

ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES UPDATE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report format and frequency for these reports were agreed as part of the previous Council. The purpose of the report is to provide a general update on key activities of the Service over recent months and to enable a discussion on key, high level topics and projects. As part of developing future committee structure and workplans, the purpose and effectiveness of this standing item should be reviewed.
- 1.2 As part of the Member Induction Programme the Head of Roads and Infrastructure gave a brief overview of the huge range of work ongoing across the Service area to Members at the Corran Halls in Oban on 17th May. The slides from that presentation are available on the Member Zone system.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Area Committee note and consider the contents of this report, and provide feedback on the content, format and frequency.

3.0 DETAIL

COVID absence

- 3.1 For the period of the previous report in March, although we were seeing some easing of COVID restrictions, absence rates as a result of self-isolation requirements remained high. With the recent changes to COVID restrictions, absence rates are now more in line with pre-COVID trends.

Capital Roads Reconstruction Programme

- 3.2 The focus of the roads reconstruction programme is to recover the network through the delivery of a mix of carriageway resurfacing schemes, patching/surface dressing and in-situ road surface recycling, which follow the principles set out within the Roads Asset Management Plan.
- 3.3 This Council has approximately £100m of backlog maintenance in the road

network. This means that over £100m would need to be invested to bring the road network up to an A1 standard. Most councils are in a very similar position. Clearly in the current financial climate we are not going to see the level of investment required to bring the road network up to an A1 condition. However, over the last decade there has been a carefully applied strategy of delivering revenue and capital funding collectively and delivering a series of works designed to minimise reactive work, carry out right first time repairs, wherever possible, and to deliver surfacing techniques and specifications which maximizes the amount of repairs and resurfacing which is delivered. As with almost all council services, there is insufficient funding available to treat all the sections of road that we'd like to do, the focus being on treating sections where we can maximise the financial return and in so doing reduce the amount of reactive repairs carried out. Unfortunately, the available funding means that almost all roads authorities, including Argyll and Bute, are unable to treat every section of road they would like to do.

- 3.4 The total programme for this financial year for roads reconstruction is £8m Council capital allocation and £1.6m from the Strategic Timber Transport Scheme, which is used to match fund existing schemes on the council network where timber extraction is programmed to be carried out.
- 3.5 Oil and bitumen prices have increased significantly over recent months. Coated roadstone used for surfacing our road and footways has increased by approximately 20%. This will impact our programmes of work. A report detailing the implications of the recent price increases will be presented to the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee in June.
- 3.6 The Council capital allocation for the MAKI area is £2.621m, and the scheme list is available on the Council website at: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/roads-capital-programme-202223>

Winter Maintenance

- 3.7 This winter maintenance season ran from Friday 29th October 2021 to Friday 15th April 2022. The annual policy is presented to the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee in September. When freezing conditions are forecast, our teams pre-treat over 750 miles of road, which is roughly the equivalent of driving from Lochgilphead to Paris.
- 3.8 Key facts from this winter season:
- 65 full fleet runs
 - 2,049 individual vehicle runs
 - Highest turned out route A819 Inveraray to Dalmally
 - Total distance travelled 105,024 miles
 - Salt used 11,030 tonnes
 - Total spend £2,258,228.59.

MAKI public conveniences

- 3.9 At the March meeting of this committee members asked for an update to be provided on the condition of public conveniences in the MAKI area.
- 3.10 The Council enhanced its public convenience cleaning regime in response to Scottish Government COVID guidance. The cleaning frequencies have now reverted to the pre-COVID schedule which is noted below:

Area	Facility	Frequency
Mid Argyll	Inveraray	As required
	Lochgilphead	1 per day
	Ardrishaig	1 per day
	Tayvallich	1 per week
	Kilmartin	1 per week
	Tarbert	1 per day
	Crinan	1 per week
Kintyre	Machrihanish	1 per day
	Southend	1 per day
	Bolgam Street	1 per day
	Pensioner's Row	1 per day
	Gigha	1 per day
	Carradale	1 per day
Islay and Jura	Bowmore	1 per day
	Bridgend	1 per day
	Port Ellen	1 per day
	Port Askaig	1 per day
	Feolin	Ad hoc
	Craighouse	Ad hoc
	Bruichladdich	1 per day
	Portnahaven	1 per day

- 3.11 In terms of the asset condition, the following spend on revenue maintenance has been incurred over the past five financial years:

Area	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Mid Argyll	29,336	7,369	17,983	12,385	11,897
Kintyre		2,466	2,440	4,332	4,448
Islay and Jura		4,378	6,069	5,937	6,340
Total	29,336	14,213	26,492	22,654	22,685

- 3.12 The average spend per annum is £23,076, which equates to an average of £1099 per facility. This spend is administered via the Council's Central Repairs Account which is managed by Property Services.
- 3.13 The outcome from this spend is noted in the property condition rating of each public convenience. Every public convenience in the MAKI area is rated in a 'B' or 'satisfactory' condition based on a property condition scoring matrix, apart from the Portnahaven PC on Islay which is rated as 'A' or 'good'.

Traffic volume and speed, Meadows Road, Ralston Road and Davaar Avenue, Campbeltown

- 3.14 Following concerns raised by a local Elected Member, traffic speed surveys were carried out at Meadows Road and Ralston Road, Campbeltown. These were reported to the March Area Committee and are noted in the table below:

	Meadows Road	Ralston Road
5 day avg volume	948	296
7 day avg volume	894	274
5 day mean speed	22	17
7 day mean speed	22	17

- 3.15 As advised in the March report, a further survey was being carried out at Davaar Avenue and the Roding. These surveys have been completed and the results are noted below:

	Davaar Avenue	Roding
5 day avg volume	317	843
7 day avg volume	315	833
5 day mean speed	16	20
7 day mean speed	16	20-21

Bridge Inspections and Capital Works

- 3.16 The Infrastructure Design team continue to carry out bridge inspections to all approx. 900 structures on a rolling programme across Argyll and Bute to ensure they are safe and fit for purpose. This inspection regime identifies necessary remedial works which are programmed for delivery.
- 3.17 The team were also successful in a highly competitive bidding process for the Scottish Government's £32m Local Bridge Maintenance Fund, receiving a funding award of £5.5m. We are currently in the process of putting a capital programme in place to utilise this welcome funding. The fund will be used to undertake proportionate works on bridges in need of repair, identified through our inspection programme/records.

Campbeltown Flood Protection Scheme

- 3.18 Tender submissions are being appraised, and this has been fed into the Business Case. The Council's Environmental, Development and Infrastructure Committee were provided with an update at their meeting in March 2022. The business case for the £15.215m project has since been approved by the Scottish Government and the Council will receive 80% of funding to go with the 20% contribution from the Council. Tender due to be awarded at the time of writing this report.

B8001 Skipness Road

- 3.19 Works are now scheduled to start on site in late Spring/Summer for repairs to this key section of road in 2022. The road surface has been badly damaged by the landslip which has 'ripped' the road's surface and caused a level difference due to ground movement. Visually this does look quite severe. However, our team continue to monitor the road condition to ensure that the route is available and safe. The road is restricted in width by traffic management/traffic lights to keep traffic from the slip area.
- 3.20 Design options have been prepared and assessed for speed of repair, longevity/sustainability etc and it has been concluded that it is better, long term, to realign the road to move it a short distance away from the slip edge. This will provide a more reliable road long term, also be more cost effective and importantly provide a better solution for our communities/travelling public. We are carrying out further designs to the realignment and the toe of the slope along the stream. Designs being prepared for land purchase to facilitate the realignment/remedial works. This amended approach is taking slightly longer than the original proposal to stabilise the slip and resurface the road on its current alignment. However, this amended approach which has evolved through the design process will provide a much more resilient route long term.

Accessibility and footway survey

- 3.21 At the last area committee a request was made that further information be brought forward on footway accessibility in terms of dropped kerbs.
- 3.22 The starting point for this is that there is no specific budget exclusively for dropped kerbs. Historically dropped kerbs are installed as and when capital funding is available for footway schemes, and generally tend to be part of more general footway surface improvement schemes. There is a £500,000 allocation for footway improvements as part of this year's budget and some of this programme will include schemes which will feature dropped kerbs.
- 3.23 There is an overall strategy for Campbeltown which is based around installing dropped kerbs on spinal routes through the town that lead from population centres to the town centre, to create a web effect. A number of schemes have been taken forward over the past few years as funding has been available.
- 3.24 As part of last year's footway capital programme dropped kerbs were installed on approaches to the Grammar School and at the nearby sheltered housing

complex. As this year's programme is developed we will look at other locations throughout the town.

- 3.25 It is acknowledged that it would be useful to have an audit of the current points and future possible locations, not only in Campbeltown, but across Argyll and Bute. Unfortunately, we do not have budget available for a full accessibility study in Campbeltown or elsewhere. Should external funding be available from national active travel funds then we can look at an overall audit across Argyll and Bute.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 This report provides a general update to local members on recent Roads and Infrastructure activities.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Policy – various policies referred to within the body of the report
- 5.2 Financial – none
- 5.3 Legal – the Council has various statutory obligations, which are the responsibility of RIS and set out in various Acts, such as the Roads Scotland Act 1984. The services provided are in line with our statutory obligations
- 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 – none
- 5.7 Risk – none known
- 5.8 Customer Service - none

Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services:
Kirsty Flanagan

Policy Lead for Roads and Transport: Councillor Andrew Kain

Policy Lead for Climate Change and Environment Services: Councillor Ross Moreland

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