

(xiii) Mr D Macpherson

To the Chair of the Economy & Infrastructure Committee

The Highland Council's Economy and Infrastructure Committee met on 4 February 2021 and agreed the distribution of an additional £20M for road maintenance programme and also agreed to continue with the current distribution method for the £7.2M base allocation. With the Highland Council's commitment to invest these significant sums of taxpayers money on repairing and improving its ageing and crumbling road surfaces and filling the thousands of potholes throughout its vast network of 6,700 kilometres of town and rural roads, what additional steps and extended flexible working hours and new business practices, (including working at night and at weekends, as happens in other local authorities, in conjunction with quarries and suppliers and experienced subcontractors), are being explored and undertaken this year to ensure that the agreed budget allocated for essential road repairs and white lining etc. will all be met in the remaining weeks before the annual shutdown of Highland Council roadworks due to the autumn and winter temperature drops that the Council's own roads engineers have previously explained prevent them annually from the effective continuation of roadworks throughout the 7 coldest months of the year from the months of October to April inclusive?

*We have introduced additional steps and flexible working hours and new business practices, to deliver the agreed roads programme as follows:*

- *Flexible Working for our in-house roads operatives to include an extended working on weekdays and working on Saturdays. We are also utilising external contractors where our own in-house resources cannot undertake works. Finally, the Project design Unit will be carrying out some of the Strategic Roads schemes as agreed at the I & E Committee in May.*