

Agenda Item	6
Report No	TEC 54-13

Additional £1m for Roads Maintenance

Report by the Director of Transport, Environmental & Community Services

Summary

This report invites Members to approve the proposals for spending the additional £1 million from the Council's Strategic Change and Development Fund for roads maintenance, as set out in this report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Highland Council, at its meeting on 27 June 2013, agreed to allocate £1million from the Strategic Change and Development Fund for road maintenance.
- 1.2 The Council agreed to distribute the additional £1million on the same basis as the additional £2 million allocated for road maintenance as part of the revenue budget for 2013/14, as agreed by the TECS Committee on 16 May 2013 (TEC-40-13).

2. Distribution of Funds

- 2.1 The decision of the TECS Committee was to distribute the additional funding as set out below:
 - 50% based on road mileage, to improve road drainage.
 - 50% on the basis of the Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey, to improve the condition of the road surface.
- 2.2 The allocations for the additional £1million are shown in the table below:

	CSER	RSL	INBS
Drainage	£183,312	£190,137	£126,551
Surface treatment	£143,000	£220,000	£137,000

3. Drainage Work

- 3.1 Improvement to road drainage has been identified as a key factor in making road surfaces last longer. Increasing longevity by timeous intervention using relatively low cost measures is a key principle of Asset Management.
- 3.2 Plans already approved by the TECS Committee include the purchase of GPS

linked cameras and software to facilitate drainage surveys and prioritise lengths of road which will benefit most from drainage improvements. The delivery of the equipment is imminent at the time of writing and surveys of the trial areas (Black Isle and Lochaber) will take place over the following weeks.

- 3.3 The additional funding will enable action to be taken on the programme of work resulting from the survey. It will in particular allow additional resources to be taken on to increase the level of drainage maintenance.
- 3.4 Even before the survey is complete, Area Managers will be able to act on known drainage problems already identified following flood events and by traditional inspections.
- 3.5 As well as simple ditch clearing the work will include replacement of defective or inadequate culverts and cross drains under the road and additional gullies in areas prone to ponding.

4. Road Surfaces

- 4.1 There is a backlog of surfacing schemes already identified and the funding will allow some of these to be dealt with.
- 4.2 Additional funding will in particular permit the employment of contractors who can offer specialist processes which could not be afforded from the base budget.
- 4.3 In particular it is intended to trial various techniques for road recycling, which reduces the need for new materials and decreases the carbon footprint of the work compared with traditional resurfacing.
- 4.4 Although it is too late to increase this year's surface dressing programme, the additional funding will help to get ahead with extensive patching in preparation for surface dressing next year. Preventing deterioration by surface dressing to avoid more expensive resurfacing later is another key principle of Asset Management.
- 4.5 Specialist patching techniques are also available from contractors, such as jet or velocity patching in which stone and bitumen are pumped into potholes under pressure, and infra-red heating techniques which result in a seamless patch in which a little new material is mixed in-situ with existing recycled material.

5. Expected outcome from additional funding

- 5.1 The £1 million from the Strategic Change and Development Fund will allow the Council to introduce additional maintenance work, some of which will use greener, lower carbon technology in accordance with the aims of the Road Asset Management Plan.
- 5.2 Specific schemes will be chosen by Area engineering staff based on Asset Management principles.

6. Implications

- 6.1 The additional £1m for road maintenance is provided through the Council's Strategic Change and Development Fund, as agreed by the Council on 27 June 2013.
- 6.2 The additional funding helps the Council to meet its duty under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.
- 6.3 The use of recycling techniques will reduce the carbon footprint of the work and so have a positive effect on climate change.
- 6.4 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.
- 6.5 There are no risk implications arising from this report.

7. Recommendation

- 7.1 Members are invited to approve the proposals for spending the additional £1 million from the Council's Strategic Change and Development Fund for roads maintenance, as set out in this report.

Designation: Director of Transport, Environmental & Community Services

Date: 2 August 2013

Report Author: Richard Guest