REPORT TO: **PLANNING & TRANSPORT COMMITTEE - 8 SEPTEMBER 2008**

REPORT ON: **ROAD MAINTENANCE STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION**

REPORT NO: **422-2008**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To advise Committee of the current position and the background to the Statutory Performance Indicators used to measure carriageway condition to be reported to the Best Value Performance and Efficiency Sub-Committee.

2 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Committee note the contents of this report.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4 BACKGROUND

4.1 The Statutory Performance Indicator (SPI) used for carriageway condition is derived from the results of the Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey (SRMCS) carried out annually for all Scottish Local Authorities. The survey uses data collection techniques that aim to measure in a consistent way, the condition of a representative sample of roads in each Local Authority area. The condition indicator is supplied to each Authority as the percentage of the road network that falls below two thresholds. The lower threshold, categorised as Red, designates areas of the network requiring immediate treatment while the upper threshold, categorised as Amber, designates areas requiring further investigation to determine whether treatment should be considered. The Statutory Performance Indicator reported annually to Audit Scotland is based on the combination of the Red and Amber values for the overall network.

4.2 The SRMCS has now been running for 6 years. In each year, the target survey length for each road classification was 100% of A Class, 50% of B & C Class and 25% of Unclassified roads. In year 1, only A Class roads were surveyed but for the last 5 years, data for all road classes has been collected. Lengths for A, B & C Class roads surveyed were sufficiently close to the targets to give representative data. However the coverage of the Unclassified network has generally been below the target.

4.3 For 2008/09, the SPI has been changed from previous years both in the method of its calculation and also the types of defects measured by the survey process. This change has been agreed by Audit Scotland and the new SPI, designated the Road Condition Index (RCI) is the official SPI to be reported from this year onwards.

4.4 The RCI is calculated by combining the survey data for the current year and the previous year's survey only it now includes the measurement of cracking of the road surface. To allow comparison with previous years SPI's, the previously reported SPI has also been calculated for the combined network. The following table details the SPI for the last 4 years showing values for Dundee City Council and the Scottish average.

Single Year SPI (Excludes Cracking Defects)								
	Yr 04/05	Rank	Yr 05/06	Rank	Yr 06/07	Rank	Yr 07/08	Rank
Dundee	47.8	20	42.2	11	45.2	11	44.2	12
Scotland	41.9		41.7		47.5		43.5	

4.5 To allow a straight comparison with the original single year SPI, a 2 year combined SPI (excluding cracking defects) has also been calculated and this is tabulated below.

2 Year Combined SPI (Excludes Cracking Defects)						
	Yr 05/06	Rank	Yr 06/07	Rank	Yr 07/08	Rank
Dundee	44.7	15	44.0	12	44.7	13
Scotland	42.0		44.2		45.8	

4.6 The new 2 year combined RCI (including cracking defects) is tabulated below.

2 Year Combined RCI (Includes Cracking Defects)						
	Yr 05/06	Rank	Yr 06/07	Rank	Yr 07/08	Rank
Dundee	26.5	5	25.5	3	25.2	4
Scotland	35.9		37.2		37.5	

4.7 The Single Year SPI indicates that the condition of the City's overall road network remains fairly static in comparison with previous years and the ranking among the Scottish Authorities generally remains the same. This impression of a steady state is probably due to the higher frequency of survey coverage of the A, B & C Class routes as detailed in 4.2 above which is matched by a tendency to favour these principal city transport arteries when compiling annual road maintenance programmes. Closer examination of the unclassified network for example in the housing areas shows this to be in a generally poor condition as within the available road maintenance budgets it receives proportionately lower levels of investment.

4.8 The results of the 2 Year Combined SPI indicate very little difference in the value or the ranking from the individual year's SPI. This again suggests that the network condition is fairly static year on year.

4.9 The 2 Year Combined RCI also suggests that the road network condition is static but the higher ranking would indicate that in comparison with other Local Authorities, road surface cracking is not a major factor in the condition of Dundee's road network. Other factors that are measured as part of the SRMCS record information on the transverse profile of the road surface (rutting), the longitudinal profile and the texture depth. These three factors are used in the calculation of the new RCI, but were the only components of the previous SPI. Of the these, the texture depth gives an indication of how much grip the surface has, while the transverse and longitudinal profiles are indicative of the ride quality of the road surface. It is these factors that contribute most to the RCI score for Dundee's road network and this is borne out by the complaints historically received regarding the number of potholes and the general condition of the network.

4.10 The following table gives a break down of the RCI for 2007/2008 by road classification.

Road Class	Network (km)	Red %	Amber %	RCI	Green %
A	48.1	1.50	11.85	13.35	88.65
B	14.9	1.88	16.70	18.58	81.42
C	119.8	1.60	12.97	14.57	85.43
U	361.4	7.40	23.12	30.52	69.48
All	544.2	5.45	19.71	25.16	74.84

These results show that the major contributor to the overall RCI is the condition of the Unclassified network with a total 30.5 % assessed as either Red or Amber condition. This equates to approximately 100 km of road where some investigation or maintenance work is recommended. In comparison, the A, B & C Class roads have much lower individual RCI values, averaging around 15% and the combined length in similar condition to that of the Unclassified roads is 27 km. As noted in 4.7 above the major routes in the City have generally been favoured in past maintenance programmes and this is reflected in the results shown here.

4.11 The evidence from the Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey indicates that significant levels of funding for road maintenance are still required to improve the condition of the road network. While the increased funding made available in the 2008-2011 Capital Plan is being well utilised, it remains to be seen if this will be sufficient to significantly improve the condition of the overall road network or simply prevent further deterioration from the current position.

5 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

6 CONSULTATIONS

6.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance), Head of Finance and Assistant Chief Executive (Community Planning) have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.

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