



# Northumberland

## County Council

ASHINGTON & BLYTH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

DATE: 15 MAY 2018

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### CONSULTATION ON THE REFRESHED FUNCTIONAL HIERARCHY AND RESILIENT ROAD NETWORK

**Report of Executive Director, Place:** Paul Johnston

**Cabinet Member for Environment and Local Services:** Glen Sanderson

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#### **Purpose of report**

The purpose of the report is to inform the Local Area Council about the consultation that is taking place with County Councillors, Town and Parish Councils and other key stakeholders on a periodic review of the Council's functional road hierarchy.

#### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the committee notes the content of the report and encourages individual members and Towns and Parish Councils to consider and respond to the consultation.

#### **Link to Corporate Plan**

How - "We want to be efficient, open and work for everyone"

Living - "We want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for"

Enjoying - "We want you to love where you live"

Connecting - "We want you to have access to the things you need"

#### **Key issues**

A report was presented to Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee on March 28th 2018 providing an update on a review of the highway hierarchy.

We are carrying out a consultation with Town and Parish Councils, County Councillors, key stakeholders and the public about the functional road hierarchy.

The closing date for consultation is the 1st June 2018. We would ask the Town and Parish Liaison Working Group to encourage Towns and Parish Councils to consider and respond to the consultation.

## **Background**

A report was presented to the County Council Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 28th March 2018 entitled 'Implementation of the Revised Highway Maintenance Code of Practice, "Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure"'. This partly related to a review of the functional highway hierarchy which was to involve a consultation with County Councillors, Town and Parish Councillors, key stakeholders and the public.

The consultation is now underway and the closing date for consultation is the 1st June 2018

The County Council has classified all its roads, footpaths and cycleways into different categories for many years - using terms such as major roads, distributor roads and local access roads. Since 2008 these 'hierarchies' have been in place without change, other than minor tweaks to allow for new developments and changes to the road network.

In October 2016 the Department for Transport (DfT) and the UK Road Liaison Group (UKRLG) released an updated national Code of Practice for the maintenance and management of all highway infrastructure assets. We are taking the opportunity working alongside this revised national Code of Practice to review and refresh our hierarchies.

The Code of Practice recommends that "the hierarchy should take into account current and expected use, resilience, and local economic and social factors such as industry, schools, hospitals and similar, as well as the desirability of continuity and of a consistent approach for walking and cycling."

As part of the review the descriptions within the hierarchy for our local roads will be amended and will include nine categories, including the major road networks, our resilient road network, distributor roads, link roads and local access roads. Its aim is to make it easier for people to understand why a certain road has a certain category within the hierarchy.

The ultimate aim is to have the most appropriate and up-to-date classification of all the county's roads, allowing for prioritisation of inspection and maintenance, including in times of bad weather such as the recent 'Beast from the East'.

The council has already assessed each section of road against the new descriptions and allocated a potential classification category to each. Town and Parish Councils, County Councillors, key stakeholders and the public are being asked their views on these classifications.

Once completed in September 2018, the Northumberland road hierarchy, showing the road category for all the roads in the county will be published on the council's website and adopted for future use by the County Council as the Local Highway Authority.

We would ask the Local Area Council to encourage individual Members and Town and Parish Councils to consider and respond to the consultation.

The consultation and all background information is available on the Council's website and can be found on the following link

<https://northumberland.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=f9f829e217ae415a88ccb8676a9a0c88>

## **Implications**

<b>Policy</b>	A review and subsequent implementation of an updated carriageway hierarchy is fundamental to reviewing current policies, strategies and service standards as part of adopting the principles of the revised Code of Practice.
<b>Finance and value for money</b>	The revised Code and asset management principles ensure that value for money is embedded in the way we work, this includes whole life costing and a proactive maintenance regime.
<b>Legal</b>	As a Highway Authority, the County Council has a number of legal obligations, an updated carriageway hierarchy is fundamental to reviewing current policies, strategies and service standards as part of adopting the principles of the revised Code of Practice which is essential in order to counter third party claims. The expectation is that courts will look upon the code as good practice and in testing the legal test of reasonableness.
<b>Procurement</b>	N/A
<b>Human Resources</b>	N/A
<b>Property</b>	N/A
<b>Equalities</b> (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	The Code reinforces risk management principles and considers the risks arising from various levels of maintenance relating to the function of the asset, its safety and its long term sustainability. Applying a functional hierarchy supports this.
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder</b>	N/A
<b>Customer Consideration</b>	This report forms part of a comprehensive consultation.
<b>Carbon reduction</b>	N/A
<b>Wards</b>	All

### **Consultation:**

This report forms part of a comprehensive consultation that is currently underway. The feedback from this consultation will be reported to Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **Background papers:**

Implementation of the Revised Highway Maintenance Code of Practice, "Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure." Network Hierarchy - Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 28th March 2018.

### **Report sign off.**

	initials
Monitoring Officer/Legal	N/A
Executive Director of Finance & S151 Officer	N/A
Relevant Executive Director	PJ
Chief Executive	N/A
Portfolio Holder(s)	GS

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