

REST AND BE THANKFUL UPDATE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At the meeting of the Environment, Development and Infrastructure (EDI) Committee on 2 March 2023 a report was considered regarding the Rest and Be Thankful. Part of the decision of that meeting was to bring a further report to the August EDI Committee. To a certain extent, this update report has been superseded by the motion to June Council.
- 1.2 At Full Council on 29 June, a report was considered following the announcement from Transport Scotland regarding the preferred option for the long-term solution to address the challenges at the A83 Rest and Be Thankful.
- 1.3 The preferred option (Brown) is for a debris flow shelter along the line of the existing Trunk Road with a construction time of three to four years following improvements to the Old Military Road. This is considered the most deliverable option by Transport Scotland. The full implications of the economic and social impacts of this option need to be carefully considered by the council in its consideration of the best permanent solution for the Rest and Be Thankful.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Members of the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee consider and note this report.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 At Full Council on 29 June, a report was considered following the announcement from Transport Scotland regarding the preferred option for the long-term solution to address the challenges at the A83 Rest and Be Thankful. The report can be found here: [REST AND BE THANKFUL UPDATE JUNE 2023.pdf \(argyll-bute.gov.uk\)](#)
- 3.2 At its meeting on 29 June, Council agreed the following motion:
- request that the Leader of the Council writes to the newly appointed Minister for Transport, Fiona Hyslop MSP, to highlight our communities'*

concerns and their need for urgency in progressing the permanent solution for the Rest;

2. *seek reassurance from the Minister and her officials at Transport Scotland on a range of points including clear timescales; measures to mitigate against delay; contingency plans for maintaining access in the event of a major incident during construction; and confirmation that the A82 upgrade will progress as planned;*
3. *ask the Minister to convene an urgent meeting of the A83 Taskforce given the commitment made at the last meeting in Arrochar, in the context of this recent announcement and the questions that remain within the community and local industry;*
4. *call upon the Minister to ensure that the Scottish Government, Transport Scotland and any other relevant agency will prepare and share a robust communications strategy which will reinforce the vital message at a national level that Argyll and Bute is open for business;*
5. *reiterate this Council's longstanding position that urgent completion of the permanent solution is of the utmost importance in order that Argyll and Bute's current and future opportunities for population and economic growth are not compromised; and*
6. *request officers to respond to the Scottish Government's recent announcement on the basis of paragraphs 1 to 5, above.*

3.3 This decision is being progressed and correspondence, following the Council meeting, has been sent to the Minister from the Council Leader and also to Transport Scotland from officers. Further updates on this project will be reported to future meetings of this Committee.

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 This report provides an update on the Scottish Government's recent announcement on the long term solution for the Rest and Be Thankful. The preferred option (Brown) is for a debris flow shelter along the line of the existing Trunk Road with a construction time of three to four years following improvements to the Old Military Road. This is considered the most deliverable option by Transport Scotland. The full implications of the economic and social impacts of this option need to be carefully considered by the council in its consideration of the best permanent solution for the Rest and Be Thankful.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Policy – in line with the Council's policy position in respect of the A83 Rest and Be Thankful which is seeking a long term permanent solution.

- 5.2 Financial – funding for the project to be met by Scottish Government.
- 5.3 Legal – limited for the Council relating to side road orders and tie-ins to the B828 to Lochgoilhead.
- 5.4 HR – none known.
- 5.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: none known.
 - 5.5.1 Equalities – none known.
 - 5.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – none known.
 - 5.5.3 Islands – forms part of a lifeline route to islands and remote rural mainland locations.
- 5.6 Climate Change – due regard will be given to climate change with a view to minimising any climate change impact and these will be considered as and when they arise.
- 5.7 Risk – ongoing connectivity challenges for Argyll and Bute until a permanent sustainable solution is completed.
- 5.8 Customer Service – none known.

Executive Director with responsibility for Road and Infrastructure Services,
Kirsty Flanagan

Policy Lead for Strategic Development, Councillor Robin Currie

Policy Lead for Roads and Transport, Councillor Andrew Kain

June 2023

For further information contact:

Jim Smith, Head of Road and Infrastructure Services

Jim.Smith@argyll-bute.gov.uk