

**ANNUAL STATUS AND OPTIONS REPORT**

---

**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The Annual Options and Status Report (ASOR) presents a summary of the Council's road assets as at April 2018. The report provides information, based upon current available data, on the condition of the asset and future options which can be considered in terms of investment. The report sets out the current road and associated infrastructure condition and forecasts future condition based on different proposed levels of investment.
- 1.2 The ASOR demonstrates investment in the Roads Reconstruction Programme over the last year which has provided a slight improvement to the overall Road Condition Index (RCI). Whilst the condition has only improved slightly, without the recent increased investment the road condition would have continued to deteriorate, resulting in our road network being in an extremely poor condition. The extended programme of resurfacing, edge strengthening and surface dressing has ensured the available increase in allocated money has been invested wisely and had a positive impact on the overall road network. The condition surveys carried out nationally have a lag of 2 – 4 years (due to not all of the network being surveyed in one year). Currently Argyll and Bute's condition survey is indicating a smaller percentage in the 'red' and this position is anticipated to worsen should there be a reduction in available investment.
- 1.3 The ASOR links into the Service Asset Management Plan (SAMP) which forms part of the overall Capital budget decision making process. The ASOR is a useful tool in assisting Members make informed strategic decisions regarding investment of our limited Capital resources.
- 1.4 It is recommended that the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee:-
- 1.4.1 Endorses the Annual Status and Options Report and the positive analytical feedback it provides with regard to the improvement of the Council's Road Condition Index as a result of the ongoing investment in roads reconstruction works.

1.4.2 Note that the Annual Status and Options Report informs key elements of the Development and Infrastructure Asset Management Plan that in turn informs the budget setting process.

**ANNUAL STATUS AND OPTIONS REPORT**

---

**2.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 This report introduces the Annual Status and Options Report which makes an analytical assessment of the condition of the Council's road network and associated infrastructure as well as setting out projected conditions based on varying levels of investment.

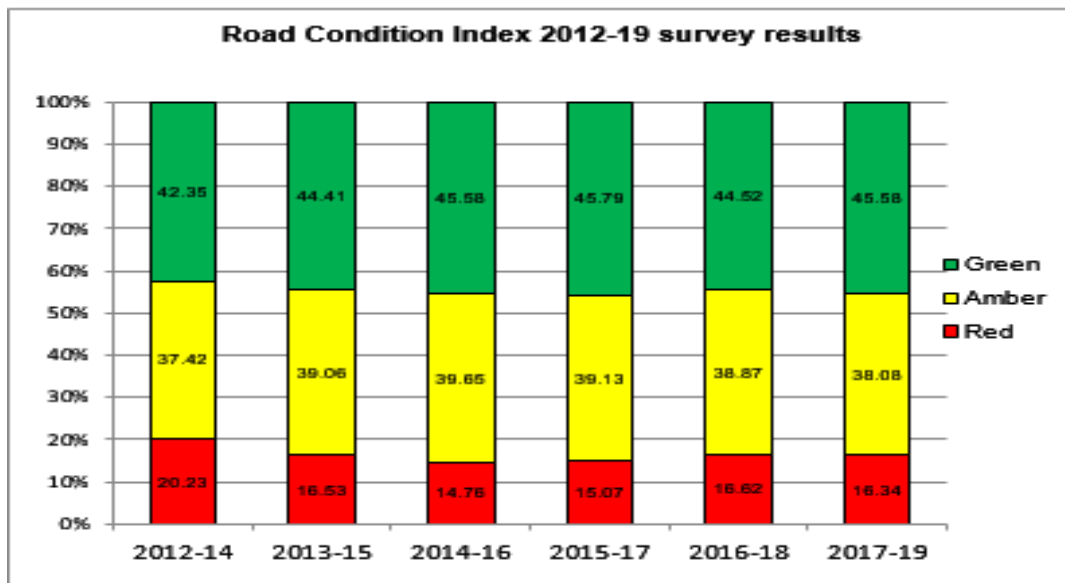
**3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee:
- 3.1.1 Endorses the Annual Status and Options Report and the positive analytical feedback it provides with regard to the improvement of the Council's Road Condition Index as a result of the ongoing investment in roads reconstruction works.
  - 3.1.2 Note that the Annual Status and Options Report informs key elements of the Development and Infrastructure Asset Management Plan that in turn informs the budget setting process.

**4.0 DETAIL**

- 4.1 At Argyll and Bute Council Budget Meeting in February 2018, a £16m investment programme for roads reconstruction was approved over the next two years. It is anticipated this recent capital reconstruction programme will deliver a welcome improvement to the road network in terms of the Road Condition Index (RCI) from the current 54.4%. Previous levels of investment have halted the deterioration of the surfacing, began to improve network condition and acted as a contributory factor in reducing the number of CAT 1 & 2 defects. The latest RCI survey results clearly reflect the positive impact previous investment has made whilst contributing to achieving the corporate goals and objectives.

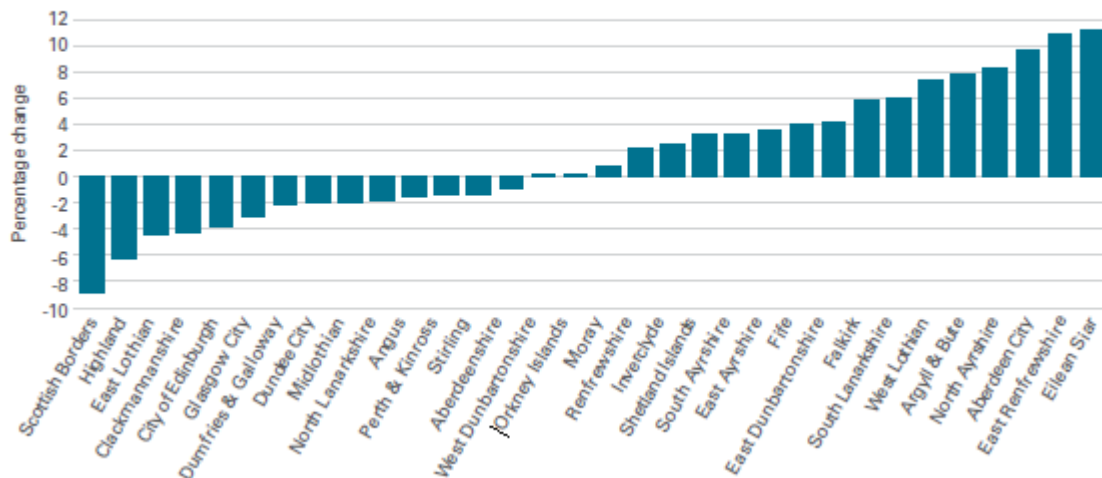
- 4.2 The previous reduction in available budget in 2016/17 and 2017/18 had resulted in a corresponding reduction in works carried out on the ground. The condition surveys carried out nationally have a lag of 2 – 4 years (due to not all of the network being surveyed in one year). Currently Argyll and Bute's condition survey is indicating a smaller percentage in the 'red' and this position is anticipated to worsen with any reduction in available investment. It is worth noting that we still have a higher overall percentage of our roads in the 'green'.
- 4.3 The 2018-19 road reconstruction budget has been prioritised towards the use of cost effective treatments such as surface dressing to maximise network coverage. This type of treatment targets areas in the earlier stages of deterioration and helps seal cracks and prevent water ingress (main cause of deterioration) which in turn will protect previous investment and extend pavement life until such times as more robust treatments can be afforded.



The extract below from Audit Scotland's 2016 report 'Maintaining Scotland's Roads' shows that Argyll and Bute is one of the most improved roads authorities with roads an acceptable condition. This direction of travel has been brought about by the levels of investment made on the road network and the prudent choice of proportionate and appropriate surface treatments.

## Change in percentage of council-maintained roads in acceptable condition from 2011/12 to 2014/15

There is significant variation in the change in road condition between councils.



- 4.4 The graph above details the positive improvement in the Road Condition Index (RCI) following the significant capital investment. Without this investment, we would have had significant deterioration occur with the RCI having fallen significantly.
- 4.5 The RCI survey data is utilised along with other relevant available data such as SCRIM (sideway-force coefficient routine investigation machine), Accident Statistics, Road Hierarchy, Inspection data and local engineering judgement to develop an initial list of suitable schemes for inclusion in the road reconstruction programme. The WDM pavement management system interrogates all the available data to identify and rank potential schemes. Once a draft list is compiled further analysis is carried out by local staff to establish scheme costs, treatment options etc. this is then matched to available funding. The selection process is under regular review and has been steadily improved over time.
- 4.6 The ASOR is a report which forms part of a suite of documents which are recommended by SCOTS for local authorities use. The documents have been developed in collaboration with all Scottish and Welsh authorities and aim to improve processes and continue the development and implementation of the wider use of recognised asset management techniques. When authorities have fully developed the use of these documents they will enable better value for money to be delivered and prudent stewardship of the road asset to be demonstrated.
- 4.7 SCOTS have focused on carriageway condition including backlog value and steady state figures due to carriageways being the single most valuable Council asset.
- 4.8 The ASOR is also a tool which elected members can use to help set priorities for investing the limited resources available to the Council.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 This ASOR report has been developed in line with the SCOTS Asset Management Project and provides a useful resource aimed at providing relevant decision makers with information which will allow a more informed choice to be made in respect of future investment options.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Policy – Non known

6.2 Financial - Current investment levels do not support the delivery of a sustainable road network maintenance regime.

6.3 Legal – None known

6.4 HR – None known

6.5 Equalities / Fairer Scotland Duty – None known

6.6 Risk - Road network condition will deteriorate.

6.7 Customer Service – None known

**Pippa Milne**

**Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure Services**

**Policy Lead Councillor Roddy McCuish**

November 2018

**For further information contact:** Hugh O'Neill, Network and Standards Manager

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Annual Status and Options Report