
Report To:	Environment & Regeneration Committee	Date:	5 March 2015
Report By:	Corporate Director of Environment, Regeneration & Resources	Report No:	ERC/ENV/IM/14.227
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Subject:	Roads Defects Performance Update		

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 is continuing to liaise with Corporate ICT with regard to 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 December 2014.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the progress being made in delivering the Roads Defects Action Plan.
- 3.2 That the Committee note that future reports on Defects Performance and Action Plan updates will form part of the Environment, Regeneration & Resources Performance Report.

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 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.
- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 The Council's 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, or 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, and the spend is complete. Contracts were 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. This has been completed and Members will be pleased to note that two additional Roads Operatives posts have been filled. These additional posts will be utilised to carry out a variety of defect and drainage works, and other roads related duties.

- 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 during 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 in 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 years 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 years additional defect and drainage allocation 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 gully 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 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 have been 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:

- Continue to maintain the three defect teams operating at all times across Inverclyde's road network subject to weather and other unforeseen incident arising, and under the control of the Local Area Roads Inspectors.
- Procurement of external contractors to as part of the coordinated approach to reducing the backlog of defects (for 2015/16).
- The establishment and implementation of a programme of drainage works to target known problem areas; this work is ongoing in terms of design and implementation on site.

- 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;

<u>Potholes Outstanding (Apr 2014)</u>	<u>Potholes Outstanding (Dec 2014)</u>	<u>% Improvement</u>
367	119	68%

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

<u>Pothole Type</u>	<u>Target Time for Completion</u>	<u>Apr to Jun 2014</u>		<u>Jul to Sep 2014</u>		<u>Oct to Dec 2014</u>		<u>% Improvement</u>
		<u>Number Recorded</u>	<u>Completed On Time</u>	<u>Number Recorded</u>	<u>Completed On Time</u>	<u>Number Recorded</u>	<u>Completed On Time</u>	
Cat 1	24 hours	13	92%	9	100%	4	100%	8%
Cat 2	5 days	392	57%	204	75%	74	81%	24%
Cat 3	28 days	56	82%	328	73%	275	92%	10%

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 (this is unchanged from the previous Committee report).

<u>Road Class</u>	<u>% Red+Amber 2013 Survey</u>	<u>% Red+Amber 2014 Survey</u>	<u>% Improvement</u>
Overall	49.2	46.3	2.9%
A	37.8	33.9	3.9%
B	43.4	38.0	5.4%
C	49.1	46.9	7.6%
U	50.8	47.9	2.9%

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	Complete
5	Improve the quality of reporting and management information recording.	Apr-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	Operatives employed and drainage works being carried out on site as part of the overall roads programme	Complete

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.	Jun-15	Revised date due to some issues with software; currently liaising with ICT re reviewing capabilities of Lagan/Uniform in terms of bring 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	Amber
8	Revise customer satisfaction survey and defect reporting mechanisms.	Jun-15	Revised date; 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; work being undertaken by West of Scotland Roads Working Group	Green
12	Conclude shared service review/Collaborative working with neighbouring authorities	Jun-16	Subject to conclusions of RTWG Group	Green
13	Improve the 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