

Audit and Scrutiny Committee 19 June 2018 - Agenda Item 12 Appendix 2

TOPIC TITLE:		Allocation of additional roads budget	
DATE OF SUBMISSION:		17 April 2018	
PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT			
QUESTION		RESPONSE	RESPONSE JUSTIFICATION
1	Does the issue affect a number of people living in Argyll and Bute across multiple wards or, if restricted to a single or small number of wards, would its scrutiny have a wider impact across the council?	Yes	The Roads infrastructure affects people council wide.
2	Does the issue concern an area of poor performance or an emerging issue (meaning there is no comprehensive performance data available)?	Yes	<p>A review of the LGBF network highlighted that over the period 2015-2017 the % of roads in Argyll & Bute (ABC) in need of maintenance compared to the Scottish average was as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - local A class roads - 45%/30% - local B class roads - 63%/35% - local C class roads - 60%/35% - unclassified roads - 53%/40% <p>It is recognised that 40% of the Council's overall roads network is on islands, and 23% of the roads are built on peat meaning the council does have unique challenges in maintaining its road network. This means that comparisons against the national average, whilst still useful, are not entirely representative of the level of performance within the Council.</p> <p>It is also worth noting that ABC as a rural council should not be compared to Urban Councils, therefore the LGBF data was used to compare ABC against the following councils;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aberdeenshire - Highland - Dumfries & Galloways - Scottish Borders - Eilean Star <p>ABC was identified as having the highest % of roads requiring repair on roads classified as A, B and C and had the 3rd highest % for unclassified roads.</p>

3	Can scrutiny add value - i.e. is performance likely to improve as a result of scrutiny?	Yes	As per the response to question 2 there is evidence that the Council are considerably behind the Scottish average in terms of the standard of our roads which have a clear impact on strategic considerations such as Growing our Committee, Economic Strategy and Tourism. Therefore there is evidence that there may be lessons to be learned through engagement with other road authorities.
4	Does the issue relate to a service area with a revenue and/or capital budget in excess of £100k or, in the case of an emerging issue, is there a realistic expectation that the revenue and/or capital budget will exceed £100k?	Yes	As per the budget papers submitted to Council on the 22 February, the total capital budget allocation for 2018/19 is approx £8.63 million. This includes £5.5 million of additional capital funding agreed at the same Council meeting. The revenue budget for Roads Operations for 2018/19 is approx £5.3 million.
5	Is the issue being addressed by another committee (area or strategic) or been subject to review in past 18 months?	No	Roads Maintenance performance is reported to the EDI committee as per the Council's approach to performance management however we are not aware of any other external or internal scrutiny of roads management in the previous two years. The 18/19 internal audit plan has a roads maintenance review with the indicative high level scope being 'to follow up on the 2014/15 internal audit of roads maintenance and a general review of the control environment and policies and procedures' however this would not focus on the proposed topic of how roads maintenance budgets are allocated. However if roads maintenance selected as an issue for scrutiny consideration will need to be given to postponing the roads maintenance audit until 2019/20 so as not to overburden officers and also to follow up to scrutiny can be incorporated into the audit.
Does the issue pass to stage 2 assessment?		Pass	
QUESTION		RESPONSE	RESPONSE JUSTIFICATION
6	Is the scrutiny activity timely - i.e. will it be possible to implement changes at the current time?	Yes	There are no restrictions in implementing new ideas within roads maintenance, furthermore Roads and Amenity services are in the process of implementing control and information HUB to enable a focus on quality delivery and delivering a service with increasing levels of customer expectation. Therefore the identification of potential improvements could potentially be managed within the project to deliver the new HUB.
7	Is there adequate resources in place to scrutinise the issue effectively?	Yes	The scrutiny work programme for 2018/19 is to be submitted to the June 2018 Audit and Scrutiny Committee there are currently no reviews planned until such time this programme is approved.
8	Is it an issue which has attracted public attention and/or highlighted by residents?	Yes	In 2017/18 there were a total of 767 complaints logged from the public across all Council areas. 79% (608) of these related to areas within Development and Infrastructure of which 129 (21%) were categorised as relating to roads maintenance.

9	Does it address an area highlighted by the Council's risk management process or other audit/scrutiny reports?	Yes	<p>There are 4 risks relating to roads maintenance on D&I's Operational Risk Register for 2018. All 4 risks relate primarily to the effect that adverse weather would have on operations. Although the proposed topic does not relate to adverse weather this indicates that the management and delivery of roads maintenance is an issue which features prominently within the risk management process of the council.</p> <p>Audit Scotland - Maintaining Scotland's Roads follow up report identified Argyll & Bute as having the lowest % of acceptable roads in Scotland in 2014/15.</p>
Stage 2 Assessment Outcome		High Priority	