

# Network Management Policy

## Introduction

Buckinghamshire County Council's (BCC) 3,200km highway infrastructure asset provides a transportation network for both businesses and private users. Proper management of the Highway Network reduces congestion and ensures occupation is appropriately managed. Transport for Buckinghamshire (TfB) manages the Highway Network on the behalf of BCC. A well-managed Highway Network will contribute towards the achievement of the Asset Management Objectives:

- AMO2:** Manage Highways Effectively and Efficiently
- AMO3:** Maximise Network Availability

and will help the council to achieve the following objectives:

- Improve community safety and reduce crime and the fear of crime;
- Repair our highways (roads, footpaths, street lights, bridges and drainage) as effectively and speedily as possible;
- To work with the England Economic Heartland / Local Enterprise Partnership's and other partners to maximise investment in the County, to deliver, manage and maintain local services and strategic infrastructure including digital highways, in line with changing demands;
- Enable the right conditions and incentives to attract new and growing businesses to Buckinghamshire, driving economic growth;
- Enable the right conditions to attract people to live, learn and work in Buckinghamshire;
- To improve the connectivity and reliability of Buckinghamshire's transport network to stimulate economic growth and promote more sustainable travel.

BCC adopts "Well Managed Highway Infrastructure, a Code of Practice" to provide guidance on highway management. The Code promotes an integrated asset management approach to highway infrastructure based on establishing local levels of service through an evidence-led, risk-based assessment.

Under the Traffic Management Act 2004 Local Authorities have a "Network Management Duty" to manage the day to day running of the highway network in an efficient and effective manner. These duties include:

- Management of works on the highway including BCC's own works, utilities and others that create static or moving obstructions.
- Contingency Plans for incidents and emergencies
- Plans for significant events or filming on the highway
- Plans for seasonal weather events.

## Management of Occupancy of the Highway

BCC adopts a Permit Scheme in order to control occupancy of the highway network. The Permit Scheme applies to all traffic sensitive streets and non-traffic sensitive streets defined as reinstatement category 0, 1 or 2 as identified on the National Street Gazetteer. Streets have been assigned to each of these categories taking account of the risks in managing the county's busiest routes, to help keep Buckinghamshire thriving and attractive.

The permit scheme is fully detailed in BCC's Permit Scheme for Road Works and Street Works. Potential incumbents of the permissible network must apply to BCC to obtain a permit in order to book the time they can occupy the network. BCC can choose to grant a permit, apply reasonable conditions or decline permission to obstruct the network. A granted permit allows the holder to carry out the specified activity at a specific location and within the allowable timeframe.

BCC encourages collaborative working between promoters of street works to minimise occupancy time on the network. BCC holds collaboration meetings within its own organisation to encourage joint working on the highway.

The permit scheme means that the most traffic sensitive parts of the network can be efficiently managed to ensure that works on the strategic network do not cause unnecessary congestion at peak times of the day.

On the remainder of the network, works on the highway are "noticeable". Statutory utility companies must notify BCC via the Eton system of the works to allow coordination and minimise conflicts between works. Other works promoters or event organisers must apply for road space booking to allow coordination and highlight potential conflicts with other works, diversions or events as outlined in BCC's Permit Scheme for Road Works and Street Works. Further licences may be required depending on the nature of the activity.

## Contingency Plans for Incidents and Emergencies

In the case of an emergency incident on the Highway Network, BCC has detailed Continuity Plans. Business Continuity Plans set out the response to emergency situations that may impact the network. The Business Continuity Plans will be used in any situation that requires immediate response on the highway infrastructure network. By following the guidance set out in the Business Continuity Plan any situation will be responded to with appropriate resources to minimise any impact to the highway network.

The BCC Business Continuity Plan also sets out how we would continue to operate and fulfil our Network Management Duty in the event of an emergency situation affecting our ability to operate from our normal place of work.

## Plans for Significant Events

Buckinghamshire plays host to key events and film productions throughout the year. These events will cause obstruction on the highway network. Events held on the highway may require Temporary Road Traffic Regulation Orders or other Traffic Management arrangements. These are licenced and coordinated by the Streetworks team within BCC. Costs for such arrangements will be borne by the event organiser or production company, other than road closures for charities.

Events off the highway which may generate significant increases in traffic must be registered with BCC to enable appropriate planning of road space to maintain a safe network. Where there is likely to be a significant traffic impact at signalised junctions affected by a planned event a review of traffic signal timing plans before the event will be considered. Advance traffic signal operations plans will involve developing event traffic signal timing plans which will prioritise strategic roads or minor road traffic movements as necessary. Such events will also be publicised in advance on our Variable Message Systems where appropriate as well as via the various media channels available to alert drivers to consider alternative route.

## Plans for Seasonal Events

BCC has a detailed Winter Service Plan that sets out how the highway network will be managed during the winter months in relation to extreme weather events.

## Performance Monitoring

The effective implementation of this policy will be reviewed through BCC's Performance Management Framework (PMF). BCC's PMF contains both Lagging and Leading Indicators to monitor BCC's outputs and the benefits the service provides. The indicators that will measure the effectiveness of this Network Management Policy are:

Indicator	Leading / Lagging
<b>No. Sample Inspections (SA, SB and SC)</b>	Leading
<b>No. Defect Inspections (D1, D2 and D3)</b>	Leading
<b>Length and Time Traffic Management is on the Network</b>	Leading
<b>No. Opportunities to co-ordinate Works</b>	Leading
<b>% of Permits Extended</b>	Leading
<b>% of Permissible Network Available</b>	Lagging

## Continual Improvement

BCC will continually monitor the effectiveness of this policy in line the risk based approach adopted. BCC will continue to conform to best practice in developing its risk based approach to network management and will take account of new data as it comes available to help inform decision making.

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