



Doncaster  
Council

Appendix A

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# Highway Asset Maintenance Communications Strategy





## Highway Asset Maintenance Communications Strategy

Doncaster Council recognises that effective communication with its key stakeholders and customers, at various stages in the asset management and highway maintenance process is essential.

Engagement raises public awareness of the challenges and issues faced by the highway authority, and helps explain the way in which services have to be prioritised in order to provide a service which meets the needs of the authority but also helps manage customer expectations.

Through communication, Doncaster Council aims to:

- Raise awareness of the services provided by the Highway Authority
- Increase stakeholder satisfaction with the services provided
- Improve the level of trust and confidence in the decisions made
- Support elected members in their roles as community representatives
- Use modern technology to reach as many people as possible.

### Stakeholders

Doncaster Council will seek to engage with and inform, people from across the borough of Doncaster and beyond, including but not restricted to:

INTERNAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Elected Members</li><li>• Area Managers</li><li>• Highways Service Staff</li><li>• Other Doncaster Council staff</li><li>• Customer Contact Centre</li><li>• Service Providers</li></ul>

EXTERNAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Residents</li><li>• Local Road Users</li><li>• Local Communities and Community Groups</li><li>• Schools and Colleges</li><li>• Local Businesses</li><li>• Town and Parish Councils</li><li>• Members of Parliament (MPs)</li><li>• Public Service Operators</li><li>• Interest groups such as freight associations, pedestrian groups, cycling and motoring groups, disability and mobility groups.</li><li>• Emergency Services (Police, Fire, Ambulance and Health Service)</li><li>• Utilities (gas, water, electric, Communications etc)</li></ul>

### What We Communicate

Information communicated to stakeholders will include but not be limited to:

- Asset Types Managed by Doncaster Council
- Policies & Strategies
- Annual Planned Maintenance Programmes
- The Resilient Network
- Customer Satisfaction



- Feedback on Service Delivery
- Proposed Longer Term Projects
- Levels of Service, Targets and Performance Measures

## How We Communicate

Doncaster Council will use the modern advances of information technology to communicate as well as continuing to use traditional methods such as newspapers, telephone and leaflets which still play a fundamental role and should not be undervalued.

The council has corporate guidelines for communication.

### Local Media

Local media such as newspapers play a strong role in shaping perceptions of local government, so informed reporting is vital.

### Digital Media

The Council use the latest technology developments to expand on opportunities to communicate more effectively with external audiences. It is important to look at new and innovative methods to keep up with an ever-changing world.



- Website – This enables communication with stakeholders by providing an A to Z Guide of Council Services. For highways services, this includes but is not limited to:
  - Documentation explaining highway asset management strategies and associated policies.
  - Details of the current highways annual works programme which is updated to ensure the information is accurate.
  - A link to Roadworks.org - an interactive map showing roadworks across the borough, including works by statutory undertakers (Telecoms, Electric, Gas companies etc.).
  - Performance data (targets and actual).
  - Facility to report highway defects.
  - Adverse Weather Information and Guidance



- Social Networking - is increasingly used by organisations, as well as individuals, as a means of developing online communities for gathering and disseminating information that is of mutual interest. Doncaster Council currently use facebook  and twitter  and can be followed @mydoncaster

## Traditional Methods

Whilst the Council will make greater use of web based access to information and social media, traditional methods of communication cannot be under estimated. The Council will use the most appropriate communication method for the audience and the message it aims to convey, these include:



Members briefing sessions – keeping local members up to date is key to managing people’s expectations, especially about more disruptive schemes.



The Customer Service Centre - is briefed to deal with and signpost any calls regarding the highway network to the most appropriate officers.



Community Committees – Briefing notes will be supplied to the area committees to inform people of works taking place. This allows for further engagement with people as the work is planned and progressed.



Meetings with external partners – to inform and engage. By building good relationships with external partners on particular schemes, and keeping them informed of developments or work within their area, expectations can be managed.



Media releases – convey important notices and events to local and national media.



Letter drops – to households directly affected by road closures or potentially disruptive works.



Signs – are placed in advance of major works starting, to allow users of the network in Doncaster to manage their travel plans, and for local residents and businesses to adjust their arrangements to accommodate the works, with minimum inconvenience and disruption.

The Council will continue to look at new and innovative methods to keep up with an ever-changing world.



## **Internal Communications**

Staff are crucial in building the council's reputation, whether they are frontline staff or officers representing the council externally. The way they behave and how they talk about the council can have a huge impact. Good internal communications are therefore very important in helping a council achieve its objectives.

Internal communication channels used include;

- Doncaster Council Intranet (internal council web based communication site)
- Message from the Chief Executive – Regular Communications Blog from the Chief Executive
- Regeneration & Environment Staff Briefings
- Regeneration & Environment Newsletter
- Senior Management and team briefings
- Regular Team Meetings

## **Evaluation & Review**

The Council will measure the effectiveness of the Highway Asset Maintenance Communication Strategy and act on the feedback received to amend or enhance it where necessary.