
To: INFRASTRUCTURE, LAND AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY BOARD

On: 29th August 2018

Report by: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Heading: CODE OF PRACTICE “WELL MANAGED HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE”

1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information on the new Code of Practice for highway maintenance which will replace the existing Code, ‘Well Maintained Highways – Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management 1983’.
- 1.2 A Code of Practice promotes best practice but is not legislation. Therefore, whilst adoption of the new Code is entirely voluntary, it is likely to become the industry standard for maintenance and inspections on the public road network.
- 1.3 Development of this new Code of Practice ‘Well Managed Highway Infrastructure’ has been overseen by the UK Roads Liaison Group (UKRLG) and its Roads, Bridges and Lighting Boards. The new Code will replace the existing 3 codes:
- Well-maintained Highways,
 - Well-lit Highways , and
 - Management of Highway Structures

The new Code is intended to apply throughout the United Kingdom.

- 1.4 The new Code recommends that a “risk based approach” should be adopted for all aspects of highway infrastructure maintenance, including setting levels of service, inspections, responses, resilience, priorities and programmes”. In essence, all Highway decisions will be backed up with a risk matrix analysis, whereby the level of risk will be defined by considering the category of probability or likelihood against the category of consequence and severity. This is a mechanism to increase visibility of risks and assist professional and management

decision making. Carriageway inspections will become more onerous under the new Code, meaning that some carriageway types will be inspected on a more frequent basis.

- 1.5 The new Code of Practice is a major change in policy, moving away from prescribed inspection frequencies and response times towards a fully risk based process whereby local authorities can develop their own levels of service based on the nature of their own particular network, road types and conditions and historical inspection records
 - 1.6 The Code of Practice was launched in October 2016 with local authorities being advised that the existing codes of practice would remain in place for a period of two years to allow authorities to transition their arrangements to reflect the guidance contained in the new Code of Practice.
 - 1.7 Although the Code of Practice was launched in 2016, there is further guidance due to be issued by the Scottish Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) who have been working on the development of a new site based approach over the last 2 years. This will ensure Councils in Scotland develop policy in a consistent manner, reflecting the priorities within the new Code of Practice.
 - 1.8 The general principles within the new Code of Practice are outlined within the report with a further report due to be presented to a future Infrastructure, Land & Environment Policy Board which will include the Councils new policies on roads and footways inspection upon publication of the SCOTS guidance.
-

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board:

- 2.1 Approves the adoption of the new Code of Practice, Well Managed Highways as set out in this report and the change to a risk based approach for management of the road infrastructure network.
 - 2.2 Notes that a further report on the New Code of Practice, Policy will be brought to a future meeting of this Policy Board to approve revised inspection policies for roads and footways upon publication of the SCOTS guidance.
-

3. Background

3.1 Current Highway Maintenance Code of Practice & Policy

- 3.1.1 The Council has a duty to manage and maintain the adopted road network as detailed in Section 1 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984. There is a requirement to carry out inspections of the network in order to comply with this duty.

- 3.1.2 To ensure consistency and establish acceptable levels of service across the U.K. the Roads and Highway Authorities produced a Code of Practice for Maintenance Management, entitled 'Well Maintained Highways – Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management 1983'. The Code included recommendations for surveys and inspections.
- 3.1.3 Renfrewshire Council's current Carriageway and Footway Inspection Policy was approved at the Roads and Transportation Committee on 30 July 1997. The policy reflected the guidance given in 'Well Maintained Highways', which is the current industry standard at that time, for all aspects of road maintenance.
- 3.1.4 Carriageway and footway inspections in Renfrewshire are carried out by roads & footways inspectors. Inspections are carried out in accordance with the frequencies detailed in the Carriageway and Footway Inspection Policy and either comply with, or exceed, the minimum requirements recommended within the Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management 1983.
- 3.1.5 The inspection frequency for carriageways is related to the classification of the road set out in detail in appendix 1 but can be summarised as follows:
- Monthly inspections on main distributor roads, local distributor roads and A and B class rural roads
 - 3 monthly inspections on general access roads and rural C class roads
 - 6 monthly inspections on minor access links
 - 12 monthly inspections on residential streets and unclassified rural roads.
- 3.1.6 The inspection frequency for footways and footpaths is dictated by pedestrian usage with monthly inspections on pedestrianised walking zones and pedestrianised areas, down to annual inspections for local access footways and cul-de-sacs.
- 3.1.7 Defects are currently prioritised depending on the degree of danger presented to the public with five categories of response timescales available ranging from 2-hours for an emergency to 6 months for programmed works.

4 New Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance, with a Proposed Risk Based Maintenance Policy / Approach

- 4.1 Changes to the existing Highway Code of Practice were requested by Local Authorities who wished to tailor their services to local requirements, priorities and needs. It is intended that the new Code will take greater cognisance of Council Asset Management plans and ensure that decisions are data driven, reduce whole life costs and promote evidence led investment.
- 4.2 Delivery of a safe and well-maintained highway network relies on good evidence and sound engineering judgement. The intention of the new Code is that local authorities will develop their own levels of service, with the new Code providing guidance for authorities to consider when developing their approach in accordance with local needs, priorities and affordability. The new Code of Practice is a major change in policy, moving away from prescribed inspection frequencies and response times towards a fully risk-based process whereby local

authorities can develop their own levels of service based on the nature of their own particular network, road types and conditions and historical inspection records.

- 4.3 Changing from reliance on specific guidance and recommendations in the previous Codes to a risk-based approach determined by each Highway Authority will involve appropriate analysis, development and gaining of approval through authorities' executive processes. The previous Codes will remain valid until October 2018.
- 4.4 There are a number of opportunities presented with the introduction of a risk based approach, including:
- Provides an integrated approach to asset management,
 - Creates flexibility within inspection programmes to target resources to priority areas,
 - Provides a sound evidence base for future capital investment programmes, and
 - Delivers the ultimate aim of providing a framework for improving safety of infrastructure within the Council area.
- 4.5 A working party from the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) group, which represents all 32 local authorities in Scotland, worked in tandem with the SCOTS Roads Asset Management Project consultant to produce a template Code of Practice to be utilised by all Scottish local authorities to ensure that the Code is adopted on a consistent basis. This final documentation is expected at the end of August 2018.
- 4.6 Each local authority must now tailor the document to suit their own particular priorities, needs and resources. This process requires input from inspectors in the roads, lighting and infrastructure team to ensure that resources are prioritised in accordance with the road network, local knowledge and historical inspection results, as opposed to standard inspection cycles. This will require to be backed up with a documented risk assessment for roads where there is departure from standard frequencies.
- 4.7 Defect response times / interventions will now be determined by inspectors on a case by case basis utilising a risk matrix, again, this will replace the standard defect response times given in the current Roads Maintenance Policy.
- 4.8 All of the footway and carriageway inspectors have been trained in the new risk based matrix methodology and the roads asset management software (symology) has been updated to reflect changes to current inspection and response frequencies. The new Code of Practice will be operationally adopted by the requested timescale of October 2018, with the new Policy being brought back to this Policy Board for approval in November 2018.

Implications of this Report

1. **Financial** – At this stage it is not anticipated that the implementation of the new Code of Practice will result in the requirement for any additional resources.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None

3. **Community Planning** – None
4. **Legal** - None
5. **Property/Assets** – The implementation of the new Code of Practice is designed to improve the safety of roads infrastructure within the Council area.
6. **Information Technology** - None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** – None
9. **Procurement** – None
10. **Risk** – The implementation of the Code of Practice will target inspection resources in priority areas which could reduce the level of insurance risk in relation to roads and footway defects
11. **Privacy Impact** – None
12. **CoSLA Policy Position** – None

List of Background Papers - none

Author Drew McNab, Transportation Manager
e-mail: drew.mcnab@renfrewshire.gov.uk