

## Cyngor Sir CEREDIGION County Council

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<b>DATE:</b>	15 July 2021
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Teams
<b>TITLE:</b>	Code of Practice for Highway Safety Inspection and Response on County Roads
<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT:</b>	To gain approval for the new Ceredigion County Council Code of Practice for Highways Safety Inspection and Response on County Roads
<b>REASON SCRUTINY HAVE REQUESTED THE INFORMATION:</b>	In order to comply with the <i>Well Managed Highway Infrastructure Code of Practice</i> published in 2016, it has been necessary to review and update Ceredigion County Council's existing Code of Practice for Highway Safety Inspection from 2010.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Ceredigion County Council's Code of Practice for Highway Safety Inspection and Response on County Roads ('Code of Practice') sets out the policy and standard for undertaking inspections of the adopted highway network. It forms part of the overall Highways Asset Management Plan and its constituent Appendix C – 'Highway Maintenance Manual' and is designed for use by staff carrying out highway inspections. It sets out inspection frequencies and also intervention levels for most circumstances (although inspection staff will always be expected to apply judgement). The primary aim of the code is to ensure that inspection, defect and suggested repair details are correctly assessed and accurately recorded, in addition to the subsequent recording of details of actual response and repairs undertaken.

In 2016, the UK Roads Liaison Group published the *Well Managed Highway Infrastructure Code of Practice*, this replacing the *Well-Maintained Highways Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management* dated July 2005. To ensure compliance with the new code it has been necessary to review and update Ceredigion County Council's Code of Practice. The underlying principle of the code is that Highway Authorities will adopt a risk-based approach to asset management in accordance with local needs, priorities and affordability.

The County Surveyors Society Wales (CSSW) developed a methodology that would allow a nationally consistent approach to the management of local highways in accordance with the

new code, and this methodology has been adopted for the review.

**CURRENT SITUATION:**

The Authority is currently performing well in its duty to maintain the highway asset. However, the reduction in the level of resources available to Highway Authorities means that the focus on reaction to safety defects has prohibited assignment of resource to maintenance activities that would reduce these defects. The inability to programme works leads to inefficiencies and risks an increasing inability to manage repairs, leading to deterioration in the condition of the network.

The new code addresses this by targeting its highest risk areas. It does this through focus on two main areas: firstly the frequency of inspection, and secondly in the determination of an appropriate threshold of intervention. The result will be an ability to reassign resources to maintenance rather than urgent repair.

**WHAT OTHER AUTHORITIES ARE DOING:**

The County Surveyors Society Wales (CSSW) developed its methodology in respect of the new Code of Practice in consultation with Insurance Companies and Highway Authorities across Wales with a view to creating a unified approach to interpretation and implementation.

All Welsh Authorities have adopted the code.

**WHAT THE COUNCIL NEEDS TO DO:**

Once the code is approved, new inspection regimes will need to be created. The Service's Highway Asset Management Plan and the Asset Management System will need to be updated and system reports amended as appropriate to reflect the requirements of the new code.

Training will be required for Highways Inspectors, Superintendents and Engineers

New business processes will need to be put in place to facilitate the assembling of treatments into more cost effective routine planned cyclical/preventative maintenance works programmes such as ditching, gully cleaning, patching etc.

Support from the Inspectorate for street works activities, enforcement and other functions will need to be developed and this is being addressed by the ongoing Highways Services restructuring proposals.

It is essential that vehicle traffic and footfall counts are carried out across the network and that these are incorporated into regular reviews of the Code of Practice.

<b>Has an Integrated Impact</b>	Yes
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<b>WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS:</b>	<b>Assessment been completed? If, not, please state why.</b>	
	<b>Summary:</b>	
	<b>Long term:</b>	The new Code of Practice provides a risk based approach to Highway Safety Inspections and offers the opportunity to optimise resource through prioritisation and planning of maintenance works.
	<b>Integration:</b>	The new Code of Practice will improve the condition of the adopted highway within Ceredigion and impact positively on its people, economy, environment and culture.
	<b>Collaboration:</b>	Ceredigion County Council will continue to work with other stakeholders including County Surveyors Society Wales, insurance Companies and Highway Authorities to implement the new Code successfully.
	<b>Involvement:</b>	Continued involvement from stakeholders will be encouraged via meetings and regular review, which will be informed by the feedback received.
	<b>Prevention:</b>	The methodology behind the code utilises data relating to the risk of damage to persons or property, and recommends a way of optimising available resources that allows this to be mitigated effectively.
<b>RECOMMENDATION (S):</b>		
<b>To recommend Cabinet approves the Code of Practice for Highway Inspection and Response on County Roads 2021</b>		
<b>REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION (S):</b>		
To refocus our resources, enhance our maintenance and improve our ability to comply with our statutory legal duties as outlined in Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 and provide a defence by virtue of Section 58 of the Highways Act 1980 through a unified all-Wales approach.		
<b>Contact Name:</b>	Phil Jones	

<b>Designation:</b>	Corporate Manager Highways Services
<b>Date of Report:</b>	3/6/2021
<b>Acronyms:</b>	