

## Northern Roads Collaboration Joint Committee

### REPORT TO NORTHERN ROADS COLLABORATION JOINT COMMITTEE – 21 JUNE 2019

#### NATIONAL ROADS COLLABORATION PROGRAMME UPDATE

##### 1 Recommendation

The Joint Committee is asked to:

- 1.1 **Note the ongoing progress being made with collaboration nationally and locally through the Roads Collaboration Programme (RCP).**

##### 2 Background

- 2.1 A paper was presented to the Committee on 1 March 2019, which provided an update on progress of the various projects and activities being undertaken by the RCP team both nationally and in support of officers within the Northern collaboration. This work has continued.
- 2.2 The RCP Board is considering options to extend and potentially expand the Programme beyond the end of this year.
- 2.3 The Chair of the Northern Officers Group gave a presentation on the work of the Northern partnership at the Society of Chief Officers of Transport in Scotland (SCOTS) meeting on 16 May, highlighting the journey so far to delegates from across Scotland.
- 2.4 The RCP has been providing direct support to the SCOTS' "Value of Local Roads" research project as detailed in 2.13.

##### **Governance First**

- 2.5 Across the country, collaboration activities are at different stages of development, viz:
  - a) **Northern** – The Joint Committee is meeting on 21 June 2019 and various collaborative activities progressing.
  - b) **Edinburgh, Lothians, Borders & Fife Roads (ELBF)** – A meeting of the Shadow Joint Committee is being arranged for August 2019 after an 18-month absence.
  - c) **Forth Valley** - Senior officers are developing operational collaborative activities.
  - d) **Glasgow City Region** – Officers are discussing collaboration opportunities across the City Region.
  - e) **Tayside** – Local review and change programme ongoing.

- f) **South West** – Ayrshire are discussing joint roads project under the emerging national enterprise and skills review. Dumfries are in discussion with colleagues in the Borders in relation to the Borderlands partnership.

### **Workforce Planning**

- 2.6 Routes to Leadership course (for aspiring leaders) second cohort started on 20 March 2019. Moray, Argyll, Angus, and Aberdeenshire are represented on the course this year.
- 2.7 Support for the recruitment of this year's Graduate Apprentices is continuing. UHI, Aberdeen University, and Abertay are all running courses.
- 2.8 Plans to obtain some Foundation Apprentice placements over summer 2019 within roads services are underway.
- 2.9 Direct support to school career events is developing, with 4 Councils now supported, including attendance by RCP staff, videos, leaflets, posters, and other resources. These resources have been made available to all Councils to use themselves. It is hoped to start doing work in schools in the north after the summer.
- 2.10 Work towards a collaborative/Training Academy approach to operative and technical training is continuing. A development group has been established (involving Aberdeen City, Moray, Argyll & Bute, and Highland) and a detailed proposal was presented to SCOTS. A legal agreement has been drafted. Tayside Contracts and Ayrshire Alliance are offering to be lead authorities in this.

### **Collaborative Network Management**

- 2.11 The Scottish Road Network Management Forum, involving senior local and trunk road officers from SCOTS and Transport Scotland, continues to work through their agreed action plan of opportunities to work across trunk and local road boundaries. This includes a review of roads depots across the country to identify any opportunities for sharing of depot/land resources between the trunk road contractor(s) and Councils.
- 2.12 BEAR Scotland met with representatives from the Northern officers' group in May, 2019 to discuss opportunities for collaborating with Councils, building on existing successful sharing. This was a positive discussion.

### **Technical projects**

- 2.13 The 'Value of the Local Roads' project is well underway on behalf of SCOTS, for completion in July, 2019. This has engaged over 30 organisations, over 200 community councils and a wide range of industry leads, to show the various aspects of social value of the local roads network. A launch event is being considered for the autumn and a briefing is attached at **Appendix 1**.

- 2.14 Further work has been carried out nationally in relation to “plastic roads” and additional guidance issued to all SCOTS members to assist discussions in their local area. The lead taken by this Joint Committee has proved valuable in enabling national discussions between manufacturers and Roads Authorities.
- 2.15 A project to look at streamlining road surfacing material specifications across Scotland has been concluded with guidance issued through the SCOTS network. A training event for practitioners/decision makers will be held in the autumn.
- 2.16 Projects to develop sharing of information and best practice around gully maintenance, street lighting (LED) maintenance, and standard construction details are underway. An update on these will be provided at the next Committee meeting.
- 2.17 The Joint Committee’s Legal Monitoring Officer within Aberdeenshire Council and Financial Monitoring Officer within Highland Council have been consulted in preparation of this report and had no comments to make and are satisfied that the report complies with relevant legislation.

### **3. Implications and Risk**

- 3.1 An equality impact assessment is not required in relation to this update report on behalf of the RCP. The report does not have a differential impact on any of the protected characteristics.
- 3.2 There are no staffing and financial implications on any of the partner Councils associated with this report.
- 3.3 No risks have been identified as relevant to this matter.

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**Lead Officer**

Report prepared by Angus Bodie, Programme Manager, Roads Collaboration Programme  
12 June 2019.



## **SCOTS– The Value of Local Roads Project Elected Member Update - May 2019**

### **APPENDIX 1**

#### **Introduction**

In early 2019 the Scottish Roads Research Board provided funding to the SCOTS (Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland) to undertake a study on the value of the local roads network in Scotland. It was agreed that the Roads Collaboration team would provide the necessary project management, with contract administration being provided by the Improvement Service.

Following a competitive procurement process, a Community Models Ltd (CML) led consortium was appointed to undertake the work. This brings together CML's considerable consultation expertise, and economic and social value input from Caledonian Economics and the Social Value Portal respectively.

#### **The Approach**

Between March and May, 2019, the consultants undertook extensive desk-based analysis of policy and academic literature relevant to the topic. They also engaged widely with national, regional, and local stakeholders from across the public, private, and voluntary sectors to gauge their views on the use and effectiveness of the network, the impact of foreseen changes in context, and the desired optimum network conditions/contributions in ten years' time. This was supplemented by a web-based survey of community councils, drawing more than 250 responses from across Scotland.

This process has provided the building blocks for a modelling exercise around economic and social value. The team are currently looking at the breadth of criteria and available data to support that exercise. It is being heavily informed by the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework and by the evolving commitments in the forthcoming National Transport Strategy. In addition, it will draw on criteria used in Scotland to inform approaches to placemaking, inclusive growth, and social value as a whole.

#### **Emerging Messages**

Key themes from the research include:

- Widespread common ground on definitions of the effectiveness of local roads.
- Acknowledgement that local roads are strategically important at a national level.
- Recognition that infrastructure plays a crucial enabling role in a breath of economic, environmental, educational, health and wellbeing outcomes.
- Awareness that road networks are systems in themselves (as well as key elements in other wider transport and connectivity systems).
- While multiple trends are expected to influence road usage in the future, their core purpose and values are likely to remain.
- Local roads should have a key (and higher profile) role in delivering Scottish Government's National Infrastructure Mission.

- Road investment decisions should be taken on a whole system basis, with regard to common definitions of social and economic impact.

### **Next steps**

The consultants presented the emerging messages and proposed modelling framework to SCOTS on 16 May, 2019. These were well received. The draft final report will be taken to the SCOTS Executive meeting on 21 June, 2019. This will be a structured report, setting-out research findings, model structure, key messages, and recommended next steps for the sector. In parallel, the SCOTS Executive will develop tactics for sharing headlines and content with Elected Members and other key stakeholders, once the project output has been signed off. It is expected to report to the COSLA Environment and Economy Board after the summer recess.