

Agenda Item	6
Report No	LA/24/21

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Lochaber

Date: 8 November 2021

Report Title: Area Roads Programme 2021/2022 Update

Report By: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report updates Members on progress achieved with the prioritised list of structural works for the Lochaber Area.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the progress achieved with the prioritised 2021/22 Roads Programme for Lochaber Area.

3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** - All work is managed within budget allocations from a resource perspective with The Highland Council delivering its legal responsibilities.
- 3.2 **Legal** - The Highland Council undertakes the Structural Programme within the Local Committee area in its duty under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.
- 3.3 **Climate and Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island)** - This report has no impact on Equality, Gaelic, Climate Change or Carbon Clever considerations. However, there may be rural considerations where low road usage levels and distances between communities reduce the opportunity to maximize the impact of investment decisions when compared to more densely populated areas /roads with greater usage levels.
- 3.4 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever** – No implications.
- 3.5 **Risk** – No implications.

3.6 **Gaelic** - This report has no impact on Gaelic.

4. Budget Background & Programme Progress Update

4.1 The Highland Roads Budget for this year was approved at the Economy and Infrastructure Committee on 4 February 2021 (report [ECI/6/21](#)). This year, 2021/22, the total Highland Roads Capital Budget is £17.2m.

4.2 The current Revenue budget allocation for Lochaber for 2021/22 is £1,110,564 which is required to cover labour, plant and materials (including salt) for Roads Cyclical Maintenance and Winter Maintenance activities.

4.3 The Lochaber Capital Budget allocation for Area Structural (Capital) Works is £1,237,454, and the proposed priorities for 2021/22 were agreed at Lochaber Area Committee on 19 April 2021 (report [LA/13/21](#)).

Progress made with these priorities can be found in the updated table in **Appendix A** to this report.

4.4 As usual the proposal was to undertake primarily surface dressing and surfacing schemes, which this year included road recycling.

4.5 The roads work list is continually updated by adding to it and adjusting priorities. (For a summary of the overall rolling programme of works see Report [LA/7/20](#)).

4.6 The Ward Allocation of £100k per Ward (referred to in Report [ECI/6/21](#)) is included in the 2021/22 Lochaber Capital Budget allocation (item 4.3 above).

4.7 Since Lochaber Area Committee on 19 April 2021 the area Lochaber Capital Budget (£1,237,454, item 4.3 above) has been supplemented by additional capital funds agreed at Full Highland Council on 24 June 2021 as part of Highlands Roads Recovery (Item 9, [HC/14/21](#); updated at Economy and Infrastructure Committee on 1 September 2021, Item 9, [ECI/35/2021](#)).

4.8 This additional funding is £6.5m highland-wide (part of £9m over two financial years, 2021/22 and 2022/23, as part of Phase 2 and 3 of the Council's Health & Prosperity Strategy ([HC/14/21](#))).

4.9 Lochaber's additional allocation amounts to £329,760 spread over two years, 2021/22 and 2022/23, (for capital activities such as surface dressing, resurfacing, strip widening, passing places, etc.). Officers continue to work from the agreed list of priorities.

5. Work Programme Types

5.1 Road Maintenance budgets are normally allocated under the following headings:-

- Winter Maintenance (Revenue)
- Cyclic Maintenance (Revenue) including:-
 - Drainage
 - Footpath Maintenance
 - Gully Cleansing

- Temporary Patching Repairs
- Road Marking Renewal
- Sign Maintenance
- Verge Maintenance
- Other Cyclic and Routine maintenance

- Structural Works (Capital) including: -
 - Structural Resurfacing (Overlay/Inlay)
 - Structural Integrity Improvements
 - Surface Dressing
 - Recycling
 - Major Patching
 - Projects (larger schemes)

5.2 This report focuses on the Area Structural Works (Capital) programme.

6. Programme Background

6.1 Schemes are selected for inclusion in these programmes on the basis of need using the information gathered from the following sources and are prioritised with the safety of the travelling public and sustainability of the road network as the main objectives:-

- Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey (SRMCS) data;
- Safety Inspections;
- Service Inspections; and
- Input and feedback from Members.

6.2 The Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey (SRMCS) records data which is processed to show rutting, profile, cracking and surface texture. Surface texture is principally used in the preparation of surface dressing programmes. Rutting and profile data is used for surfacing programmes, while cracking data is used in both surface dressing and surfacing programmes.

6.3 The SRMCS survey is undertaken according to the following schedule:-

- A class roads annually;
- B class roads every two years; and
- C & U class roads every three years

6.4 The SRMCS survey is presently up to date. The surveys are usually undertaken throughout the spring, summer and autumn but do not include winter damage due to the freeze thaw cycle.

6.5 WDM can produce a paper plan showing the damage over a wide area but the volume of data and the scale of the plan results in the data being difficult to use or handle. The system is best used interactively, using both an overview and then closer inspection at a smaller scale. Small scale prints can be produced for specific sites.

6.6 Given the survey frequency, the SRMCS data is only indicative of the road conditions at any one time. Additional deterioration and repairs may not be captured on the survey. Consequently, additional sources of information are used.

- 6.7 All roads are inspected either monthly, quarterly or annually for safety hazards depending on their priority. Roads are also inspected in the course of preparing the works programmes. These inspections, together with specific concerns raised through Members and Community Councils, are considered for inclusion in the works programmes.
- 6.8 The programmes are prepared over the winter months and are finalised in the spring to allow for additional damage due to freeze thaw cycle; winter tends to have serious effect on the road network. The programmes reflect both the strategic network and the importance attached to local roads by rural communities.
- 6.9 Prior to finalising the programmes, each site is again visited by experienced engineers to confirm the importance of the works against the network and the details of the designs.

7. Additional Capital Funding for Strategic Roads

- 7.1 The Strategic Road Schemes – Capital Allocation report taken to Environment and Infrastructure Committee on 5 May 2021 (Item 6, [ECI/15/2021](#)), detailed the proportion of the £20m highland-wide roads capital (for 2021/22 and 2022/23) that will be spent on strategic schemes to be £7.4m (£3.7m per year over 2021/22 and 2022/23).
- 7.2 After funding is allocated for agreed major maintenance schemes, specified PDU schemes and Scottish Timber Transport scheme match funding, the remainder is allocated to the Highland strategic road network for surface treatments such as surfacing, and surface dressing is £3.067m.
- 7.3 The report describes the methodology for scheme identification, prioritisation, and allocation (i.e., the combination of SRMCS scheme builder results, operational factors, risk assessments, engineering input, etc, as described in item 6 above).
- 7.4 Progress on spending the strategic allocation was reported in Appendix B of the 1 September 2021 Environment and Infrastructure Committee Roads & Transport Transformation and Roads Capital Allocation Update report ([ECI/35/2021](#), Item 9).
- 7.5 In Lochaber area strategic roads identified are the A884 and the A961. Of the works identified, resurfacing was completed on the A884 this summer at sections including Liddesdale, Tornish and the approach to Lochaline.
- 7.6 Planned works include the A861 and additional sections on the A884.

8. Roads Transformation Strategy

- 8.1 Contractor availability has been a significant factor this year, primarily due to the increase in volume of work resulting from the welcome larger Council roads budget combined with that of neighbouring local authorities and the trunk road authority and the effect of the Covid pandemic.
- 8.2 Thankfully by planning and notifying works and engaging with contractors early we have been able to achieve significant capital works over the summer 2021 season.
- 8.3 Simultaneously, with Council roads operatives we have achieved significant capital works - surface dressing and road recycling (in addition to patching and cyclical (revenue budget) maintenance works).

- 8.4 Visitor infrastructure issues have impacted significantly on staff time this year and experience, prioritisation and endeavour have been essential in delivering the capital programme whilst addressing this.
- 8.5 Staff continue to focus on Highland roads recovery. Innovation, specialist vehicle replacements, team development, partnership working, consultation, communication and all available budget streams continue to help deliver.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

Date: 18 October 2021

Author: Richard Porteous, Roads Operations Manager
(Lochaber, Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey and Corran Ferry)

Background Papers: Roads & Transport Transformation and Roads Capital Allocation [Update](#)
Strategic Road Schemes – Capital [Allocation](#)
Medium Term Financial Planning and Health & Prosperity Strategy [Investment](#)
Lochaber Area Roads Programme [2021/2022](#)
Roads Investment Budget Distribution – Capital [Report](#)
Lochaber Area Roads Maintenance Programme [2020-2021](#)

Appendix 1

Lochaber Area Roads Capital Works 2021/22

	Route	Description	Length (m)	Treatment	Estimated Cost	Remarks
1	A884	A884 Sunart Side Overlay areas	2564	Surface dress	£69,228	Complete
2	A884	A884 Sunart Side – Old SD areas	1200	Surface dress	£32,400	Complete
3	B8043	B8043 Overlay areas	1582	Surface dress	£39,866	Complete
4	B8043	B8043 Old SD areas	2800	Surface dress	£70,560	Complete
5	C1166	Phase 2 East Bay Mallaig	421	Inlay	£90,000	Complete
6	B8008	Morar Village beyond Level Crossing	305	Overlay	£40,000	Complete
7	U1002	Lundavra Road	435	Inlay	£60,000	Complete
8		Lanark Place	205	Inlay	£35,000	Complete
9	U2226	Henderson Row	66	Inlay	£22,000	Planning the works
10	A861	Mingarry – part A	340	Overlay	£52,360	Imminent
11	A861	Mingarry – part B	75	Overlay	£11,550	Imminent
12	C1094	Glen Etive	2388	Recycling	£134,755	Complete
13		Kinloch Hourn		Drainage	£40,000	Planned
14		Torlundy Road	800	Overlay	£70,000	Imminent
15		Burnside Road Strontian	80	Patching	£30,000	Complete
16		Fersit	40	Patching	£10,000	Complete
17		Loch Arkaig	40	Patching	£10,000	To be progressed
18		Albert Road	45	Patching	£8,000	Imminent
19		Angus Crescent	45	Patching	£8,000	Complete
20		Jetpatcher Programme		Patching	£50,000	Complete
21		Passing Place Signs Replacement		Project	£40,000	Ongoing
22	A861	Centre Studs Replacement		Project	£40,000	Complete
23		Various Routes		Edge Repairs	£50,000	Ongoing
24		Various Routes		Patching	£80,000	Ongoing
25		Various – Contingency repairs		Embankments	£140,000	Ongoing
				Total	£1,233,719	