ABSTRACT
This report discusses the possibility of cost recovery for some discretionary areas of service provision including the provision of access protection road markings at private accesses.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 It is recommended that the committee agrees:–

(i) to note the contents of this report;

(ii) to the introduction of a charge of £125 for access protection road markings at private accesses.

2 DETAILS

2.1 The Best Value Service Review of the Traffic Management Section of the Roads Department identified that consideration should be given to the possibility of cost recovery for some discretionary areas of service provision.

2.2 This has now been done and a number of areas of discretionary service provision have been considered.

2.3 Provision of traffic count data. Outside parties may ask for copies of traffic count data, which the Roads Department has already collected for its own purposes. These requests are relatively infrequent and cost very little in terms of staff time as the information is electronically stored. It is not proposed to charge for this data. If however requests are received for the collection of data, which is not held on file then, subject to staff availability, this survey work can be undertaken by the Roads Department. A charge would be made for carrying out this work. Requests for traffic count data are infrequent and the income generated will therefore be minimal.

2.4 Provision of road accident data. The Roads Department has a database of accident data that is supplied by the police. If outside parties request accident data these requests are in the first instance passed to the police. Occasionally the Roads Department are asked to provide outside parties with information that can be more easily obtained from the database using the sophisticated data analysis software available. This is done (with police permission) and a charge made for the staff time
involved. Requests for accident data are infrequent and the income generated will therefore be minimal.

2.5 **Safety Audits.** There is a national shortage of suitably qualified people able to carry out safety audits of new road schemes. Staff within the Traffic Management Section of the Roads Department are occasionally asked by other local authorities or consultants to carry out safety audits. Subject to staff availability these briefs are normally accepted and a charge made for this service. Currently there are only one or two requests for safety audits per annum so the income generated is minimal. There is a benefit to the Department in that the staff involved are able to gain valuable experience of safety auditing on larger schemes.

2.6 **White road markings at private driveways.** At the time of carrying out the best value service review this was thought to be the most likely area for cost recovery. The total cost of providing these markings averaged over the years 2000 to 2003 has been £1400 per annum and this cost has been met from the Traffic Management and Road Safety revenue budget. There is of course also an ongoing maintenance cost. However the Department for Transport has recently issued new guidance on the use of these markings that states that they should be used sparingly. The guidance also states “over provision of markings will bring them into disrepute and compromise their effectiveness”. Given this recent guidance it is anticipated that the number of markings being laid will significantly reduce. In addition many of the existing markings will not be replaced as they wear out. Nevertheless those markings that will be laid only benefit the owner of the access and serve no general traffic engineering need. It would therefore be appropriate for a charge to be made. Currently the minimum charge from Tayside Contracts for markings such as these is £90 and so it is suggested that owners of private accesses be charged £125 to cover these third party payment costs and administration. No further charge would be made for future maintenance of the lines.

3 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 With respect to the provision of access protection road markings there will be an annual average saving of £1400 from the revenue allocation for signs and lines. This saving can be used to provide signs and lines for other more appropriate traffic engineering reasons.

3.2 There will also be a saving in the ongoing maintenance of those lines that are not to be replaced. However there are no records of how many access protection marks have been laid over the years and no information on how many would require to be maintained following the new Department for Transport guidance. It is therefore difficult to quantify the savings in maintenance costs. The savings which do materialise will allow maintenance of other road markings to a higher standard or reallocation to other road maintenance priorities.

4 **HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no human rights implications arising from the proposals in this report.
5 CONSULTATION

5.1 The Chief Executive, the Director of Law and Administration, the Director of Finance and the Chief Constable have been consulted in the preparation of this Report.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 There are no areas of the Traffic Management Section’s work that can generate significant amounts of income. Those areas where charges can be made are limited in number and the income generated simply covers costs.

6.2 Access protection lining at private accesses will be done taking into account the recent guidance received from the Department for Transport. It is proposed that in future residents be charged £125 for lines at accesses (including future maintenance) where these are considered appropriate.

Ronnie McNeil
DIRECTOR OF ROADS

NOTE

The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above Report:-


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REPORTS/cost.recovery