

Agenda Item	4
Report No	RDB-01-22

## HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** Redesign Board

**Date:** 18 February 2022

**Report Title:** Roads Improvement Project – Project Brief

**Report By:** Executive Chief Officer Economy,  
Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

<b>1.</b>	<b>Purpose/Executive Summary</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to present for consideration and approval the Project Brief for the Project. The Project Brief includes setting out the vision, purpose, scope, and objectives of the work and provides a useful reference point from which to measure project progress.
1.2	The Roads Improvement Project is part of the Councils Business Change programme. It is applying a multi-phase approach to the improvement of the Roads Service and its operations.
1.3	The Redesign Board are taking a lead on the Roads Improvement Project, with Redesign Board members, Cllr M Davidson, Cllr R Bremner and Mr J Gibson, embedded in the Project Team, ensuring appropriate proposals and workstreams are developed in collaboration.
1.4	Redesign Workshops were held on 8 <sup>th</sup> November and 20 <sup>th</sup> January for the purpose of defining the scope, objective and supporting documentation for the Roads Improvement Project. The Project Brief included in this report at <b>Appendix 1</b> , reflects the outcomes from this work and the work of the Project Team.
1.5	The Roads Improvement Project aligns with the delivery of:  <u>Roads and Infrastructure Directorate service plan</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting the delivery of the £20million additional investment in Roads for 22/23</li> <li>• Supporting the delivery of road operations including maintenance which consists of drainage, verges and general road improvement delivered in context of local decision making on local priorities and asset condition.</li> </ul> <u>Highland Council Strategic Priorities:</u>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To make the Highlands a more resilient region, one where more people choose to live work study and visit.</li> <li>• Work Collaboratively to drive economic growth and champion innovation as well as ensuring our infrastructure meets the needs of businesses as well as citizens and visitors.</li> <li>• Address the financial challenges with a positive vision of change.</li> <li>• Safeguard and enhance the Highland’s significant reputation and standing, nationally and internationally</li> <li>• Address the climate and ecological emergency minimising our carbon footprint and working with partners to adapt to the changing climate.</li> </ul> <p><u>Community Planning Partnership:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People in Highland will be more involved in decisions that affect their lives.</li> <li>• People in Highland will benefit form living in stronger safer and more resilient communities.</li> </ul> <p><u>Strategic, Statutory and Operational priorities:</u> A place to prosper: Outcome 4.6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will improve Roads Condition across Highland.</li> </ul> <p>Your Highland Council: Outcome 6.6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will deliver a change programme that will include making the Council more efficient.</li> </ul> <p>The Councils citizens panel which is surveyed every year on its opinion of Council service and life in Highland, as well as our local communities told us the most important services to them were Roads and Potholes and Winter road Maintenance.</p> <p>The Road Improvement Project will be underpinned by the Councils Corporate and Community objectives and will be fundamental to the delivery of efficient, quality services that continue to deliver value for money and meet the needs of all those who use them.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	Members are asked to consider and approve the Roads Project Brief.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Implications</b>
3.1	<b>Resource</b> There are no direct human resource issues.
3.2	<b>Legal</b> Under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, the Council is the local Roads Authority and has a duty to manage and maintain all publicly adopted local roads within its area, noting Transport Scotland is the Roads Authority for the trunk road network.
3.3	<b>Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural)</b> An impact assessment is not required as the proposal does not have a differential impact on any protected characteristics.
3.4	<b>Climate Change / Carbon Clever</b>

	The Roads service have an important role to play in the achievement of the Council's climate change mitigation ambitions and a full project plan will identify areas for collaboration with the Climate Change team.
3.5	<p><b>Risk</b></p> <p>The Project Roads Risk register is reviewed at each working group meeting.</p> <p>The Roads Improvement Project does not expose the Council to any increased risk. The desired outcome of the roads redesign project will deliver efficiencies in the use of allocated resources, that will reduce the decline of the road condition – and overall reduce risk to the Council and the communities served.</p> <p>The project will aim to reduce the number and severity of defects on the road network – reducing risk to the public and also reducing risk of claims for damages.</p> <p>The risk associated with not approving the Roads Improvement Project Brief and therefore the approved recommendations from the Engineering services review will mean the Council will fall short of its corporate and community objectives.</p>
3.6	<p><b>Gaelic</b></p> <p>There are no Gaelic implications identified.</p>
4.	<b>Project Brief</b>
4.1	The Project Brief is a key communication document which provides an overarching specification of the Roads Improvement Project. This includes high level information relating to the objectives, scope boundaries, approach, timeline, risks, and assumptions which will be addressed by the project.
4.2	Successful delivery of projects relies upon having an agreed scope over which there is wide agreement through all stakeholder groups. It is equally important that any areas not being addressed by the project are fully captured. This is to align project effort fully with expected delivery. The project brief also recognises and documents interdependencies that are related to project delivery.
4.3	The brief also includes the development of a Plan of Action that will seek to identify and deliver the agreed actions together with a programme of delivery and implementation.
4.4	The Project Brief is a summary document which act as a general guide and does not replace the more detailed document sets which include a full project plan, benefits realisation plan, risk register and detailed communication plan.
5.	<b>Next Steps</b>
5.1	Following approval by the Redesign Board, the project team will progress with a phased approach to the Scope of work set out in the Project Brief at <b>Appendix 1</b> . The project team will report on progress to future Redesign Boards and Workshops.
5.2	Embedded Councillors and Trade Union representation are an integral part of the project team and will be critical towards collectively developing the approach. This

must act to enhance the performance of front line and supporting services while achieving the wider strategic objectives outlined above.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer: Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

Date: 03 February 2022

Authors:

Malcolm Macleod, Executive Chief Officer, Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

Colin Howell, Head of Infrastructure, Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

Cheryl Townsley, Project Manager, Transformation Service

Background Papers:

[Engineering Services Review:](#)

## Appendix 1 – Roads Improvement Project Brief

### PROJECT BRIEF

<b>Project</b>	<b>Roads Improvement</b>
<b>Project Sponsor</b>	Malcolm Macleod
<b>Project Lead</b>	Colin Howell
<b>Date</b>	03 February 2022
<b>Version</b>	V1.0

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

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This project provides the means to progress the recommendations made by the Engineering Service review and approved at the 23rd March 2021 Redesign Board.

The Roads Improvement Project includes the key elements of the work to deliver the Engineering Services review recommendations. The project intends to deliver the necessary improvements for the effective, efficient, and sustainable delivery of all Engineering and Roads operations and improve Road Condition across the region.

Importantly, all Roads activities have an important role to play in the achievement of the Council's climate change mitigation ambitions, and the **Outcomes and Objectives** of this Project will enable a more coordinated approach to doing this.

#### 2. SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

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- **Strategy, Governance and Project Management**
- **Integration and Communication**
- **Financial Resources**
- **Workforce Planning and Operations**
- **Partnership Working**

#### 3. EXPECTED OUTCOMES & OBJECTIVES

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##### **Strategy, Governance and Project Management**

*Improved Road Condition and Strategic Roads and Asset Management Plan.*

- Move from reactive to cyclical maintenance
  - Early intervention and getting it right first time to double the useful life of a road surface.
- Improved Winter Maintenance policy to alleviate the pressure it presents annually on the Roads revenue budget
- Review and analyse the Roads Service's role in the achievement of the Council's climate change mitigation ambitions

## **Integration and Communication**

*A more responsive service and improved communication with our stakeholders.*

- Complete the integration of the various elements of the Roads Service that were separated across 2 services until the formation of the Economy, Infrastructure and Environment service
- Targeted communication management with our stakeholders
- Effectively manage levels of stakeholder satisfaction

## **Financial Resources**

*A more efficient use of resources and value for money.*

- Review the efficiency of capital and revenue budgets to deliver the Roads Service functions
- As a priority, identify and seek agreement to an objective and more sophisticated policy for the allocation of budget/funds
- Establish assessment criteria and parameters for prioritising resource across the Highlands – criteria to be based on and informed by empirical evidence of need, recognising factors such as geography, winter maintenance demands, population, and intensification of use to achieve greater value for money
- Review the charge out regime and multiplier of technical in scope staff

## **Workforce Planning and Operations**

*Improving cross functional and service collaboration. Using Lean to improve service delivery.*

- Redress insufficient resources we must provide a winter maintenance service and adequately maintain the road network
- Create a service wide workforce plan which maintains rigour whilst encouraging agility, flexibility, and diversification across all functional areas
- Optimise the use of Technical and Admin resources - task-orientated approach to be a priority for improved workflow and resource management.
- Streamline process-based functions and associated administrative tasks for increased efficiency, e.g., complaint handling, general customer relations and interactions, and responding to queries
- Align training and development of staff through CPD and on the job training together with progression to a 'cradle to grave' approach to create a culture of knowledge sharing and nurturing staff development.

## **Partnership working**

*Leveraging partnerships to improve our value proposition.*

- Build on the existing relationships with external parties including Transport Scotland and Northern Roads Collaboration as well as Hitrans and family group of local authorities, to include the potential for sharing of depot resources and reciprocal agreements on winter maintenance
- Attracting and maximising external investment

## 4. APPROACH

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### Stakeholder Engagement

- Staff
- Members
- Trade Unions
- Others as identified throughout the Project
- Community incl. Community Councils

### Process Improvement - “LEAN” Approach

- **DEFINE** the problem / opportunity - includes scope and provides focus
- **MEASURE** and quantify what is going on – evidence and research, avoiding assumptions, accounting for the “voice of the customer”
- **ANALYSE** the evidence, determine root causes, research solutions
- **IMPROVE** by designing solutions, with business justification to ensure viable / sustainable
- **CONTROL** the improvements through establishing change into business as usual, realising benefits, and ensuring revised / new measures are in place

### Delivery

A proportionate Project Managed approach will be applied for control and ongoing viability for the duration of the work. Key aspects of this approach will include the following (not exhaustive):

- **Governance** (Sponsor, Lead, Redesign Board, etc.)
- **Project Brief/Project Initiation Documentation** (this document, i.e., what the Project must address and achieve, how it will be conducted, how it will be resourced, etc.)
- **Project Plan** (task list, dates, responsibilities in line with achieving stated Outcomes and Objectives)
- **Work Packages** (i.e., allocation of work across the Project in line with achieving stated Outcomes and Objectives)
- **Benefits Management** (i.e., being clear on what is expected, and measure the extent this is delivered)
- **Communication Management**
- **Risk Management**
- **Project Assurance**

### Research

- Engineering Services Recommendations

- Other Local Authority Policies and Strategies specifically: Dumfries and Galloway and Ayrshire Roads Alliance
- Roads Asset Management plan
- Winter Maintenance Policy
- Other Local Authority Structures
- Other Organisations, inc. SCOTS, APSE,
- Other Local authority Budget Allocations
- THC historical budgets

## 5. INTERDEPENDENCIES

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- Transformation Programme - Service Redesign
- Amenities Project - designing contract/workload management processes and operating procedures (could be transferable/adaptable to Road's operations)
- Fleet Project
- Infrastructure & Environment Service & Workforce Plan
- Climate Change Strategy
  - Net Zero 2025
- Strategic Asset Management/Capital Programme

## 6. TIMESCALES

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Timescales are indicated in the approach section of this scoping report. The project team is expected to be resourced for 23 months during which all the project scope will be achieved. Success of the timeline is reliant on having all resources in place to permit concurrent planning with a seamless transition between phases.

Milestone	Target Date
Project Team – review draft Project Brief and related documentation	01 December 2021
Capital Budget Setting	09 December 2021
Redesign Workshop (Consider Brief & Plan)	20 January 2022
Redesign Board (Formal Sign off Brief & Plan)	18 February 2022
Revenue Budget Setting	03 March 2022
Redesign Report (overall update on Redesign Board progress)	10 March 2022

## 7. RESOURCES

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The following sets out the resource committed and aligned to the Project:

### PROJECT TEAM

**Purpose:** provide direct input to the project work areas, including researching, developing, and accessing options, and shaping the approach being taken to deliver the stated objectives of the overall project

**Membership:**

<b>Role</b>	
Sponsor	ECO, Infrastructure & Environment
Lead	Head of Service, Infrastructure & Environment
Project Manager	Project Manager: Transformation
Project Assurance	Team Manager: Transformation
Redesign Board Representative	Councillor
Redesign Board Representative	Councillor
Redesign Board Representative	Trade Union
Subject Matter Expert	Roads Operation Manager Representative
Subject Matter Expert	Roads Strategy Representative
Subject Matter Expert	Programme Design Unit
Subject Matter Expert	Finance Representative
Subject Matter Expert	HR Representative

Potential additional project resource if available:

<b>Resource Type</b>	<b>FTE</b>	<b>Duration</b>
Operations Support Officers	3.0	23 months
Senior Technician	1.0	23 months

## 8. RISKS & ASSUMPTIONS

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The indicative Programme timescales are based upon various assumptions and could be affected by a number of risks.

**Assumptions:**

Project Resource requirements through Transformation fund bid will be granted to deliver the project's Vision and objectives.

**Risks:**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Impact (High/Medium/Low)</b>	<b>Mitigation &amp; Management Action</b>
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Revenue allocation and impact on the winter maintenance delivery and cyclical maintenance	High	Review revenue allocations and identify efficiencies in operations. Short term and seasonal workers. Communication strategy. Develop and implement a risk-based approach
Staffing levels, including impact of HGV driver availability and impact of covid	High	Determine adequate resourcing levels – and consider recruitment including seasonal workers
Compliance with driving legislation and Impact on resourcing levels and service	High	Establish legislative requirements and develop clear guidance and monitoring, review resourcing requirements
Capital allocation and impact on road condition and road structures	High	Review capital allocation on an ongoing basis, as agreed at Council in December 2021 prioritization of funding based on asset management principals.
Fleet availability and reliability	High	Improve communication between Roads and Fleet. Consider levels of service and associated revenue and capital allocations.
Increase in customer contacts, complaints, and claims	Medium	Provide a better and more durable road conditions. Develop the communication strategy and customer contact system.
Decrease in staff wellbeing and trade union relations	Medium	Develop engagement and communication. Consider workload allocations, overtime provision and standby. Publicize support available to staff.
Staff recruitment and retention	Medium	Work with HR to publicize and market recruitment opportunities. Provide training and clear career pathway opportunities. Utilization of graduate and modern apprentices.