

REPORT TO: CITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – 21 APRIL 2014

REPORT ON: AUDIT SCOTLAND 'MAINTAINING SCOTLAND'S ROADS' AND DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL'S ROAD ASSET CONDITION

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF CITY DEVELOPMENT

REPORT NO: 97-2014

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise on the follow up progress report by Audit Scotland, 'Maintaining Scotland's Roads' May 2013.
- 1.2 To advise Committee of the current position and the background to the Statutory Performance Indicator used to measure carriageway condition as reported to the Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.3 To advise on the condition of the adopted road asset within Dundee City Council and identify the continued investment required to maintain the asset at an appropriate standard.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee notes the contents of this report and take account of this when setting future budgets.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Although there are no direct financial implications arising from this report, it should be noted that significant capital funding of £9.7 million is being provided over the 4 year period of the Capital Plan 2014-2018 for carriageway works.

4 BACKGROUND

Audit Scotland 'Maintaining Scotland's Roads'

- 4.1 Reference is made to Article IV of the Planning & Transport Committee of 13 March 2006 outlining a study report produced by Audit Scotland in November 2004 which identified the maintenance backlog associated with all road assets both nationally and within Dundee City Council. This study established that at that time there was a backlog of £1.7 billion for the whole of Scotland, whilst the backlog for Dundee City Council for all road assets was £50.3 million with the backlog for adopted carriageways alone sitting at £18 million.

In February 2011, Audit Scotland issued the report 'Maintaining Scotland's Roads: A Follow-up Report'. The report examined progress against recommendations from the 2004 report as well as looking at changes in the condition of the road network since 2004, what was currently being spent on road maintenance and how road maintenance is being managed.

The report contained a number of recommendations for Scottish Government, Transport Scotland and Local Authorities. In particular, it was recommended that the Scottish Government should consider a national review of how Scotland's road network is managed and maintained and that Transport Scotland and councils should work together to consider all opportunities for achieving more with the resources currently available. It was suggested this could be achieved by exploring new ways of working such as service reconfiguration, partnership working, pooling and flexible use of resources.

During 2012, Audit Scotland commissioned local auditors to audit every council in Scotland to establish what progress had been made in relation to the follow up recommendations in the 2011 report.

In May 2013, Audit Scotland issued a progress report on the auditor's findings. The report detailed the results of the auditor's reviews with councils, provided feedback from interviews carried out with representatives from the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) and considered aspects of the National Roads Maintenance review. The key messages of the report were:

- The percentage of local roads in acceptable condition had increased marginally from 66.1 to 66.7 per cent over the last two years.
- The national roads maintenance review resulted in a detailed action plan to improve road maintenance activities. It was highlighted that this is a positive move forward, however, there is scope to accelerate implementation.
- Councils need to ensure roads asset management plans are in place and they need to ensure they are of sufficient quality and that they are monitoring them effectively.
- It was accepted that councils have been working together to establish common performance indicators, but that further work is required to improve the quality and consistency of the data to enable meaningful benchmarking to take place.
- It was recommended that councils, COSLA and SCOTS work together with Transport Scotland to ensure the national roads maintenance review action plan is reviewed and prioritised to ensure it is translated into more efficient delivery of roads services and ultimately in improved road condition.
- Individual councils were strongly recommended that they continue to improve how they manage roads maintenance. These ranged from:
 - formal adoption of sufficient asset management plans, developing and monitoring the plans.
 - Submitting accurate and complete data to the annual SCOTS/APSE benchmarking process.
 - Continue to monitor the impact of changing levels of maintenance expenditure on the condition of roads.
 - Respond actively to emerging guidance, promote innovation and knowledge sharing across councils.

These are all areas that Dundee City Council through the Roads Maintenance Partnership with Tayside Contracts are actively delivering and seeking continual improvement. Dundee are actively involved with SCOTS in the improvement of service delivery over all roads assets and this has been extended locally with Angus Council and Perth & Kinross Council, where a maintenance strategy group has been established specifically to share knowledge, promote innovation and consider shared service options where feasible.

The roads maintenance partnership has been working with SCOTS to develop an appropriate asset management plan and it is intended to have a comprehensive updated plan in place by summer 2014.

Since the Audit Scotland report was produced in May 2013, Dundee have completed a full return to the SCOTS/APSE benchmarking process and been actively involved in the SCOTS benchmarking group to assist in the validation of information provided and to ensure that appropriate and correct indicators are in place.

Road Asset Condition and Backlog

- 4.2 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.

- 4.3 The SPI, properly known as the Road Condition Indicator (RCI), is calculated from survey data collected every 10 metres from vehicle mounted sensors that measure specific characteristics of the road surface. The data measurements are then compared against threshold levels to determine how much the individual characteristics contribute to the overall RCI and these are then aggregated up to produce the RCI for the section of road as well as the overall network.
- 4.4 Each year the SRMCS covers a sample of each Local Authority's road network, the size of which is determined by the different road classifications and is considered to be representative of the whole network. The following table details the percentage of each class of road surveyed.

| Road Class | Percentage to be Surveyed (one direction only) | Dundee Road Length | % of Dundee Road Network |
|---------------------|--|--------------------|--------------------------|
| A | 100% | 48.1 | 8.8% |
| B | 50% | 14.9 | 2.7% |
| C | 50% | 119.8 | 22.0% |
| Unclassified | 10% | 361.4 | 66.5% |
| Total | | 544.2 | 100% |

- 4.5 Since only the A class roads have 100% survey coverage, the Network RCI reported as the Statutory Performance indicator is calculated by combining the survey data for the current year and the previous year's survey. This has the effect of smoothing out any large variations that may be introduced from only surveying a sample of the network, particularly on the unclassified roads where the annual sample size is small.
- 4.6 The following table shows the values of the rolling 2-Year RCI for Dundee City Council. Also shown are the average RCI values for the city authorities ie Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow taken as a group as well as the average of all Scottish Local Authorities.

| 2 Year Rolling Network RCI | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | 2007/09 | 2008/10 | 2009/11 | 2010/12 | 2011/13 |
| Dundee | 23.19 | 26.13 | 25.95 | 28.00 | 27.70 |
| Cities Average | 28.19 | 31.13 | 30.95 | 33.00 | 32.70 |
| Scottish Average | 32.32 | 36.75 | 36.46 | 36.42 | 36.19 |

- 4.7 From the information presented, it is clear that the RCI value has risen over the 5 year period and this is attributed to the severe winter conditions experienced during the past 4 years (2008/09 to 2012/13). There has however been a slight decrease over the last 12 months although this trend is not unique to Dundee as 23 out of the 32 Scottish Local Authorities have results exhibiting a similar decrease, signifying a small improvement in their road network condition. It should be noted that Dundee City Council's road condition results are consistently better than the average for the city authorities as well as those of the Scottish Local Authorities average.

- | Results for Carriageway Headline Backlog (SCOTS Report April 2013) | | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | Backlog 2009 | Backlog 2011 | Backlog 2013 |
| Dundee | £18,397,826 | £22,063,657 | £21,174,080 |
| Dundee (Back adjusted for inflation etc) | N/A | £23,053,555 | £21,174,080 |

- ## Carriageways

[illegible]

- 4.13 The following table gives a break down of the RCI for 2011/2013 by road classification and an overall comparison to 2009/11.

| Road Class | Network (km) | Red % | Amber % | RCI | Green % | 2009/11 Green % |
|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|
| A | 48.1 | 2.47 | 17.03 | 19.5 | 80.5 | 79.21 |
| B | 14.9 | 1.37 | 17.70 | 19.07 | 80.93 | 81.26 |
| C | 119.8 | 1.78 | 15.19 | 16.97 | 83.04 | 83.62 |
| U | 361.4 | 5.45 | 27.25 | 32.7 | 67.29 | 66.77 |
| All | 544.2 | 4.27 | 23.43 | 27.7 | 72.30 | 71.97 |

- 4.14 These results show a small improvement on A class roads in comparison with previous years with effectively steady state on B and C class roads. This is not entirely unexpected, bearing in mind the historical tendency to favour the busy A, B & C Class roads that form the principal city transport arteries when compiling annual road maintenance programmes. The condition of Unclassified roads which make up 66.5% of the adopted road network however, continues to be the main contributor to the overall RCI value with 32.7% of the U-Class network in need of either immediate maintenance or further investigation. It should be noted that it is now intended to utilise a larger proportion of the further increased capital investment to improve the condition of the unclassified road network.
- 4.15 The evidence from the annual Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey indicates that significant levels of funding for road maintenance (£2.4 million per annum) continues to be required to maintain it at the current condition with further funding required to improve the condition of the road network. The significantly increased funding made available in the Capital Plan from 2013/14 onwards is being very well utilised. This committed level of expenditure needs to be maintained in the long term to ensure that the recent small improvement in the Road Condition Indicators and carriageway backlog continues.

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, Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Democratic and Legal Services have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None.

Mike Galloway
Director of City Development

Fergus Wilson
City Engineer

FW/EH

8 April 2014

Dundee City Council
Dundee House
Dundee