

Appendix 2 Benchmarking Findings

To inform the review of County Council's asset management approach and strengthen alignment with best practices, a benchmarking exercise was conducted comparing the County Council's current strategic highway policies and asset management framework against two neighbouring authorities: West Sussex County Council and Kent County Council.

Aspect	West Sussex County Council	Kent County Council	East Sussex (current vs. updated)
Document Structure & Integration	Comprehensive, integrated asset management framework combining highways, bridges, and other assets in a single suite. Documents are regularly reviewed and clearly linked to strategic outcomes.	Similar integrated approach, with a strong emphasis on risk-based maintenance and long-term investment strategies. Strategic documents include detailed service standards and performance targets.	Current documents are fragmented; updated suite aims to adopt a unified and clearly structured framework aligned with ISO 55000.
Use of ISO 55000 Principles	Explicit adoption of ISO 55000 framework to guide lifecycle planning, risk management, and continuous improvement.	Embedded ISO 55000 concepts in policy updates and operational practices, with regular maturity assessments.	Limited current reference: updated plans will incorporate ISO 55000 principles to enhance asset management maturity.
Resilience and Climate Adaptation	Includes specific strategies to enhance network resilience against climate impacts, including flood risk management and extreme weather planning. Climate change is embedded in lifecycle planning.	Proactively integrates resilience into asset management, with risk assessments focused on critical infrastructure vulnerabilities and adaptation measures to maintain service continuity.	Current documents lack explicit resilience focus; updated plans introduce resilience as a core principle.
Performance Management & Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Well-developed KPIs linked to strategic goals, including asset condition, safety, and customer satisfaction. Data-driven decision-	KPIs aligned with national reporting requirements and local priorities; extensive use of benchmarking data.	Current KPIs are underdeveloped; new framework includes refined KPIs on resilience, sustainability, and service levels.

	making supported by digital tools.		
Risk-Based Asset Management	Uses risk matrices to prioritise maintenance and renewal, balancing likelihood and consequence of asset failure. Decisions supported by quantitative data and stakeholder input.	Employs a risk-based framework consistent with Well Managed Highway Infrastructure Code and ISO 55000, focusing resources on high-risk assets and critical network sections to optimise safety and service.	Risk-based approaches are limited or informal; updated policies embed structured risk assessment processes to support evidence-based decision making.
Stakeholder & Public Engagement	Proactive engagement with stakeholders and public via consultations, clear communication protocols, and transparent reporting.	Regularly conducts public consultations, integrates feedback into policy revisions, and maintains accessible information portals.	Engagement limited; updated communication protocols and need for transparency in revised documents.
Technology & Innovation	Use of GIS, real-time asset monitoring, and digital inspection tools to improve data accuracy and operational efficiency.	Deployment of mobile inspection apps, asset management software, and route optimisation technologies.	Current technology adoption limited; updated plans promote increased digital integration for inspection and reporting.

In summary, East Sussex builds on an established foundation of sound asset management by aligning more closely with ISO 55000 and national standards, drawing on the mature practices demonstrated by West Sussex and Kent. The updated suite of strategic documents represents a forward-looking evolution. Closing identified gaps, modernising existing processes, and strengthening the county's commitment to a systematic, risk-based and value-focused approach to highway asset management.