

## 17. Network Management Duty Strategy

### 17.1 Introduction

Making the best use of our current road network is important for both economic vitality and society in general. Roads facilitate the movement of goods and services and provide access to homes and businesses and also provide routes for supplying an increasing number of services that modern society demands.

Warwickshire County Council is part of the West Midlands, Shires and Unitaries Traffic Management forum. The vision that this group has for the delivery of the Network Management Duty is to: 'Continue to improve delivery of the Network Management Duty through cross-boundary working and using best practice principals, thereby enabling consistency, efficiency and effectiveness'.

The vision that Warwickshire has for its road network is 'one on which people travel safely, with reliable journey times and that they have the best available information to ensure that they can make informed choices as to how they will travel in and through Warwickshire'.

Reducing the reliance on car travel with more sustainable means of transport through travel plans, increased investment in public transport, car share, etc, will help slow the growth in Congestion. But managing roads to get the best out of the available road space is a key component in managing congestion. Roadworks and works by utility companies must be effectively managed so that delays and disruption are minimised.

### 17.2 Policy Context

The Government, in its White Paper 'The Future for Transport: A Network for 2030' set out its vision for better management of the network:

"We need a transport network that can meet the challenges of a growing economy and the increasing demand for travel, but can also achieve our environmental objectives."

A better managed transport network will help achieve:

- A more reliable and freer-flowing service on the road network for both personal travel and freight, with people able to make informed choices about how and when they travel;
- Bus services that are reliable, flexible, convenient and tailored to local needs; and
- Walking and cycling as a real alternative for local trips.

The Traffic Management Act was given Royal Assent on 22 July, 2004. It is intended to provide the basis for better conditions for all road users through proactive management of road networks. It can be seen as a response to two issues:

- Growing concern about the impact of road congestion and disruption on the economy,
- A desire to release Police resources from road policing to focus on criminality.

The Act adds new duties and powers on local traffic authorities, building upon their existing range of powers and duties under which they maintain and improve the network and manage its use and the activities taking place on it.

Section 16 of the Act introduces a major new duty, the Network Management Duty (NMD). The scope of the duty is wide and includes the following requirements:-

- To consider the needs of all road users, including utilities,
- To manage the road space for everyone,

- To identify current and future causes of congestion and disruption, and to plan and take action accordingly,
- To put arrangements in place to gather accurate information about planned works or events, consider how to organise them to minimise their impact, and agree (or stipulate) their timing to best effect,
- To include establishing contingency plans for dealing with unforeseen incidents outside the authorities' control e.g. adverse weather, security alerts, and major emergency incidents,
- To identify trends in traffic growth on specific routes and put in place policies for managing incremental change,
- To recognise that the implications of the actions of a local traffic authority do not stop at its borders.

### 17.2.1 The Highways Agency

The NMD is not directly applicable to the Highways Agency, however, in meeting the duty, all local traffic authorities need to specifically consider the effects of their actions on the motorway and trunk road network and the measures that could be taken to mitigate any adverse effects

## 17.3 The Strategy

### 17.3.1 Core Objectives

The core objective of the Network Management Duty Strategy is to focus on the challenge of economic growth whilst at the same time reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, key objectives of the Network Management Strategy seek to:

- Reduce the environmental impact of traffic (in terms of its speed, volume and emissions) on environmentally sensitive areas;
- Protect the public from Harm caused by transport and promote modes that are beneficial to health;
- Deliver reliable and efficient transport that supports economic growth;
- Design transport infrastructure to be sensitive to its surroundings;
- Ensure that decisions taken regarding transport do not compromise the needs of future generations.

In order to achieve these objectives we need;

- To consider the needs of all road users, including utilities,
- To manage the road space for everyone,
- To identify current and future causes of congestion and disruption, and to plan and take action accordingly,
- To put arrangements in place to gather accurate information about planned works or events, consider how to organise them to minimise their impact, and agree (or stipulate) their timing to best effect,
- To include establishing contingency plans for dealing with unforeseen incidents outside the authorities' control e.g. adverse weather, security alerts, and major emergency incidents,
- To identify trends in traffic growth on specific routes and put in place policies for managing incremental change,
- To recognise that the implications of the actions of a local traffic authority do not stop at its borders.
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### 17.3.2 Policies

#### **Policy NMD1: Considering the needs of all road users**

We will develop a clear understanding of the problems facing different parts of the network and a structured approach to the allocation of road space.

We aim to:

- Cater for all forms of user, e.g. pedestrians/cyclists on a level footing with vehicular traffic
- Group roads in a new hierarchical system according to location, use and activities occurring on them to provide consistency for stakeholders.
- Work together with stakeholders through local partnership working and consultation
- Hierarchies need to be balanced to take account of other policies and plans such as Asset Management Plans, etc.
- Facilitate the economic vitality of the community and support regeneration

#### **Policy NMD2: Route Management**

The County Council will develop a road hierarchy by level of use and by function, and keep it under regular review. The Council will publish a level 3 Street gazetteer in accordance with relevant British Standards and update monthly.

#### **Policy NMD3: Route Management of Roadworks**

The County Council will put in place a continual review of the street designations in accordance with the criteria set out in the code of practice for the coordination of Streetworks and Works for Road Purposes. Cross boundary arrangements are also in place to share these revised designations with all adjoining authorities.

#### **Policy NMD4: Contingency Planning**

The Council will, in consultation with the emergency services, HA and neighbouring highway authorities, investigate and put in place a series of contingency options and diversion routes.

The Council will ensure that, wherever possible, these plans do not exacerbate the current situation in urban areas for an unduly long period of time.

#### **Policy NMD5: Cross-boundary working**

The County Council will promote and improve cross boundary linkages with neighbouring authorities and share information.

In order to help deliver policy NMD5 the County Council will continue to be an active partner in the West Midlands (Shires and Unitaries) Traffic Managers Forum. The forum was formed during 2005. The Group was formed to “improve the West Midlands regional approach to implementing the Network Management Duty”.

#### **Policy NMD6: Warwickshire Freight Quality Partnership**

The County Council will develop its work with the freight industry through the Warwickshire Freight Quality Partnership (FQP) to recognise the needs of goods vehicles in the management of the highway network (including traffic management, highway improvements, highway maintenance and bridge maintenance and strengthening) and to manage the potential conflict arising between freight movements and possible environmental and social effects.

Further details of the aims of the FQP are contained within the Sustainable Freight Strategy.

### **Policy NMD7: Managing and co-ordinating activities and events on the network**

The County Council will develop methods to effectively manage all activities on the network and proactively coordinate them., including a planned and evidence-based approach to managing significant events affecting the network, including contingency plans.

To help deliver policy NMD7 the County Council will, where appropriate;

- check on all incoming street works notifications for possible co-ordination issues or possible changes to construction methods;
- Hold regular quarterly co-ordination meetings with all works promoters in Warwickshire and make available all works programmes and potential conflicts on a public website at [www.Elgin.gov.uk](http://www.Elgin.gov.uk).
- challenge incoming street works notifications where it is considered that the duration of the works is not appropriate;
- Issue directions, where appropriate, for carrying out work at less disruptive times;
- Challenge revised duration estimates on-street works notifications, if appropriate;
- Check that completion of works on site data is as notified;
- Require that all temporary traffic control, especially temporary traffic signals, be only used where and when necessary.
- Require information signing at work sites to advise the public in advance of the commencement of work.

We have established through our various software suppliers the ability to able to receive notices from all works promoter (both internal and external). The County Council provide information on all roadworks on a public website (this is on the Elgin website in partnership with 50 other Local Highway Authorities).

All major events held within the county have a Safety Advisory committee meeting at which Traffic Management is a standing item. These events are included in the conflict schedule of the coordination meeting. The impacts of these events are input to central register to enable coordination of works and events to take place.

The council will use all its statutory powers to manage all works that take place on the highway network. Contingency plans are in place for major emergencies within the County and regular table top exercises are held to test the robustness of these plans. More specific Control of Major Accident Hazard (COMAH) plans are in place for various sites around Warwickshire i.e. Kingsbury Oil Terminal.

### **Policy NMD8: Developing a permit scheme**

We will develop in accordance with national guidance a Permit scheme for Warwickshire or in partnership with other regional members.

The West Midlands Traffic Managers Forum have has agreed in principle to undertake the operation of a joint Highway Network Permit Scheme (HNPS) by all Shire Authorities. Under secondary legislation to the Traffic Management Act 2004, it is our intention to make an application to the Secretary of State, to operate a permit scheme to cover all work activities on the highway. This allows authorities to exercise greater control over undertakers of works and provides additional income streams to authorities through charges for administering the permit scheme and through resultant permit enforcement. The operation of a permit scheme demonstrates compliance with the new Network Management Duty and evidences our authorities' actions in relation to the appropriate part of the LAA assessment.

The new legislation allows authorities to operate individually or as a group, hence the West Midlands Shire Authorities recognise the benefits of joint working and have committed to a joint

application for a permit scheme. The authorities will share the cost of setting up the scheme and will look for opportunities to build economies of scale into joint working practices where possible.

#### **Policy NMD9: Gathering Information**

The County Council will develop effective arrangements to gather accurate information about planned works and manage and organise information on planned activities to ensure that the impact on the network is minimised.

Appropriate information will be made available about the authority's network to stakeholders.

#### **Policy NMD10: Information provision: Event Co-ordination**

The County Council will develop reliable and accurate information to stakeholders and the public to enable improved planning and travel options and encourage sharing and dissemination of information through a wide range of channels.

In order to help deliver policy NMD10 the County Council will continue to improve the dissemination of information on planned activities to the public. We will ensure that the diary of events that has been prepared is regularly updated. This is used to ensure that affected parts of the highway network are protected so that there are no conflicts of interest between the event and other activity on the highway. Event organisers will be encouraged to notify us of events being held and the diary will be added to the County Council's website so that the public can be made aware of forthcoming events.

#### **Policy NMD11: Information provision: Incidents and Roadworks**

The County Council will provide information regarding incidents and roadworks to other street authorities in line with statutory obligations. The Council will also provide information on all road works on a public website where relevant and appropriate.

The delivery of policy NMD11 will be supported by the facility on the web site that allows users to set up an area of interest and to receive email alerts of works happening in a defined area. This is available to all users and is especially useful for cross boundary coordination. In addition the Council will display all forward planning information on a map background such that all works promoters can see all possible conflicts.

The County Council maintains a register of all works (utility and Highway). This is an electronic system and is GIS based. This register can be accessed via visiting the councils offices and/or via the Warwickshire County Council website.

Policies NMD10 and NMD11 will be supported by NMD12 and the wider ITS strategy to meet the council's Network Management Duty requirements, performance measures, evidence gathering and reporting facilities.

In addition the County Council will ensure the development of strategic diversion routes and the ability to provide adequate signs and usage information. This will be facilitated by closer links to the Highways Agency and the Police.

#### **Policy NMD12: Improving the efficiency of the highway network**

Increase the efficiency of the existing highway network through the introduction of Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) and CCTV.

Through the ITS strategy the County Council will improve the efficiency of the highway network via:

- Improve data gathering from the deployment of UTMC compliant devices across strategic routes and transport interchange points;
- Operational information shared across strategic partners and stakeholders via internet client and UTMC common database facility;
- Public traffic and travel information delivered via web based services across multiple platforms and devices targeted to meet all user need requirements.
- Carry out VMS deployment to improve information services to drivers;
- ANPR cameras will be utilised to provide accurate and reliable travel information;
- An inclusive demand responsive traffic signal strategy that meets the requirements of all road users including freight, public transport, cyclists and pedestrian

This will enable the Council to

- Improve the ability to measure and manage the network with a greater degree of accuracy than present;
- Improve the ability to forecast traffic growth with greater accuracy and the ability, and;
- react to traffic growth provided by a dynamic UTMC compliant network management system.

### **Policy NMD13: Incident Management and contingency planning**

The County Council will develop contingency plans for our network and the interaction with other networks and work with and consult all stakeholders to achieve continuity of contingency planning across boundaries for unforeseen events.

Policy NMD13 will help ensure that all stakeholders have the required information to react quickly and deal with incidents on the network. Details regarding specific incident management policies are set out below.

### **Winter Service Policy**

The County Council will carry out precautionary gritting when the formation of ice is predicted. It is County Council policy to pre-grit ;

- All A roads, most B roads and some strategic routes,
- Roads in urban areas that afford access to hospitals and main industrial estates
- Roads that provide a single route into villages.

A leaflet showing the routes is published annually and the gritting routes are available on the County Council's website.

In addition, the County Council will:

- Ensure gritting/salting of footways & cycle-ways. When there are periods of prolonged persistent widespread frosts or ice (and with a forecast for temperatures not to rise above zero for a further 24 hrs). Footways and cycle-ways subject to the highest usage will be gritted, during daylight hours, subject to the availability of resources.
- Snow Clearance - In the event of snow fall, the roads receiving gritting will be cleared as soon as resources allow. When snow falls are heavy, strategic link routes will be made accessible across the network. This will be followed by roads receiving precautionary gritting and at least one route into villages will be cleared. Footways will also be cleared where there is a considerable pedestrian usage. Resources will be targeted where snowfall is heaviest
- Salt Bins Salt bins in rural areas which are provided by Parish Councils will be replenished with salt. Salt heaps are no longer provided for environmental reasons.

The County Council will continue to regularly exchange updated emergency contact details with the police and National Traffic control centre. In conjunction with the Highways Agency we undertake an annual review of the contents of the Detailed Local Operating Agreement which contains this information. The County Council also publishes a booklet of Emergency contact numbers which is distributed to wide variety of stakeholders.

### **Helping to manage traffic growth**

#### **Policy NMD14: Walking and Cycling**

The County Council will ensure that the safety and protection of works is carried out to the required standard and that full courtesy and consideration is given to all road user especially pedestrian and cyclists. First-time permanent, quality reinstatements are required in order to maintain the condition of the highway and minimise disruption and inconvenience to all road users.

#### **Policy NMD15: Managing congestion**

The County Council will continue to identify locations or trends of traffic growth, Implement policies and actions to effectively manage and monitor incremental changes in traffic growth.

#### **Policy NMD16: Bus Quality Partnerships**

We will continue to use Bus Quality partnerships to identify methods of improving the delivery of bus services. Key to this will be the predictability of journey times. Within the partnership there will be a methodology for each partner to measure performance and set targets for improvements.

A high quality cycling and walking environment is essential in order to encourage more people to travel on foot or bicycle. This can be achieved by a reduction in car use in Warwickshire's towns, a reduction in congestion and improvements to air quality. A key objective for the Network Management Strategy is to improve the cycling and walking environment thereby encouraging greater levels of walking for short journeys, particularly to town centres, workplaces, schools and public transport interchanges.

The County Council will continue to monitor traffic growth and key congestion points as set out in the LTP3 Congestion strategy.

#### **Policy NMD17: Management of Parking**

The County Council will seek to reduce congestion through the appropriate use of public parking, including the location and period of stay; the cost and the provision of real-time information.

## **Enforcing Road Traffic Regulations**

### **Policy NMD18: Enforcing moving traffic regulations**

Where there is evidence that moving traffic offences are causing congestion, environmental intrusion or are detrimental to road safety, the County Council will use powers in the Traffic Management Act to achieve better enforcement of such offences through decriminalisation of the offences where appropriate.

### **Policy NMD19: Enforcing road traffic regulations**

The County Council will carry out a study into the operational and financial implications of the County and District Councils jointly carrying out the Civil Enforcement of moving traffic offences.

### **Policy NMD20: Integration of the Network Management Duty**

We will ensure that a “whole-authority” approach is being implemented and that all internal officers exercising duties that impact upon the network are aware of and take account of the NMD. We will ensure that our partners at the District and Borough Councils and other bodies that they have an awareness of the NMD in the exercising of their powers.

### **Policy NMD21: Working with partners**

We will continue to be part of the Midlands Service Improvement Group and work with the highways Agency to share best practice and develop strategies and schemes to improve the management of the network.

The County Council will continue to be an active member of the Midland Service Improvement Group for Street Activities, this group covers the East and West Midlands and some North western Authorities.. There are specific terms of reference for the group to help establish and improve best practice.

The County Council liaises with the Highways Agency on a formal basis, senior representatives from the County Council meet with their counterparts from the Highways Agency twice a year to discuss schemes and initiatives of mutual interest. These meetings are minuted, and contain actions for each organisation to follow up.

The County Council also attends the West Midlands HAUC meetings and is active in a number of the initiatives that they are working on at present.

### **Policy NMD22: Ensuring parity with others**

The County Council will ensure that the same standards, approaches and priorities are applied to all activities on the network. We will also develop appropriate indicators to evidence parity between all undertakers of works.

### **Policy NMD23: Ensuring parity with others: Joint occupation of road space**

We will continue to work with all undertakers of works and will encourage joint occupation of road space to improve forward planning and minimise highway network obstruction

### **Policy NMD24: Fixed Penalty Notice**

The County Council will operate the Fixed Penalty notices scheme in accordance with the current regulations and national guidance. This authority already operates a section 74 scheme and see the current benefits of shorter works durations on the highway network.

## **17.4 Targets and Monitoring**

The County Council will monitor the effectiveness of network management policies/actions, develop and improve actions taken to optimise the performance of the available network and appropriately use the available powers to effectively manage the network.

### **National Indicators**

NI 167: Congestion (variant 2) - Average journey time per mile during the morning peak

NI178: Bus Services running on time

### **Local Indicators**

WLI 14: Disruption on major routes (category 0, 1 and 2 roads) The number of days that road closures and temporary traffic signals are present on these roads in the am peak (measured per km).