

ROYAL CRESCENT LANE – DUNOON.

1. PURPOSE

To advise members of the risks to future Council commitments, if the proposal to adopt sections of private rear access lanes of a lesser standard of design and construction than is usually required, is pursued. To seek Members approval to conclude matters with residents as quickly as practicable.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Members take note of the advice of Officers on the potential for additional unsustainable costs in maintaining lesser quality roads and the pressures this will place on potentially reduced future maintenance resources.
- 2.2 That Members agree that Officers should proceed with negotiations with residents of Royal Crescent, on the basis of advising on the best possible improvements achievable for the sum of £47,000.
- 2.3 That Members further agree, not to pursue formal adoption, as this would set a precedent by adopting a lane which does not function as a public road and commit the Council to excessive future costs, both here and throughout Argyll and Bute.

3. DETAILS

- 3.1 Members are referred to the previous papers on this issue of 16th February 2010 and 6th April 2010, previous correspondence with residents in 2007 from Mr Alan Lothian (Area Manager) and Mr Graham Brown (Operations Manager) and further recent letters through Network and Environment management representatives, Alan Kerr , Neil Brown and Paul Farrell and Sept 2010 business day discussion.
- 3.2 The options proffered in the 16th Feb report are summarised thus:-
 1. Surfacing, Drainage, Footway build-outs and Street lighting ~ £120,000
 2. Surfacing, V shaped Drainage , Footway build-outs ~£47,000
 3. Re-grading and 50mm Surfacing only ~ £12,000Only option 1 would be of sufficient standard to allow adoption on completion. In the report option 3 was recommended as the least expensive manner of producing an acceptable running surface to assist access.
- 3.3 Members will be aware of the present maintenance backlog on the public road network in Argyll and Bute. This is to a great extent exacerbated by the poor quality of traditional sub-surface “construction” in that in most cases surfaced roads were

developed from tracks and lightly metalled unbound roads. Only recent developments and isolated maintenance have involved full depth construction.

- 3.4 This lack of full depth construction manifests itself in the frequent and recurring deterioration of the running surface of the network, due to water ingress, flexing of the carriageway and subsequent acceleration of damage due to freeze / thaw. This results in the allocation of resources to a higher proportion of reactive repairs. Therefore, increasing the proportion of the network of less than fully acceptable constructed depth and adequate drainage, will increase pressure on limited resources.
- 3.5 For this reason all new developments cannot be adopted unless they reach minimum acceptable standards in the Council's Roads Development Guide. Similarly, as Revenue and Capital funds allow, network improvements are designed to increase the ability to resist ever increasing traffic loads. Adoption of existing roads can be to a lower standard, if fit for purpose. The proposed option1 treatment for Royal Crescent is to a lower standard than a "new build" but is considered by experienced Officers to be the minimum acceptable specification achievable, which would avoid added risk to the Council.
- 3.6 The proposal to adopt sections of the network "at a lesser standard and maintain at that lesser standard" is unworkable. All this will do, is allow faults to re-appear more quickly and expose the Council to liability. Specific to this site, whatever proposal is accepted, the residents of Royal Crescent will be presented with a fully sealed surface on completion. However the deterioration of this surface will be directly related to not only its use by traffic but its suitability to prevent water ingress. The "V- Shaped" drainage proposal will actually focus water on the surface, due to the inability to get the water away into any subsurface drainage system, there for accelerating deterioration.
- 3.7 Officers are able to advise residents of the best job possible for the reported sum of £47,000 available. However as this will be below the standard for adoption, further advice will be given on the likely on-going annual costs of maintaining the finished surface to maintain access, as this will remain their responsibility. The cheaper £12,000 option, minimum work to seal the surface, is also still available and would allow residents to retain funds for future years' maintenance costs.

4. IMPLICATIONS

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| 4.1 | Policy | It is contrary to Council policy to adopt roads which have sub-standard construction. Approved design standards are applied to all new developments. |
| 4.2 | Financial | Accepting responsibility for roads of sub-standard construction, will expose the Council to the risk of excessive and disproportionate maintenance costs |
| 4.3 | Personnel | none |
| 4.4 | Equalities Impact Assessment | none |

4.5 Legal Public Liability risks increase pro rata to the network length and condition.

For further information, please contact Callum Robertson, Roads Asset Manager

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Date 14th September 2010