

**ROADS CAPITAL RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME 2024/25 – UPDATE
REPORT**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In March 2024, the EDI Committee endorsed a report providing details of the proposed roads reconstruction programme for 2024-25. The programme was based on the 2024-25 allocation of a total of £8.0M.
- 1.2 This report provides an update on changes to the programme to be endorsed by Members. The programme remains based on the 2024-25 allocation.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee:
- Endorses the amended programme of capital works for 2024-25
 - Agrees that details of each area committee's programme will be forwarded on to individual Elected Members.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 It has come to my attention that the roads reconstruction programme presented to Members in March 2024 was based on a desktop exercise using various sources of data as well as having input from Members as part of the Area Committee business days held last year. Whilst the desktop exercise provides a good starting basis for developing the final programme, it doesn't reflect detailed local course visual inspections and as noted in the March report, would not reflect any winter deterioration experienced on the road network.
- 3.2 The local course visual inspections and measurements were carried out later than normal mainly due to resourcing issues as a result of the response to the large-scale flood and road closure incidents experienced last year from October 2023 and the knock-on effect this has had on workloads, in addition to sickness absence of some key individuals involved in the process.

- 3.3 The local course visual inspections and measurements now carried out by officers have identified, in some areas, where the original programme reported in March, should be amended. All schemes costings have been updated now that measurements have been carried out. There are new schemes added into the programme and schemes that have now become unaffordable that have had to be de-prioritised; it should be noted that schemes raised by Members at the Area Business Days have remained in the programme. Details of the new schemes and those that are no longer affordable are noted in Appendix 1 and are summarised below. The full revised programme is included in Appendix 2.

MAKI

A total of 31 Schemes were presented to the EDI Committee totaling £2.48M. The updated report presents a total of 31 Schemes with the same budget of £2.48M. However there have been changes to some scheme costings and:

- 2 schemes added in Mid Argyll and 2 schemes rescheduled.
- 1 scheme added on Kintyre with 3 rescheduled.
- 2 schemes added on the islands and 1 scheme rescheduled.

Members are asked to note:

- a. There is an estimated outturn over budget allowance of £33,395.21, for Mid Argyll, this was because of the urgent need to include the C43 Crinan Canal works where the Council are responsible for maintaining the surface over Loch 4. Failure to carry out this work may well lead to a malfunction in the bridge mechanical system which would cause issues for Scottish Canals which we would potentially be liable for.
- b. There is an estimated outturn over budget allowance of £27,103.49 for Kintyre, this is preparation work for the 2025-26 Surface Dressing works.
- c. There is an estimated outturn under budget allowance of £8,895.48 for the island work. Should this remain, the budget will roll into next years island works.

If the costs remain in excess of the relevant area budget, we will draw down from next year's capital budget as has been done in previous years.

B&C

A total of 20 schemes were presented to the March EDI Committee totaling £1.6M.

The updated report presents a total of 21 Schemes with the same budget of £1.6M. However there have been changes to some scheme costing and:

- 1 Scheme added in Cowal with 3 schemes rescheduled.

- 4 Schemes added in Bute with 1 scheme rescheduled.

Members are asked to note:

- a. There is an estimated outturn under budget allowance of £9,406.04 and £9,406.64 respectively for Bute and Cowal, if the costs remain unspent this will roll over into next years Bute and Cowal Budget.

OLI

There have been no schemes added or removed in OLI, however some schemes have been re-costed to deliver best value. The budget remains the same at £2.8M.

Members are asked to note:

- a. There is an estimated outturn over budget allowance of £18,089.23, Oban and Lorn, this was due to more accurate estimates when officers carried out course visual inspections.
- b. There is an estimated outturn under budget allowance of £7,285.27 for the Isles, this was due to more accurate estimates when officers carried out course visual inspections.

If the costs remain in excess of the relevant area budget, we will draw down from next year's capital budget as has been done in previous years. If costs remain under budget these will be rolled onto next years budget as has been done in previous years.

H&L

There has been 1 scheme added due to available budget after re costings in Helensburgh and Lomond, and some schemes have been re-costed to deliver best value. The budget remains the same at £1.12M.

Members are asked to note:

- a. There is an estimated outturn under budget allowance of £1,842.17 for Helensburgh and Lomond, if the costs remain unspent this will roll over into next years Bute and Cowal Budget.

- 3.4 It should be noted that any amendments seek to deliver better value for money, this being the approach over the last decade where we have carefully applied a 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 maximises the amount of repairs and resurfacing which is

delivered. Members will be aware that the investment that the Council has made over a number of years and the approach to allocating the funds has had a positive impact on the Council's overall Roads Condition Index.

- 3.5 The roads reconstruction programme will continue to be delivered by a mixed economy model with the Councils in-house team delivering carriageway reconstruction and patching works. The surface dressing element of the programme will be delivered by an external contractor. This enables the maximum surface area to be covered which will help to seal carriageway cracks, prevent the ingress of water and reduce the amount of reactive maintenance for potholes.
- 3.6 In 2023-24 there was also a grant from the Strategic Timber Transport Scheme (STTS) totaling £387k. This grant was significantly less than in previous years and officers expected this to continue in the current frugal economic climate. Officers have now been informed that our bids for 2024-25 funding have been rejected and no funding will be available through STTS for this financial year. This is a similar position being experienced by other Councils across Scotland.
- 3.7 The programme for each of the administrative areas will be forwarded to Area Committee Members if endorsed by the Committee today. The programme will also be available on the council website with key scheme status and dates.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 This report provides an update on changes to the roads reconstruction programme to be endorsed by Members.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Policy - works assessed and carried out under the current Roads Asset Management Plan.
- 5.2 Financial - programme will be based on capital allocation for year 2024-25.
- 5.3 Legal – None known.
- 5.4 HR - reconstruction works delivered by a combination of in-house roads operations team and sub-contractors.
- 5.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: None known.
 - 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 – 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 - completed works will reduce requirement to repair roads and will arrest the carriageway/footway deterioration.
- 5.8 Customer Service - overall improvement in road surfaces and the quality of driven journeys.
- 5.9 The Rights of the Child (UNCRC) – the investment to improve our road network will contribute to a safer environment for young people to thrive in.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Changes to Programme reported in March 2024

Appendix 2 – Amended Roads Reconstruction Programme 2024-25