

The Highland Council
Community Services Committee
15 May 2014

Agenda Item	8(i)
Report No	COM/05/14

Allocation of Road Maintenance Budget – 2014/15

Report by Director of Community Services

Summary

This report invites Members to approve the distribution of the Roads Maintenance Budget for 2014/15 between the four new Operational Areas.

1. Background

1.1 The budget for road maintenance currently falls into four distinct headings:

- Winter Maintenance (Revenue)
- Routine Maintenance (Revenue)
- Surface Dressing (Capital)
- Structural Road Maintenance (Capital)

1.2 The allocation for Winter Maintenance is used to deliver the Council's Winter Maintenance Policy.

1.3 The allocation for Routine Maintenance includes work such as surface patching, footway repairs, ditching, gully cleaning, road markings, traffic signs and verge maintenance,

1.4 The allocation for Surface Dressing is used as an early intervention treatment to extend the life of the road surface.

1.5 The structural road maintenance budget is used for resurfacing works with an element reserved for major bridge refurbishment works.

1.6 The four Operational Areas are:

- Caithness & Sutherland
- Skye, Ross & Cromarty
- Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey and Lochaber
- Inverness

2. Method of Distribution

2.1 Winter Maintenance (Revenue)

2.1.1 The allocation for winter maintenance is based on the resources required to deliver the Council's Winter Maintenance Policy. It includes an allocation for providing the detailed weather forecasting service and the Icelert system. The proportional split between the Areas is based on historical spend averaged over the last 3 years.

2.2 Routine Maintenance (Revenue)

2.2.1 The allocation for Routine Maintenance is distributed between Operational Areas according to a formula based on road mileage with a population weighting for urban areas, to take account of urban features such as footpaths and increased signage and junction markings.

2.2.2 Routine maintenance is either cyclical (such as verge cutting and ditch cleaning) or reactive (such as filling potholes.) In either case, the amount of work is proportional to the length of the road, making road length an effective measurement to establish relative need.

2.2.3 Within the overall allocation for Routine Maintenance the allocation for bridge maintenance is based on the number of bridges in each Operational Area, rather than road mileage. A similar method is used for allocation of drainage monies (gully cleaning) where the number of gullies in each Operational Area is used.

2.3 Surface Dressing (Capital)

2.3.1 The allocation for surface dressing is calculated on the basis of need assessed from the outputs from the Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey (SRMCS).

2.4 Structural Road Maintenance (Capital)

2.4.1 The allocation for structural road maintenance is calculated on the basis of need assessed from the outputs from the SRMCS.

2.4.2 Within the total Structural Road Maintenance allocation, a proportion is reserved for road structures such as bridges and retaining walls. This budget is held centrally and is distributed on the basis of need as determined by routine and special inspections of structures. The distribution is recommended by the Chief Structural Engineer and agreed with Area staff.

3. Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey (SRMCS)

3.1 The SRMCS is undertaken annually to assess the condition of the Scottish Local Authority road network. Members will recall that the results are used

to calculate a Road Condition Indicator (RCI) that Audit Scotland requires as a Statutory Performance Indicator for reporting carriageway condition.

- 3.2 The SRMCS is a machine based survey and covers the entire 56,000km of the Scottish Road Network. The survey vehicles are all subject to strict independent audit and verification by the Transport Research Laboratory to ensure consistent data recording across the entire network and year on year, allowing historical comparison between Councils.
- 3.3 The length of road surveyed annually equates to approximately 2,900km or 43% of the road network and includes:
- 100% of A Class roads in one direction with the direction of travel alternating each year.
 - 50% of B and C Class roads per year in one direction with the remaining 50% surveyed in the subsequent year to effectively sample all these roads on a 2 year cycle. The direction of travel is alternated every 2 years to provide a survey of all lanes over a 4 year period.
 - 10% of U Class roads are surveyed in one direction each year.
- 3.4 For the purposes of calculating road condition parameters in each of the operational Areas the following sample size is used:
- The current survey year for “A” class roads (100%)
 - The last 2 years survey data for “B” & “C” class roads, so giving a 100% sample of those roads
 - The last 4 years survey data for “U” class roads, so giving a 40% sample of those roads
 - The target sample size for urban roads is 15% of the overall survey by length
- 3.5 The main parameters measured by the survey vehicle are:
- Texture (roughness of the road surface)
 - Rutting (wheel tracking)
 - Longitudinal profile (smoothness of ride)
 - Cracking
- 3.6 The results from the SRMCS are categorised and presented on a colour coding convention as set out below:

Green	Minor defects may be present, but the road is considered to be in an acceptable condition.
Amber	Further consideration for the need for maintenance is required – repair works may be necessary
Red	The road has deteriorated to a point where repairs are very or highly likely to be required to preserve and prolong serviceability

3.7 The RCI is derived by adding the lengths of road assessed as “red” and “amber” averaged over a rolling 2 year period. An increase in the figure indicates overall deterioration, whilst a decrease indicates improvement.

3.8 The measurements for **texture** and **cracking** are used to allocate the funding for surface dressing.

3.9 The measurements for **rutting, profile** and **cracking** are used to allocate the funding for resurfacing.

4. Budget Allocation for Roads Maintenance

4.1 The overall revenue budget available for road maintenance activities for year 2014/15 has been set at £12.188M.

4.2 The capital allocation for structural road maintenance for 2014/15 has been set at £5M.

4.3 Individual Area allocations are detailed in **Appendix A** of this report.

5. Implications

5.1 The distribution enables the Council to meet its duty under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 to a consistent extent in each of the four Operational Areas.

5.2 There are no legal, climate change, carbon clever, risk, Gaelic or equality implications arising directly from this report.

Recommendation

Members are invited to approve the distribution of the Road Maintenance Budgets for 2014/15 between the four Operational Areas on the basis of need. The details are provided in **Appendix A**.

Designation: Director of Community Services

Date: 10th April 2014

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APPENDIX A

Roads Budget Allocation 2014/15.

Activity	Distribution Method	Total Budget	HQ	Caithness & Sutherland	Skye, Ross & Cromarty	Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey and Lochaber	Inverness
Revenue Allocation							
Winter Maintenance	Historical	£5,221,755	£90,740	£1,741,560	£1,757,943	£842,393	£789,119
Routine Maintenance	Weighted Road Length and proportion of total asset.	£6,967,019	£20,000	£2,085,468	£2,287,654	£1,408,839	£1,165,058
Total Revenue		£12,188,774	£110,740	£3,827,028	£4,045,597	£2,251,232	£1,954,177
Capital Allocation							
Surface Dressing	SRMCS	£2,000,000		£474,412	£665,133	£500,332	£360,123
Structural Maintenance	SRMCS	2,650,000		£665,208	£940,770	£600,147	£443,875
Bridges	Condition survey	£350,000					
Total Capital		£5,000,000		£1,139,620	1,605,903	1,100,479	803,998
Total Budget		£17,188,775		£4,966,648	£5,651,500	£3,351,711	£2,758,175