

ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES UPDATE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides an update on Roads and Infrastructure Service activities in recent months.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Area Committee note and consider the contents of this report.

3.0 DETAIL

Continuing COVID precautions

Waste Strategy

- 3.3 Work continues on the Council's Waste Strategy which is taking into consideration the BMW ban which comes into place at the end of 2025, the 25 year PPP contract with Renewi which ends in September 2026, the Deposit Return Scheme and the Household Waste Recycling Charter. Discussions continue with civil servants from Scottish Government regarding the above and discussion continue with neighbouring local authorities with a view to maximising collaboration opportunities.

Winter Policy Update

- 3.4 Winter maintenance standby rotas commenced on Friday 29 October. This follows the current in season policy agreed at the September meeting of the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee. The first three months of the winter standby period saw 34 equivalent full fleet runs against an annual budget allowance for 62 full fleet runs. This equates to a commitment of 55% and now gives a direct correlation in statistical activity, in 55% of the standby duration to date. The salt tonnage used as at end of January was 5,528 tonnes, equal to the lowest volume recorded as used in the first 3 months of any season, since weekly recording of activity began in 2009-10, Salt stocks remained steady at around 8,600 tonnes.
- 3.5 Members will be very much aware of the national shortage of HGV drivers. Whilst we have not lost a significant number of drivers, this does have an impact on recruitment of HGV drivers. This is being compounded by some absence being experienced through Covid.

Public Transport

- 3.6 Officers are currently liaising with West Coast Motors on roll out and implementation of Pingo app-bookable bus service. The Pingo app funding is provided by HITRANS for up to a year's trial, however, the app is being tested on two Council contracted demand responsive services - Cowal DAB and Kintyre Ring n Ride. Subject to a satisfactory trial, this system is likely to be rolled out more widely. One of the key considerations for the potential future of this service is how Members and users can be consulted in terms of the review of the pilot and the possible next steps. Certainly we will try where possible to provide Members with updates on any changes to bus services which need to be made for operational reasons. Members will note from the recent briefing note on public transport though, that services can change on an almost daily basis across the 80 different services managed by our small public transport team, so it may not always be possible to provide real-time updates. Further information on Pingo was provided to all Members in a recent briefing note.

Bridge Inspections and Capital Works

- 3.7 The Infrastructure Design team continue to carry out bridge inspections to all approx 900 structures on a rolling programme across Argyll and Bute to ensure 3.

works which are programmed for delivery.

- 3.8 The team were also successful in a highly competitive bidding process for bridge funds totaling £5,5million. We are currently in the process of putting a capital programme in place to utilise this welcome funding. The fund will be used to undertake proportionate works on bridges in need of repair, identified through our inspection programme/records and in line with the bid process.

longevity/sustainability etc and it has been concluded that it is better, long term, to realign the road to move it a short distance away from the slip edge. This will provide a more reliable road long term, also be more cost effective and importantly provide a better solution for our communities/travelling public. We are carrying out further designs to the realignment and the toe of the slope along the stream. Designs being prepared for land purchase to facilitate the realignment/remedial works. This amended approach is taking slightly longer than the original proposal to stabilise the slip and resurface the road on its current alignment. However, this amended approach which has evolved through the design process will provide a much more reliable road.

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