

## ROADS ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

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### 1. PURPOSE

1.1 This report informs Members of the asset management approach for road, gives an update regarding the SCOTS project and set out the policy documents and work streams being developed to support the asset management of roads.

### 2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Argyll and Bute's road network, at 2315 km, is the largest and most valuable community asset in Argyll and Bute. The road network plays a vital role in supporting the local economy. The network facilitates the movement of people, goods and services throughout the area and connects people with economic opportunities.

2.2 The Audit Scotland Report – *Maintaining Scotland's Roads*, published in November 2004, contained a central recommendation that a national project should be carried out to develop a common methodology across Scotland to calculate the size of the structural maintenance backlog. This has been led by the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) which calculated the backlog across each of the 32 Authorities in Scotland.

2.3 All 32 Authorities use the WDM system to hold and process information from machine based road surveys. This information is used to produce a Road Condition Index (RCI) which is used as part of the prioritisation process for roads reconstruction programmes and also to determine the level of backlog maintenance.

2.4 In February 2011 Audit Scotland published a follow up report. A key recommendation in both reports was that "*Transport Scotland and councils should review their road maintenance strategies and plans to confirm that adequate prioritisation is given to those routes which are likely to contribute greatest to economic growth and improved quality of life.*"

2.5 The road network is a key enabler of economic growth. Audit Scotland's report - *Maintaining Scotland's Roads* - makes clear the challenge of maintaining this asset to a standard that enables the continuing fulfilment of this role in the face of increasing traffic volumes, the recent severe winters and in light of decreasing budgets. To ensure full value is obtained for maintenance funds they recommend improvements to management, asset management and procurement processes.

### 3. DETAIL

3.1 The roads asset management approach for the Council, whilst aligning with the work of SCOTS, will follow the Councils corporate asset management policy. This policy will help to ensure that the road network is sustainable and is available for the safe and convenient transportation of people and goods.

3.2 As part of the asset management approach it is proposed that 1, 3 and 10 year roads reconstruction programmes be produced. The 1 and 3 year programmes will initially be heavily influenced by the need to recover from the effects of the winters of 2009-10 and 2010-11 which exacerbated the impact of years of national underinvestment as highlighted by Audit Scotland. The asset management will also be designed to assist the movement away from reactive maintenance and move towards planned structural maintenance together with enhanced routine and cyclic maintenance. Audit Scotland's analysis concludes that generally Roads Authorities should spend less on reactive works and more on structural and planned maintenance works. It is proposed that this is achieved in Argyll and Bute by:-

- Carrying out planned routine and cyclic maintenance in accordance with good practice. Emphasis will be placed on improving drainage to remove standing water and to prevent the ingress of water into the structure of the road to minimise the risks of damage through scour, hydraulic pumping and frost heave. This will reduce the need for reactive maintenance.
- Increasing the proportion of carriageway repaired by first time permanent patch (structural) rather than temporary pothole repair (reactive).
- Dealing with underlying problems ie, fixing the drainage and clearing the grips as well as repairing the pot hole.
- Reviewing defect categories and revising response times, to support "Right First Time" (RFT) repairs within reasonably achievable times.
- Increasing the use of innovative techniques.
- Maximise the surface area treated to seal and reduce deterioration through surface dressing, micro asphalts and insitu recycling processes.
- Prioritising larger scale surface treatments, where this will give worthwhile reductions in reactive potholing. (Targeting the Red RCI values)

3.3 The 3 year programme will largely be a recovery programme with the emphasis on providing surface treatments on as much of the network as possible together with introducing more robust systems to ensure that proportionate routine and cyclic work is carried out.

3.4 The 10 year programme will be an improvement programme with the emphasis on upgrading the strategic network through reconstruction, drainage improvements and local widening and edge strengthening works.

3.5 To support the asset management approach detailed above, development of policy will continue over the autumn with the following documents/work streams being produced:

- Asset Group Policy - Roads
- Asset Group Policy - Bridges
- Asset Group Policy - Retaining Walls.
- Ongoing and enhanced use of the WDM system to prioritise programmes of work, hold inventory information and proactively manage the network.
- Roads maintenance plan.
- 1, 3 and 10 year roads reconstruction plan.
- Standard specification for materials and treatments.
- Rolling programme of traffic counts to inform works programmes in terms of network usage.
- Street Lighting Replacement Plan.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

4.1 This report informs Members of the asset management approach for road, gives an update from SCOTS and set out the policy documents and work streams being developed to support the asset management approach.

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