

PROCEDURE FOR ROAD SAFETY INSPECTIONS AND DEFECT CATEGORISATION

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, states that "...a local roads authority shall manage and maintain all such roads in their area that are for the time being entered in a list (in this act referred to as "the list of public roads") prepared and kept by them under this section.."
- 1.2 The "Well-maintained Highways" the Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management has specific recommendations regarding inspections of all road elements. This procedure specifically relates to safety inspections.
- 1.3 The establishment of an effective regime of safety inspections is a crucial component of road maintenance.
- 1.4 This guidance document has been developed in collaboration with the Roads Authorities of Argyll & Bute, Dumfries and Galloway, East Ayrshire, East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Glasgow City Inverclyde, North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire South Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire Councils.
- 1.5 The Roads Working Group comprising of Senior Officers from the above Councils identified that as Local Authorities are currently faced with delivering services within an environment of increasing fiscal austerity, the need to agree a common approach and minimum standard following the principles of the Well Maintained Highways Code of Practice.
- 1.6 This will also assist relevant Councils to attribute resources to inspect and maintain additional roads assets not contained within their list of Public Roads.
- 1.7 This approach was adopted to provide a consistent methodology to the management of the road network that will focus on delivering a proactive programme of permanent repairs to improve the condition and safety of the road network. It is intended that the implementation of this new policy/procedure will also allow performance to be monitored and reviewed, implementing any necessary improvements recognised through its use.
- 1.8 The consistent approach will also assist local authorities when defending any public liability claims that may be intimated against them.

- 1.9 It is recommended that the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee recommend to the Policy and Resources Committee that the Procedure for Roads Safety and Defect Categorisation is adopted by the Council.

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2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The West of Scotland Roads Working Group, which is an officer group working through SCOTS and currently chaired and facilitated by Argyll and Bute Council, have produced a revised roads inspection document. This document coupled with revised methods of working, using ICT and capturing 'live' inspections into the WDM asset system will make the inspection process more effective and efficient. Furthermore, the procedure document will ensure a consistent approach across the West of Scotland. Other Scottish Authorities are also considering adopting the procedure.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee recommend to the Policy and Resources Committee that the Procedure for Roads Safety and Defect Categorisation is adopted by the Council.

4.0 DETAILS

- 4.1 The current inspection procedure is based on "Well-maintained Highways". This revised document provides an adopted approach to roads inspecting. This revision also provides an improved link into the increased use of ICT, through recording inspections directly onto ICT devices making the inspection process more efficient and also more effective.
- 4.2 This guidance document has been developed in collaboration with the Roads Authorities of Argyll & Bute, Dumfries and Galloway, East Ayrshire, East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Glasgow City Inverclyde, North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire South Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire Councils.
- 4.3 The Roads Working Group comprising of Senior Officers from the above Councils identified that as Local Authorities are currently faced with delivering services within an environment of increasing fiscal austerity, the need to agree a common

approach and minimum standard following the principles of the Well Maintained Highways Code of Practice.

- 4.4 Through Governance and Law, the Council's insurers have reviewed the procedure and are happy that this document is adopted by the Council as the Council's inspection procedure.
- 4.5 The revised inspection procedure will also assist relevant Councils to attribute resources to inspect and maintain additional roads assets not contained within their list of Public Roads. The revisions to the inspection regime increase the frequency of inspection to some categories and also introduce additional inspections to some rural footways which haven't previously been inspected. Overall there will be an additional amount of staff time to fulfil the inspection requirements in terms of on-site inspections. However, by recording inspection directly into the system and by utilising administrative support that is currently assigned to the area teams, the revised inspection regime is deliverable with existing staffing resource.
- 4.6 This approach was adopted to provide a consistent methodology to the management of the road network that will focus on delivering a proactive programme of permanent repairs to improve the condition and safety of the road network. It is intended that the implementation of this new policy/procedure will also allow performance to be monitored and reviewed, implementing any necessary improvements recognised through its use.
- 4.7 The consistent approach will also assist local authorities when defending any public liability claims that may be intimated against them.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The West of Scotland Roads Working Group, which is an officer group working through SCOTS and currently chaired and facilitated by Argyll and Bute Council, have produced a revised roads inspection document. This document coupled with revised methods of working, using ICT and capturing 'live' inspections into the WDM asset system will make the inspection process more effective and efficient. Furthermore, the procedure document will ensure a consistent approach across the West of Scotland. Other Scottish Authorities are also considering adopting the procedure.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

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| 6.1 | Policy | This will form a policy for inspections |
| 6.2 | Financial | From existing budget |
| 6.3 | Legal | In line with Roads Scotland Act 1984 |
| 6.4 | HR | None known |

6.5	Equalities	Helps to ensure a safe road network
6.6	Risk	Helps to ensure a safe road network
6.7	Customer Services	None known

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Procedure for Road Safety Inspections and Defect Categorisation