



north wales economic ambition board  
bwrdd uchelgais economaidd gogledd cymru

**REPORT TO TRANSPORT DELIVERY SUB-GROUP**

**02 DECEMBER 2019**

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**Title: UPDATE PAPER ON THE PROGRESSION OF THE ADOPTION OF UNADOPTED ROADS ACROSS WALES**

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**1. Purpose of the Report**

1.1 To update the Sub-Group on progress

**2. Decision Sought**

2.1 Support for officers to attend meetings and report back.

**3. Reasons supporting the need for a decision.**

3.1 Not applicable

**4 Background and Relevant Considerations**

**PROGRESS TO DATE**

4.1 The Unadopted Roads Taskforce has completed its 'First phase' of work and its Report on Unadopted Roads, which included a 'Road Adoption Model Guide' has been endorsed by the Minister for Economy and Transport.

4.2 The Task Force is now moving forward with its 'Phase 2' work, aiming to report further to the Minister for Economy and Transport in February 2020.

4.3 The further work of the Taskforce will be focused to deliver the outcomes following the recommendations identified in the preliminary Report, namely

- That work progresses to establish a database to provide a comprehensive record of all unadopted roads in Wales
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- To established and develop a set of highway design and construction common standards for use by Local Authorities and housing developers for adoptable roadways.

#### **Road Adoption Model Guide**

- 4.4 The Road Adoption Model Guide (RAMG) was sent to all Local Authorities, via WLGA, on 4/9/19
- 4.5 The RAMG has been developed and agreed by Local Highway Authority, Local Planning Authority and Building Federation representatives, together with Welsh Government officers. All parties have agreed that if this was embraced consistently throughout Wales then there would be a clearer understanding by Councils and Housing developers at an early stage that should eradicate future potential process issues in terms of road adoption.
- 4.6 The WLGA commends the RAMG to all Authorities in Wales and encourages its use nationally to ensure that local processes are in accordance with what is set out in the Guide. The intention is to monitor the situation around the country over the next 6 months or so and see whether the wider usage of processes aligned to the RAMG will lead to improvements and less future problems in terms of potential adoption issues.

#### **Record of all unadopted roads in Wales**

- 4.7 The Unadopted Roads Taskforce is looking at how best to establish a database to provide a comprehensive record of all unadopted roads in Wales. The database could be used to provide cost estimates for improving unadopted roads to reasonable adoptable standards.
- 4.8 The database would be managed and maintained with the assistance of local authorities and a budget would need to be established to set up the database.
- 4.9 All Local Authorities are obliged to maintain a 'Local Street Gazetteer' which in turn feeds in to the 'National Street Gazetteer' which is held and maintained by Geoplace, which is a Limited Liability Partnership jointly owned by the Local Government Association and Ordnance Survey. The NSG contains definitive information for streets in England and Wales including its status i.e. whether it is 'maintainable at public expense' or not.
- 4.10 The Taskforce will work with GeoPlace initially to see what information on unadopted roads can be extracted from the Gazetteer and what additional work needs to be done to obtain the required information.

#### **Unadopted Roads – Development of Common Standards for Adoption.**

- 4.11 The first meeting of the Unadopted Roads Common Standards Review Group, Chaired by Paul Whealdon, the Chair of the CSS Wales Development Control Forum was held on 5th November 2019.
- 4.12 The Group agrees that the 'common standards' approach is important in helping to prevent further unadopted roads from being created and exacerbating an already difficult situation. It will also give developers, many of whom operate across various Local Authority borders, better certainty regarding what will and will not be acceptable for adoption and also consistency.

- 4.13 The proposal as decided by the unadopted Roads Taskforce, is to use the Rhondda Cynon Taf suite of documents as a basis for an All Wales Common Standards approach.
- 4.14 For such a document (or suite of documents) to be effective, it needs to be adopted by all the Local Authorities. The Group agreed that take this back to the Taskforce to seek best ways of ensuring buy-in, be that through an SPG approach, a formal 'design guide' approach or any other suitable mechanism.
- 4.15 There was also discussion around the focus of the 'common standards' approach. There are numerous initiatives currently being promoted that may well impact on what the Group is seeking to produce, but there was general agreement that the Group should stick to highway construction details and highway alignment in terms of identifying commonality and what would work Wales wide. It was noted that things like the emerging work on Active Travel, SuDS, Pavement Parking etc. will all have an interface and will impact at some point but the Group needs to prepare something for the here and now, and be prepared to re-visit and amend in the future should other emerging initiatives impact significantly on highway standards at that time.
- 4.16 The Group has agreed that the RCT documents be circulated to all Authorities for review and comment on any aspect or area that could be problematic for them and to feed comments back to the Group via Huw Morgan at WLGA. The comments will then be discussed at the next meeting.
- 4.17 The Group has agreed to meet monthly probably until March if necessary.

## **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 No financial implications for the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, only individual local authority staff time at present but I understand that the Unadopted Roads Task Force will assess the financial implications for the relevant bodies once more details have been agreed

## **6. Legal Implications**

- 6.1 Included within the remit of the relevant Task Group

## **7. Staffing Implications**

- 7.1 Staff time and additional resources included within the remit of the relevant Task Group

## **8. Impact on Equalities**

- 8.1 Included within the remit of the relevant Task Group

## **9. Consultations undertaken**

- 9.1 Tasking Group includes a range of establishments and will deal with publicity and consulting with the appropriate bodies going forward.

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**STATUTORY OFFICERS RESPONSE:**

**i. Monitoring Officer – responsible body:**

No observations to add in relation to propriety

**ii. Head of Finance – responsible body:**

I note that part 5.1 of the report explains the financial implications