

ROADS CAPITAL PROGRAMME – MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report sets out proposals for additional Member and Area Committee engagement for the development of the annual roads capital programme.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Members of the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee endorse the proposals for additional Member and Area Committee engagement in the roads capital programme.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 The roads capital programme is informed using the Road Condition Index which is produced via a machine based survey measuring over 30 attributes of the roads condition. The Council's Annual Status and Options Report produces an analysis of road condition, which has shown a small but steady improvement in condition over the last few years. This has largely been achieved by the level of investment made available and by developing a programme based on:-

- Information from machine based surveys (RCI) etc
- Safety related information from Police Scotland from killed and seriously injured collisions (KSIs)
- Economic and tourism opportunities
- Known developments and additional traffic
- Information from Members
- Engineering judgement
- External funding opportunities
- Information from communities

- 3.2 Over the last 12 years the Council has invested over £86M in roads reconstruction including some £9M from the Strategic Timber Transport Fund. This has provided an average annual investment of just over £7M per year. This level of investment has seen a slow but steady increase in road condition, although, it should be noted that there is approximately £120M worth of backlog road maintenance meaning

that we are unable to treat every section of carriageway which we would ideally like to do. The roads capital programme is progressed with a view to providing the best level of return from the available investment, taking into consideration the various inputs detailed in paragraph 3.1 , whole life costs and value for money.

- 3.3 Audit Scotland produced a report on ‘Maintaining Scotland’s Roads’ in 2011 where they stated “Scotland’s roads are important for economic prosperity and for the quality of life of its people”. Similar statements have been made by Audit Scotland in subsequent audit reports.
- 3.4 A member seminar was held on 17 January 2023 to provide an overview of roads asset management. The presentation covered survey methods, backlog maintenance, investment modelling, scenarios based on different investment levels/treatment types, Road Condition Index, and how programmes are developed and implemented. The presentation can be viewed in the Members area on the Hub here:- [ELECTED MEMBER SEMINARS 2023 | The Hub](#)
- 3.5 At the members seminar, introducing further member engagement into the process of developing the roads capital programme, through a series of area based Business Day meetings was discussed. The table below sets out how we propose to implement this into the process timeline.

Action	Date
Road Condition Index data received	Generally late summer but dates can vary
Scheme Manager produces initial list of schemes for consideration	September/October
Initial lists are reviewed by officers against KSI collision data, engineering judgement etc.	September/October
Initial draft programme prepared and shared with Elected Members for comments/input	October
Draft programmes are considered by Area Committees	December
Budget confirmed at February Budget meeting and programme adjusted based on investment	February
Programme considered by EDI Committee	March
Agreed programme confirmed to all members and made available to public	March

- 3.6 The Member engagement will provide an additional opportunity for Members to discuss and comment on the programme whilst it is being developed. The framework for developing the programme is set out at a high level in paragraph 3.5 and takes into consideration numerous factors. The final draft programme will be reported the Environment Development and Infrastructure Committee at its

March meeting. Following approval by the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee, the programme will be issued to all Members on an Area Committee basis. The programme will also be publicised on the Council website.

- 3.7 As in previous years, it is possible that changes will require to be made to the programme following publication. This is to take into account winter deterioration, however any changes will be reported to Members.
- 3.8 Updates on the Capital programme will be available on our website and also through our weekly members briefings.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 This report proposes formalising member engagement to the process of developing the Roads Capital Programme to incorporate member engagement.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Policy – There are no direct policy implications arising from this report – Member engagement will provide an additional opportunity for Members to discuss and comment on the programme whilst it is being developed.
- 5.2 Financial – capital funding allocation.
- 5.3 Legal – the Council has statutory duties to maintain infrastructure set out in various legislation like the Roads Scotland Act 1984.
- 5.4 HR – none known.
- 5.5 Fairer Scotland Duty:
 - 5.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – none known.
 - 5.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – none known.
 - 5.5.3 Islands – none known.
- 5.6 Climate Change – due regard will be given to climate change with a view to minimising any climate change impact and these will be considered as and when they arise.
- 5.7 Risk – none known.
- 5.8 Customer Service – none.

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