AGENDA ITEM NO 14
REPORT NO: 680/11

ANGUS COUNCIL
INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES DEPARTMENT – 11 OCTOBER 2011
ROADS ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN
REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

ABSTRACT: This report updates the position of the emerging Roads Asset Management Plan and progress on the national project, together with compliance with new accounting requirements.

1 RECOMMENDATION
1.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
   (i) notes the progress on the national project to date;
   (ii) approves the initial Roads Asset Management Plan for Angus.

2 BACKGROUND
2.1 Members will recall the various reports to Committee on roads asset management and the formation of the Sounding Panel as established by Report No 265/08 to Infrastructure Services Committee on 4 March 2008.

2.2 There was a previous meeting of the Sounding Panel with a presentation by officers and the consultant leading the national project Exp Ltd.

3 PROGRESS ON THE NATIONAL PROJECT
3.1 The national project was established through the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS). It was agreed through Report No.102/07 that Angus Council engage with SCOTS to determine a suitable way forward to continue the proposals to develop asset management on a national framework and that this was likely to offer economies of scale as well as producing a national framework in a consistent way amongst Scottish Roads Authorities. This followed on from recommendations of an earlier Audit Scotland report on the maintenance of Scottish roads networks.

3.2 The SCOTS project has now completed the third year of its four year programme. As part of the programme the project has established a set of “tasks” to enable authorities to draft a Roads Asset Management Plan (RAMP) for their own road network. There has been an ongoing cycle of setting additional tasks through workshops over the last two years and whilst individual tasks are being completed as each of these contribute to the emerging RAMP, to date the RAMP has not been sufficiently complete to report to the Committee, until now. A draft version of the RAMP was presented to the Sounding Panel on 23 August 2011 and comments were received which have now been incorporated into the final document. A copy of the document is available in the Members’ Lounge. The document is, however, still a “work in progress” and will continue to develop with time particularly as the action plan to improve this initial RAMP resolves existing gaps in our inventory and condition information.

3.3 The content of the RAMP is standardised through the project to develop a consistent approach and format of the document. The project has also been amended to take into account the production of the Code of Practice on Transport Infrastructure Assets published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting (CIPFA) in 2009 which includes valuation of the roads assets in line with Whole of Government Accounts. This Code has required additional assets to be valued requiring additional tasks to be added in the preparation of the RAMPs with further sections included in the RAMP.
3.4 As anticipated at the start of the SCOTS project councils are progressing asset management at their own pace. Some councils had already adopted a RAMP prior to the SCOTS project and have adjusted their plans accordingly. Others, like ourselves had awaited the national project. Angus is currently working well towards the project but further work will be required over the remaining six months of the project.

3.5 The progress on the national project was noted in Audit Scotland’s report, “Maintaining Scotland’s Roads – A Follow Up Report” which was the subject of Committee Report No 290/11 presented to Infrastructure Services Committee on 19 April 2011.

4 ROADS ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

4.1 In accordance with the SCOTS project and in line with the CIPFA Code of Practice, the Roads division has now developed an initial RAMP which includes the following:

- Asset Description
- Community Requirements
- Future Demands
- Levels of Service
- Lifecycle Plans for the following assets
  - Carriageways
  - Footways
  - Structures
  - Lighting
- Financial Summary
- Risk Management
- Improvement Plan

4.2 The main sections of the document are augmented by further detail set out in the RAMP Appendices.

4.3 By way of illustration members’ attention is drawn to the information included in the RAMP for traffic signals. Due to the relatively low number of traffic signal sets in Angus (52 in total) and the detailed inventory information available on the age, condition and cost of traffic signal systems, it has been possible to set out the likely budgetary demands for traffic signals over the next ten years. The division can programme future needs for works and budgets allowing a more managed approach to maintaining and replacing the asset, subject to adjusting the profiles in light of actual performance of the asset. Thus the benefits of the RAMP are starting to materialise although for larger assets groups, particularly carriageways and footways, there is some considerable input required to achieve capture management information.

4.4 Work will continue both through the SCOTS project and the suggested Improvement Plan to further develop the RAMP. Future significant revisions will be reported to Infrastructure Services Committee with periodic updates to the Improvement Plan, noting its intended period of cover is three years.

5 RISK

5.1 Maintenance of the infrastructure asset and risks associated with this task has been identified on the Roads Risk Register and has been evaluated below the current corporate tolerance line. The RAMP will assist in maximising value for money and thereby help manage the infrastructure risks.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report. There are ongoing resource demands to develop the RAMP during the SCOTS project and these will be contained within the Roads division’s revenue budget in the appropriate year.
6.2 Future development of the RAMP and inventory/condition data surveys is likely to be enabled through IT hardware and software. At this time these future needs are not fully developed and consideration of any financial issues that may arise will need to be given in future budget allocations. These will be reported as necessary in accordance with Financial Regulations and Standing Orders to the established Sounding Panel or Committee as appropriate.

6.3 The introduction of the CIPFA Code of Practice on Infrastructure Assets makes significant changes to how roads assets are valued, albeit this currently has no impact on the figures reflected in the council’s annual accounts. Preparation work in 2009/10 has developed valuations for the carriageways and further work has now expanded this to cover the major asset groups from 2010/11. There will be ongoing discussions between the Head of Roads and the Head of Finance to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Code.

7 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

8 EQUALITIES IMPlications

8.1 The issues contained in this report fall within an approved category that has been confirmed as exempt from an equalities perspective.

9 ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN AND SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

9.1 This report contributes to the following local outcomes contained with the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement for 2011 - 2014

- Our communities are safe, secure and vibrant
- Our natural and built environment is protected and enjoyed.

10 CONSULTATION

10.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services, Head of Finance, and Head of Law and Administration were consulted in the preparation of this report.

11 CONCLUSION

11.1 The report updates the committee on the progress of the national SCOTS project for the development of asset management and the Roads division’s initial RAMP leading to compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for valuation of roads assets.

ERIC S LOWSON
DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

NOTE:

The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing this Report:-


Report No. 290/11 “Maintaining Scotland’s Road – A Follow Up Report” - Infrastructure Services Committee on 19 April 2011.

Roads/JG/IAC