

HAMP COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Introduction

The highway network is one of the main elements underpinning the strong performing economy of Bury. It provides access to jobs, commerce, services, schools, health care and communities that are the drivers of the economy and is a major influencing factor on how the quality of everyday life within the Borough is perceived.

Effective and efficient management of the highway network is a key factor in the ability of the Council to deliver its services and enable the economy of the Bury to continue to thrive. A well maintained highway network plays an essential role in supporting growth and attracting increased investment in the Borough and it is the single most valuable asset owned and operated by Bury Council, currently valued at £921 million.

The highway network comprises all the carriageways, footways, street lights, cycleways, verges, signs, drains, road markings, street furniture, structures, verges and highway trees within the adopted highway maintained by Bury Council as Highway Authority (HA) at the public expense.

HAs are finding that they are having to exercise their duties to maintain, operate and improve their highway assets under ever increasing pressures, including:

- Mature, ageing networks with significant backlogs of maintenance.
- Increasing accountability to stakeholders and funding providers.
- Increasingly informed public with higher expectations.
- Inadequate budgets with funding diverted to support other services.
- Limited resources in both staff and skills.

Within these constraints, the adoption of asset management principles can aid in attaining a more beneficial service provision. However, it is also important to provide clarity and transparency for stakeholders regarding our asset management approach to highway maintenance in order that we can:

- Inform and support decisions that affect the stewardship of the highway network.
- Solidify the reputation of Bury Council's Engineering and Operational Services, and maintain a high profile and positive image.

- Demonstrate the Council have acted quickly, decisively and responsibly in improving asset condition.
- Have the ability to submit strong bids for funding both at national and regional levels.

Consultation

The initial purpose of consultation is to help stakeholders understand the Council's policy/approach to asset management (i.e. where and why roads are being repaired) and to improve their understanding of how repairs are being made to the highway network. It is more of a "push" of information rather than engaging in full consultative dialogues but it is important to listen to people's concerns about the highway network.

Who Will We Communicate With?

Internal Stakeholders

- Bury Council Staff
- Members
- Operational Services

External Stakeholders

- Local road users
- Local communities / residents
- Bury Business Group
- Emergency services (Police, Fire, Ambulance and Health service)
- Statutory Utility Companies
- Interest groups such as freight associations, pedestrian groups, cycling and motoring groups, disability and mobility groups and motoring groups
- MPs
- Leisure services
- Schools
- Neighbouring highway authorities.

What Will We Communicate?

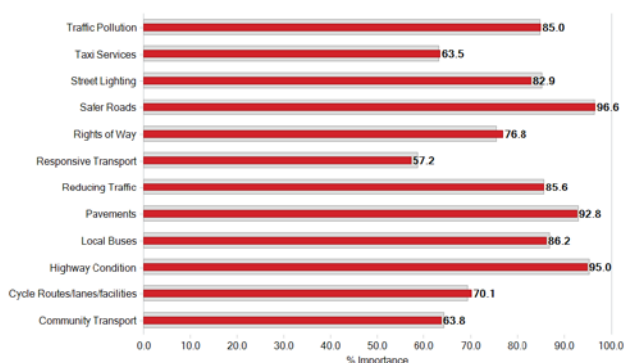
- Funding - the Council does not have access to infinite funds and has to prioritise its works.
- Prioritisation - explain how we spend money to maximise the benefits to our asset/stakeholders
- Achievements - what have we achieved in the last 12 months? How has this benefitted stakeholders?
- Performance - how are we performing against the targets we set for ourselves?
- Lessons Learnt - what will we do differently next time and why.
- Programmes - inform stakeholders of when and where we will be carrying out works and explaining why we are carrying them out.
- Managing Expectations - deliver what we promise but never promise what we cannot deliver. Publicise these standards and levels of service to stakeholders.

Information, Reporting and Feedback

Public Opinion Survey

The National Highways and Transport (NHT) Public Opinion Survey is a collaborative venture by a number of local highway authorities (106 in 2016) to give residents the chance to comment on highways and transport services provided by their authority. It is governed by a local highway authority steering group and the same questionnaire is used across all authorities so that comparisons can be made. The survey analysis enables benchmarking, trending, mapping and overlaying of data from national down to local ward level.

Results are publicly available (via NHT's website) and authorities can use the feedback to manage and improve local services.



Example results for just one of the thirty questions asked in the 2016 NHT survey

Getting the Message Out

The NHT survey indicates that satisfaction with the level of information on transport and highways is generally low. There are numerous methods that can be used to get the message out ...

- Our website at www.bury.gov.uk
- Social media - Facebook and Twitter
- Discussions with neighbouring HAs
- Leaflets
- Local news items
- Local media features



The message should contain information on budget setting and the service levels and performance targets that have been set.

It should also set out how engagement with Councillors takes place to provide them with information and how they have the opportunity to inform and influence strategies.

The Bury website should contain information on our asset management policies and plans, activities undertaken and outline works programmes for current and future years. It already provides the opportunity for feedback and for reporting issues, defects and problems using the online tools.