

**ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES UPDATE**

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**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 normal course of business we provide all members with regular weekly briefings on topical projects and ongoing service delivery. We have been doing this weekly for over 60 editions now and these prove to be a useful tool for regular service updates. They are all available as part of the wider resource portal on the Member Zone system which also includes specific topic briefing sheets and key policy documents. We are also in the process of developing a seminar programme on specific topics which we are hoping to make as interactive as possible with various site visits.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Area Committee note and consider the contents of this report and its purpose/value as a standing item on the agenda given that all the information contained is otherwise accessible.

**3.0 DETAIL**

**COVID Absence/Resource Availability**

- 3.1 For the period of the previous report two reports in March then June absence rates as a result of self-isolation requirements remained high in the case of the former report and tapered down more in line with pre-COVID trends in the latter report. This remains largely the case, and absence levels continue to be in line with pre-COVID trends, although there do remain a few isolated absences attributed to COVID, the overwhelming percentage of absences are non-COVID

related

- 3.2 A more pressing issue in terms of resource availability is around recruitment particularly for manual roles in our Operations team. We are finding that we are having to go out three or four times for some posts, and even then we continue to have some long-term unfilled vacancies. At the time of writing this report there are 18 vacant posts which we are trying to recruit to in our Operations team. Even in the posts we are successfully recruiting to, we are finding that we have far fewer applicants than we would have done for similar posts previously.

### **Capital Roads Reconstruction Programme**

- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 The Council capital allocation for the HL area is £999.340, and the scheme list is available on the Council website [here](#). As well as the programme itself, the online resources include financial values and short explanations of engineering methods/solutions.
- 3.5 Overall progress with the programme has been excellent and works remain on schedule. As well as the full programme [link above] which is updated monthly, we provide weekly updates on schemes via our weekly briefing. At the time of writing this report 14 of the 20 individual schemes in Helensburgh and Lomond have been completed.

### **Winter Maintenance**

- 3.6 The annual winter policy update has been reported to and agreed at the recent EDI meeting. The policy is largely unchanged from previous years and forms the basis of the delivery of our winter maintenance activities over winter 22/23.
- 3.7 A key aspect of the winter service is the provision of public information on what we do and why we do it. There is a range of online resources available on the Council website [here](#).

### **Play park funding**

- 3.8 Funding of £76,000 was allocated in financial year 21/22, with a further £79,000 this financial year. In order to provide for a meaningful programme of improvement works targeted at the high priority sites, as well as a works package with is attractive to what it is a limited supplier/contractor market, the funds have been rolled together into a single package. Sites were given a priority rating based on asset inspections and feedback from the Youth Forum, in compliance with the Scottish Government's grant requirements. The full list of prioritised sites was

reported to EDI in June and is available [here](#). In this area the priority sites are Bendarroch and Arrochar.

- 3.9 An update on this was recently provided in the weekly briefing [Edition 61 5<sup>th</sup> August] which read: *The recent tender process failed to generate any bids. We requested feedback as to why there were no applications and we were advised that the timescales for completion of work were too short. A request for more time to complete was made and this is currently being assessed by our procurement team. A further re-tender process will be looked at this month.*
- 3.10 A report will go to EDI in December on the fund, future year funding and consultation plans.

### **Luss Traffic Order**

- 3.11 We provided a short update on this in our weekly briefing Edition 64 [26 August] which read: *The public hearing for the Proposed Order was held on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> August, at the Loch Lomond Arms Hotel, Luss. The Reporter gave an overview of the proposed Traffic Regulation Order and summarised the overall objections submitted before moving on to allow both the attending objectors to speak to their specific objections. The Reporter allowed questions and statements to be heard from the attendees and although there was not a great number, the points made were relevant to the proceedings. At the close of the hearing, the Reporter has allowed the Council a two week period to provide supporting information. The Reporter also proposes to allow a further two week period for the objectors to submit comment on the Councils supporting information and draft modifications. The Reporter will then complete his report, with any recommendations, and submit to the Council in due course. Upon review, Officers will submit the report to the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee for consideration. All the documentation on the proposed Order, along with information on all Traffic Orders, is available on the Council website [here](#).*

### **Faslane Cemetery Project**

- 3.12 A short update on this project was provided in the previous area committee report in June, and in our weekly briefing Edition 62 [12<sup>th</sup> August] we provided the following update: *We have been working with the local community council and the MoD to progress a scheme to upgrade Faslane Cemetery. The MoD provided labour to clear out some overgrown shrubbery and tidy up the cemetery grounds. The community council fundraised and had a local blacksmith create brand new gates to our specification. They also cleaned the stonework around the entranceway. We widened the vehicular access into the cemetery and upgraded the car park. Overall the project has seen a welcome improvement to the cemetery with contributions from all involved. We will shortly be arranging a small event to mark the project and more information on this will follow.*

- 3.13 At the time of writing the above event has not yet been arranged but it is expected it will have been by the time of the committee meeting and a verbal update can be provided at the meeting.

#### **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**

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Councillor Andrew Kain**

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