

Resilient Highway Network

Report of: Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Executive Member for Community Services
(ian.dalgarno@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Responsible Director: Marcel Coiffait, Director of Community Services
marcel.coiffait@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

This report relates to a decision that is Key

Purpose of this report

1. In order to secure the maximum possible Highways Maintenance Capital Funding from the Department for Transport's 'Incentive Fund' the Highways Service has put in place efficiency measures so that by 2018/19 Central Bedfordshire Council is a 'Band 3' authority. This paper sets out the remaining documents that must be adopted in order to demonstrate a renewed commitment at senior level to the principles of Asset Management and resilience, and achieve Band 3 status.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to:

1. **adopt the following key documents:**
The Resilient Network set out in Appendix A
Network Maintenance Management Plan set out in Appendix B

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

2. On 25 May the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended:-
 - I. That the Highways Service utilises the principles set out in the Draft Highways Asset Management Policy to develop a Highways Asset Management Strategy, Communications Strategy, undertake a Service Review and develop any other supporting documents relevant to the Incentive Fund Bid.
 - II. That the Executive adopts the updated Network Maintenance Management Plan and approves the Resilient Network for public consultation.

- III. That the Council, as Highways Authority, adopts Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) that are situated within the highway boundary and which only receive highway run off and agrees the criteria as set out in Appendix B.
 - IV. That a review of the contractor, Ringway Jacobs be included within the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme.
3. On 1 August the Executive decided to adopt the Highways Asset Management Policy, the Highways Asset Management Strategy and the Network Maintenance Management Plan. The Executive also authorised the Director for Community Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Community Services, to adopt the Highways Communications Strategy that was being prepared.
 4. The Executive also approved the Resilient Network for public consultation.

Background to the Incentive Fund

5. In order to secure Highways Maintenance Capital Funding from the Department for Transport's 'Incentive Fund' each local highway authority must complete a self-assessment questionnaire.
6. Each authority scores themselves against 22 questions, and place themselves into one of 3 Bands on the basis of the available evidence. The incentive funding awarded to each local highway authority is based on their score in this questionnaire, and will be relative to the amount received through the needs-based funding formula.
7. The Incentive Fund Bid for 2017/18 was submitted in January 2017, Central Bedfordshire Council has been Band 2 since 2016/17; this means that for 2017/18 the Highways Service received 90% of our share of the incentive fund.

Table 1: Incentive Fund Share based on Banding

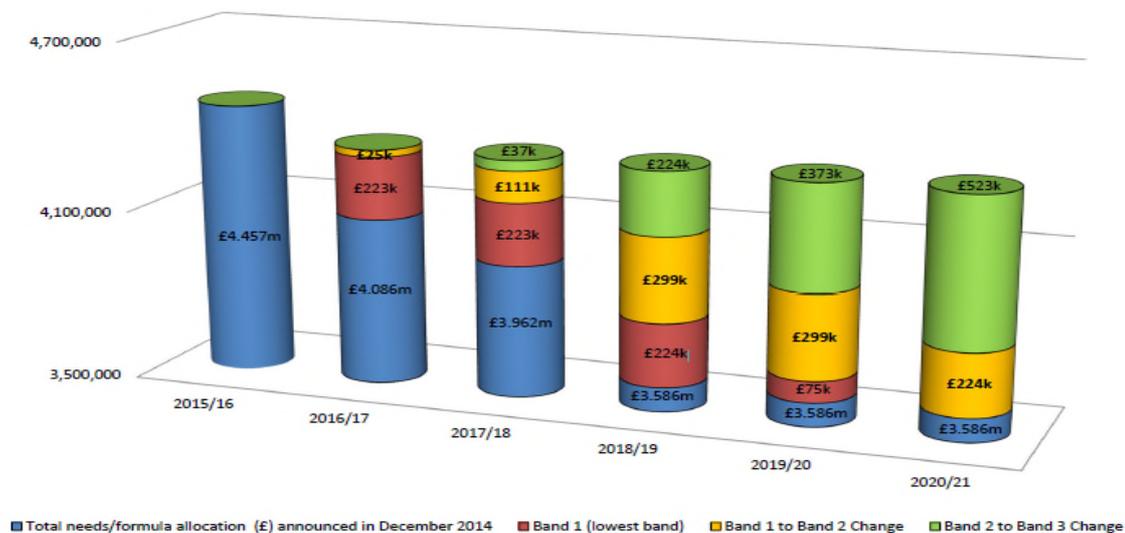
Year	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Band 1	100%	90%	60%	30%	10%	0%
Band 2	100%	100%	90%	70%	50%	30%
Band 3	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

8. If we do not move up to Band 3 in 2018/19 the Highways Service will only receive 70% of our share of the incentive fund, a loss of £224,000. The effect over the next three years of remaining at Band 2 is set out in Table 2 and Chart 1 below and would equal a total loss of £1,120,000.

Table 2: Future Incentive Fund Share based on Banding

Year	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Needs formula allocation	£3.586m	£3.586m	£3.586m
Total available for Band 1	£3.810m	£3.661m	£3.586m
Total available for Band 2	£4.109m	£3.960m	£3.810m
Total available for Band 3	£4.333m	£4.333m	£4.333m

Chart 1: Central Bedfordshire Incentive Fund Share



- The Incentive Fund Assessment requires a focus on five key areas; asset management, resilience, customers, benchmarking and efficiency, and operational service delivery. Over the course of 2017 officers have put in place a range of actions to move from Band 2 to Band 3. We are now confident that by January 2018 we will be able to submit a Band 3 bid to the Incentive Fund for funding for the financial year 2018/19.

Network Maintenance Management Plan

- On 1 August 2017 the Executive adopted the Highways Asset Management Policy (HAMP) and the Highways Asset Management Strategy (HAMS). These documents set our strategic direction for highways maintenance moving forward. Following the adoption of the HAMP and HAMS the Network Maintenance Management Plan (NMMP) has been reviewed to ensure it is fully in line with these documents.
- The revised NMMP, strengthens our risk management approach, removes duplication and has made the document more accessible. Officers have refined definitions of defects enabling us the freedom to respond appropriately in line with the asset management approach and thereby spending our budget more efficiently.

12. The revised NMMP has been reviewed internally by Highways staff, Customer Services and Ringway Jacobs. The updates concentrate on the Plan's relationship with the Highways Contract and ensuring clearer definitions of defects and emergency work are in place. The Committee is asked to adopt the updated NMMP (Appendix B).

Resilient Network

13. In order to achieve Band 3, a Resilient Network for Central Bedfordshire must be in place and be reviewed every two years. The Resilient Network (Appendix E) refers to the transport routes that are given priority in order to maintain economic activity and access to key services. The Resilient Network has been developed with input from the Emergency Planning Team and stakeholders from the Resilience Forum.
14. A public consultation on the Resilient Network was held from the 7 August to 30 October 2017. The consultation document was made available both as an online survey and a paper questionnaire. In total 122 residents participated in the consultation by completing the survey. The majority of respondents (52%) agreed that all key priority services had been identified. Of the 48% who said No, many highlighted access to mainstream schools, doctors and bus routes would need to be maintained in the event of adverse weather.
15. Officers have reviewed all the consultation responses and determined that in a number of cases the suggested routes were already included in the Resilient Network. The Resilient Network already covers:
 - all A and B class roads
 - most C class roads
 - some UC class roads
 - busy peak commuter routes
 - main peak hour bus routes
 - routes to fire stations
 - ambulance stations
 - hospitals
 - most school bus routes
 - roads past all Middle and Upper schools.
16. In cases where respondents suggested that routes should be added to the Resilient Network, Officers applied the criteria set out in Appendix G of the Winter Maintenance Plan to determine whether the routes should be added. No additional routes were found to be necessary. The Committee is asked to adopt the Resilient Network as set out in Appendix B.

Reason/s for decision

17. The reasons for the decisions set out in this paper is to enable the Highways Service to continue on track to becoming a Band 3 authority, secure Incentive Funding and become a more efficient and resilient service.

Council Priorities

18. The recommendations within this paper will facilitate a more efficient and responsive highways service that provides great resident services and enhances Central Bedfordshire.

Corporate Implications

Legal Implications

19. As the local highway authority Central Bedfordshire Council is responsible for the maintenance and improvement of the public highways within its administrative area under the Highways Act 1980.
20. The Incentive Fund Bid for 2017/18 was submitted in January 2017, Central Bedfordshire Council has been Band 2 since 2016/17. There is clear financial advantage in achieving a Band 3 status
21. In August 2017 the Executive adopted the Highways Asset Management Policy (HAMP) and the Highways Asset Management Strategy (HAMS). This report now seeks endorsement to the Network Maintenance Management Plan (NMMP). This document provides the framework for carrying out maintenance to the highway network. The NMMP has been reviewed and refined to ensure it is fully in line with these documents. This is described above at para 11.
22. As regards the Resilient Network the Council has followed due process in reviewing and defining its Resilient Network of highways and the key locations where they need to give priority to maintain access and connectivity in the face of adverse conditions.
23. The Council have consulted with the public and stakeholders and taken into account the responses to that consultation in seeking to identify its resilient network at paragraph 15 above. It is now seeking Member endorsement before it publishes both the Network Maintenance Management Plan and the Resilient Network, publication both being a requirement if Central Bedfordshire is to achieve Band 3 status and an improved funding settlement with Department of Transport.

Equalities Implications

24. Central Bedfordshire Council has a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. In developing the NMMP and Resilient Network consideration has been given to the needs of vulnerable groups.

Financial and Risk Implications

25. The Incentive Fund Bid for 2017/18 was submitted in January 2017, Central Bedfordshire Council is currently Band 2; this means that for 2017/18 the Highways Service will only receive 90% of our share of the incentive fund. If we do not move up to Band 3 in 2018/19 the Highways Service will only receive 70% of our share of the incentive fund, a loss of £224,000. The MTFP for 2018/19 and 2019/20 assumes the Highways Service will remain at Band 2. The effect over the next three years of remaining at Band 2 is set out in Table 2 (repeated from earlier in the paper) and would equal a total loss of £1,120,000.

Table 2: Future Incentive Fund Share based on Banding

Year	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
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Next Steps

26. The Incentive Fund bid will be submitted in January 2018.

Appendices

Appendix A: Resilient Network

Appendix B: Network Maintenance Management Plan

Appendix C: Appendix G of the Winter Maintenance Plan

Report author:

Jade Jones, Highways Team Leader- Business Support

jade.jones@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk