
Report To:	Environment & Regeneration Committee	Date:	4 September 2014
Report By:	Acting Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources	Report No:	ERC/ENV/IM/14.207
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Subject:	Roads Defects Performance to End of July 2014		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Committee with information in respect of the implementation of the approved actions and latest performance relating to roads defects.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 As part of the 2014/16 budget, the Council agreed to allocate a one-off sum of £500,000 to be spent on roads defects, including drainage, over this period. A condition of this funding was that the service would develop an Action Plan and report to the Environment & Regeneration Committee on a six monthly basis regarding its delivery. The intention being that by the end of 2015/16 improvements would be achieved across a number of areas to tie in with the significant RAMP investment being made at the same time.
- 2.2 The Action Plan was developed on the basis of the specific actions reported to the Environment & Regeneration Committee in January 2014 and the latest position in respect of the delivery of the Action Plan is shown in Appendix 1.
- 2.3 The main areas of work over the next six month period will be the delivery of increased roads defects expenditure, and a comprehensive review of processes and practices whilst continuing to improve management information. Finally, the service will be piloting the use of handheld devices to improve communications, generate efficiencies and provide more accurate reporting.
- 2.4 The latest performance shows that the number of outstanding potholes has reduced significantly over the period April 2014 to July 2014, whilst the percentage of roads defects repaired on time has consistently improved over the same period (refer section 7.1). The report also highlights that the Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey (SRMCS) has reported a 3% improvement throughout Inverclyde's roads network since the previous survey carried out last year (refer section 7.2).

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the progress being made in delivering the Roads Defects Action Plan and note that the next update will be presented to Committee in January 2015.
- 3.2 That the Committee welcome the improvement in the Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey results for the last year.

Ian Moffat
Head of Environmental & Commercial Services

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Inverclyde published its Roads Asset Investment Strategy and in February 2013 the Council approved a three year budget which included £17m capital investment for carriageways, footways, street lighting and structures.
- 4.2 The strategy acknowledged the need for further investment in the revenue budget for routine reactive and cyclic maintenance to run in tandem with the capital programme works. It was highlighted in the RAMP that spend on reactive maintenance would only fall once the condition of the network improved substantially.
- 4.3 The previous report to Committee highlighted that the number of roads defects were increasing and until the significant RAMP investment begins to have a material effect then extra revenue funding would be required to avoid the roads network deteriorating further.
- 4.4 In February 2014 the Council approved additional funding of £300,000 (£150,000 per year) towards addressing the roads defects backlog and £200,000 (£100,000 per year) to carry out essential drainage/ditches/gully work. It was anticipated that the delivery of this extra investment would be through a combination of internal resources and external contractors.
- 4.5 In tandem with the request for extra funding officers recognised the need to formulate a strategy that would address the challenges and improve the effectiveness of defect management. This included an action to improve the quality of management information on roads defects. The actions were split over short, medium and long term.
- 4.6 The Council current procedures for road safety inspections are broken down into three categories of pothole defects with targeted response times to repair. The categories and response times listed below are based on guidance contained within the Code of Practice for Highways Maintenance Management "Well-Maintained Highways".
 - Category 1 defects: Emergency defects should be corrected or made safe at the time of inspection where this is practicable; where this is not possible such defects should be repaired, on a temporary or permanent basis, within 24 hours.
 - Category 2 defects: Repair within 5 working days.
 - Category 3 defects: Repair within 28 days.

5.0 CURRENT POSITION OF THE ACTION PLAN

- 5.1 The key actions endorsed by Committee were split over short, medium and long term, covering the period of 2014 to 2016 plus. These are summarised in appendix 1 of this report and an overview of progress to date is contained within this section of the report.
- 5.2 Short to Medium Term Actions implemented (2014-2016)
 - Subject to severe weather and emergency duties over the winter months three defect teams have been operating across the area, under the control of a local area roads inspector. Performance and efficiency of these teams including the inspector's performance are being monitored. As necessary doubling up of team resource has been actioned as required.
 - Earmarked Reserves funding previously allocated to Roads has been allocated to supplement revenue allocation for defect repairs. Contracts have been awarded to third party contractors to carry out specific defect works to complement the work done by the in house teams.
 - A review of staffing arrangements within the Roads Trading Organisation with specific reference to the future utilisation of Future Trust staff and Modern Apprentices including consideration to establishing a dedicated drainage squad. In the main this

has been complete and Members will be pleased to note that two additional posts have been created. These additional posts will be utilised to carry out a variety of defect and drainage works. The service was unsuccessful in the last round of modern apprenticeships placement allocation but further discussions on alternative placement funding are being reviewed.

- Existing processes and procedures for recording defects and work have been reviewed and work has commenced on the design and the preparation of an outline business case for the implementation of a dedicated electronic roads integrated management system. This would include the use of handheld and other mobile technologies. The aim would be to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of whole defect management from defect notification/identification through to implementation of a permanent repair. Work is ongoing and it is anticipated that a report will be submitted to Committee early in 2015 for approval for funding via the modernisation earmarked reserve fund.
- The Roads Service Management structure has been reviewed and a supervisory engineer is dedicated to defect management. With the integration of Building and FM Services into Environmental and Commercial Services an opportunity to centralise administration functions that would support roads services develop better management information systems and reporting, in particular focussing on defect management, is being developed.
- A review of the use of internal labour vs external contractors for all or part of defect repair management, with a view to determining the best value approach for Inverclyde Council has been completed. It was determined that the basic defect management be kept in house with additional defect repairs, including specialist techniques such as jet patching, being carried out by the private sector subject to funding and procurement activities.
- Increase revenue spend in line with recommendations made in the Roads Asset Management Strategy and the allocation of the first year's additional funding for both defect and drainage works. Tenders have been drafted and three external patching contracts have been awarded and works are ongoing. In house teams have carried out a number of improvements and maintenance of drainage systems. The 1st year's additional defect allocation has been fully spent over the summer months and the additional drainage funding will be fully spent in the finance period 2014/15.

5.3 Longer Term Actions Started:

- Collaborative working with neighbouring authorities is ongoing. Officers from East Renfrewshire, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde have completed nine separate scoping papers for roads related activities, such as Gulley emptying/Drainage, Design and specification, Flooding, procurement. Both Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Councils have joined forces to procure street lighting column surveys and testing which will lead to a business case for the introduction LED street lighting.
- The recent publication of the Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey (SRMCS) for 2014 indicates positive movements across all road categories within Inverclyde. These surveys are carried out between April and June each year and are calculated on an average over 2 years for A, B and C classification roads and 4 years for unclassified roads. Although when the survey is officially published it will use average figures over a two year period. The survey conducted in 2014 shows an overall improvement throughout Inverclyde roads network of approximately 3%. Officers are targeting further improvements with the continued RAMP capital investment and additional defect funding secured for 2014/15.

6.0 WORK TO BE CARRIED OUT OVER THE FORTHCOMING PERIOD

- 6.1 Key actions over the forthcoming period are as noted below, and an update on progress will be given in the next 6 month update report:

- Continue to maintain the three defect teams operating at all times across Inverclyde's road network subject to weather and other unforeseen incidents arising, and under the control of the Local Area Roads Inspectors.
- Procurement of external contractors as part of the coordinated approach to reducing the backlog of defects.
- The establishment and implementation of a programme of drainage works to target known problem areas.
- Continue to review existing processes to improve and ensure the consistency of management information and the reporting of the information to senior management, Elected Members and the public.
- Development of the business case for a Roads Integrated Management System and pilot the use of handheld devices to improve communications, generate efficiencies and provide more accurate reporting.
- Development of proposals for shared services/collaboration in terms of street lighting.

7.0 CURRENT PERFORMANCE

7.1 The number of outstanding potholes has reduced as indicated below; it should be noted that work is ongoing in respect of process review, to ensure the consistency and reliability of management information.

<u>Potholes Outstanding (April 2014)</u>	<u>Potholes Outstanding (July 2014)</u>
367	171

The percentage of roads defects repaired on time has increased as indicated below:

<u>Pothole Type</u>	<u>Number Recorded (Apr 14 to Date)</u>	<u>% Completed On Time (at April 2014)</u>	<u>% Completed On Time (at July 2014)</u>	<u>Target Time for Completion</u>
Category 1	16	100	100	24 hours
Category 2	498	45	79	5 days
Category 3	174	78	86	28 days
Overall	688			

7.2 The latest data from the Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey (SRMCS) has reported an improvement throughout Inverclyde's roads network since the previous survey; this is as indicated below:

<u>Road Class</u>	<u>% Red+Amber 2013 Survey</u>	<u>% Red+Amber 2014 Survey</u>
Overall	49.2	46.3
A	37.8	33.9
B	43.4	38.0
C	49.1	46.9
U	50.8	47.9

8.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

8.1

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
Roads	Defects/Drainage Works	2014/15-2015/16	£500	n/a	

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

Legal

8.2 There are no Legal implications arising from this report.

Human Resources

8.3 There are no specific HR implications arising from this report.

Equalities

8.4 As this report does not involve a new Policy or a new Strategy, there are no equalities issues arising.

Repopulation

8.5 The quality of the roads network is an influencing factor in the perception which people have of the area and therefore it is important that the Council optimises its limited spend on roads maintenance and as such the work generated by this report will have a positive benefit to the Council's Repopulation Strategy.

9.0 CONSULTATIONS

9.1 No specific consultations are required as a result of this report.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None.

APPENDIX 1: DEFECTS ACTION PLAN

Action Ref	Description	Target Completion	Update	Status (RAG)
1	Three number defect teams will operate at all times (weather permitting), under the control of the Local Area Roads Inspectors	Mar-14	Three teams maintained subject to adverse weather and other urgent issues arising	Complete
2	A review of staffing arrangements within the Roads Trading Organisation with specific reference to the future utilisation of Future Jobs Fund staff and Modern Apprentices.	Jun-14	2 number additional roads operatives to be employed; job advert closes end July 2014, with interviews August 2014	Complete
3	A review of the use of internal labour vs. external contractors for all or part of defect repair management, with a view to determining the best value approach for Inverclyde Council.	Jun-14	Both Internal and external resources to be employed on defect management; in internal teams to provide core function all year with top up from private sector for defined packages on work.	Complete
4	2013/14 Earmarked Reserves funding previously allocated to Roads will supplement the existing revenue allocation and will be targeted to defect repairs, especially potholes, with the emphasis on meeting the specified target time for repairs. Performance will be closely monitored and reported to senior management during this period.	Aug-14	Revised target date; full spend not achieved during 2013/14 due to private sector being unable to resource external contracts in run up to end of financial year; contract now awarded and works programmed for start early August 2014	Green
5	Improve the quality of reporting and management information recording.	Aug-14	Revised target date; revised format being developed to ensure consistent reporting and further work required to ensure data reliability	Amber
6	The establishment of a Drainage / ditching squad, made up of two operatives equipped with the appropriate plant.	Oct-14	Revised target date; being reviewed in context of overall workload for internal trading account	Amber

7	Preparation of an outline business case for the implementation of a dedicated electronic Roads Integrated Management System; this would include the use of handheld and other mobile technologies. The aim would be to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of whole defect management from defect notification/identification through to implementation of a permanent repair. A Roads Integrated Management System would replace the existing management database which is beyond its useful life as noted above.	Dec-14	Currently liaising with ICT re reviewing capabilities of Lagan/Uniform in terms of bringing early improvements to workflow using existing systems. For a dedicated RIMS, previous work (>5 years old) to be reviewed and updated to take account of current systems and asset management practises; to be carried out in liaison with ICT	Green
8	Revise customer satisfaction survey and defect reporting mechanisms.	Dec-14	Assess feasibility of putting customer satisfaction survey on website through Corporate Comms; ongoing	Green
9	Increase revenue spend in line with recommendations made in the Roads Asset Management Strategy. This would be allocated to dealing with pothole type defects via the use of proprietary defect repair materials and techniques, and conventional patching (£150k per annum), and for the maintenance of, and minor improvements to, existing drainage systems (£100k per annum)	Mar-15	Pothole type defects to be actioned via use of jetpatcher technique and three number external patching contracts - budget to be broadly spent by end October 2014. Currently assessing scope of additional drainage maintenance work required, and anticipate spend in late autumn/winter period	Green
10	A review of the roads maintenance hierarchy to determine the frequency and response times for pothole repairs	Jun-15	In accordance with CoP for Highway Maintenance Management, and other established practise; not started	Green
11	A review of pothole categorisation, repair type (temporary and permanent) and response times based on the above. Implement an updated Inspection Policy; implement an Inspection Manual to assist the Roads Inspectors determine how defects are to be assessed and determine appropriate response times.	Oct-15	In accordance with CoP for Highway Maintenance Management, and other established practise; policy to be updated and Inspection Manual to be prepared; also refer action refs 14 and 15; not started	Green
12	Conclude shared service review/Collaborative working with neighbouring authorities	Jun-16	Subject to conclusions of RTWG Group	Green
13	Improve Inverclyde's position in the roads condition Index	Jun-16	In accordance with current asset management practise; ongoing	Green
14	Improve customer satisfaction ratings	Jun-16	Subject to ongoing targeted investment and rate of deterioration of existing network; ongoing	Green

15	Reduce the number of roads related public liability claims	Oct-16	Subject to ongoing targeted investment and rate of deterioration of existing network; ongoing	Green
16	In line with the Roads Asset Management Plan review future years funding requirements for defect management	Oct-16	Not started	Green