a risk-based approach should be adopted for all aspects of highway infrastructure maintenance'. This policy enables the Council to follow that approach and will further enable clear programme of works to be established for all assets, which in turn will allow accurate capital and revenue funding requests to be established on an annual and long term basis.

This in turn will enable the ultimate goal to be achieved, which is to develop integrated highway schemes, where we align the issues and remedial works into one works package for a street/area and utilise the 'close once, fix many approach' to bring cost efficiencies and reduce disruption for residents/road users.

5. Purpose of Policy

The prioritisation criteria are designed to enable all officers to assess and prioritise defects of the highway, where it is considered the most significant and/or risk is posed to the users of the Highway.

It will promote a consistency of approach and give accountability for any decisions made.

The policy and processes will allow the authority to effectively manage and prioritise its resources. It will be able to bring efficiencies to working practices and key in providing value for money.

The process will ensure all works are assessed, and if criteria is met and work required, then a clear indication of the order in which these works will be undertaken subject to available budgets.

It will allow the service to be proactive in its approach to the programming of works and bring clearly defined requirements to cabinet on an annual basis.

Along with the Implementation plans, it also ensures that no issues/defects get ignored. At the very least they would be part of a prioritised works list but would also be time stamped and would be reinspected after 6 months, if they still remain on the list without any action.

6. Improvement Actions

The Council will take an assessed approach when looking at issues on the highway within the city.

The issue will first be allocated to its applicable asset group and the relevant implementation plan, and its associated criteria applied. If an issue does not meet the initial criteria, then no further work will be undertaken, and the requester will be notified accordingly.

The current Implementation Plans are detailed in [Appendix 1](#) and will be available as links on the website.

If the issue meets the initial criteria, further assessment will be undertaken where applicable. Should there be any missing data then this would be gathered before any further assessments or decisions are made.

Once approved for works then the item will be placed on the prioritised works list for it to be programmed in accordance with available budgets.

These programmes will have work undertaken in a priority order based on the available budget. If there is no budget available, then the programme will be used as an evidence-based request for funding to cabinet for the following financial year.

Any works that would be considered an immediate safety risk to users would be actioned immediately, again subject to available funding or an emergency funding request.

7. Prioritisation

As detailed previously the Council has developed a risk-based approach to selecting and undertaking works and this approach will be used across all assets and programmes associated with Highway works.

When prioritising cases, the Council will take account of the following:

1. The total criteria score for the issue
2. The associated street Priority/Risk Score
3. The current condition of the asset
4. Any other relative information

These elements will enable the issue to be correctly prioritised against other relative works and assets.

8. Policy Review

This policy is a living document and will be reviewed and updated if/when statute or national standards or best practice requires it. This policy will be reviewed after 12 months of operation and then every 3 years.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Current Implementation Plans

Appendix 2 - Process Map

Appendix 1

Current Implementation Plans

Carriageway and Footway Resurfacing Implementation Plan

Referred Schemes Implementation Plan

Speeding Issues Implementation Plan

Verge Damage Implementation Plan

Appendix 2

Process Map

