

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee
DATE	10 January 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Update on Northern Roads Collaboration Joint Committee – Annual Report 2021 / 2022
REPORT NUMBER	RES/23/005
DIRECTOR	Steven Whyte
CHIEF OFFICER	Mark Reilly
REPORT AUTHOR	Doug Ritchie
TERMS OF REFERENCE	7 & 8

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 At its meeting on 25 June 2021, the Northern Roads Collaboration Joint Committee approved an annual report and recommended that each of the partners take that report back to the relevant Committee within their Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee: -

- 2.1 Note the annual report from the Northern Roads Collaboration Joint Committee as attached at Appendix 1;
- 2.2 Note the stock taking exercise which was carried out by the Northern Roads Collaboration Officer Group as attached at Appendix 2; and
- 2.3 Note the continued role of Aberdeen City Council in the Northern Roads Collaboration Joint Committee.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to make members aware of the work being undertaken by the Northern Roads Collaboration of which Aberdeen City Council is a partner. The terms of the Minute of Agreement among the member Authorities provide that an annual report will be submitted to each authority on the work of the Northern Roads Collaboration Joint Committee.
- 3.2 On 30 July 2016 (Item 9) Aberdeen City Council approved a report on the formation of a Joint Committee for Roads Collaboration. Since its first formal meeting on 18 May 2018, the Northern Roads Collaboration Joint Committee has now met on a quarterly basis with a range of activities having been taken forward on a joint basis.

- 3.3 At its meeting on 25 June 2021, the Committee approved an annual report and recommended that each of the partners take that annual report back to the most relevant Committee within their Authority. The annual report of the Northern Roads Collaboration Joint Committee for 2020 / 21 is attached at **Appendix 1**.

At its meeting on 10 December 2021 the Committee approved a further report following a stock taking exercise which was carried out by the Northern Roads Collaboration Officer Group and is attached at **Appendix 2**.

- 3.4 At the same meeting on 25 June 2021 it was confirmed that Aberdeenshire Council would retain the role of Lead Authority supporting the Northern Roads Collaboration Joint Committee until a review of the governance arrangements is completed and up until the Local Authority elections in May 2022.
- 3.5 The Northern Roads Collaboration Joint Committee will continue to consider a range of joint working and procurement opportunities and the potential for inter-authority commissions and for shared contracts.
- 3.6 The elected members / substantive members and Lead officer are listed below:

	Members	Substitute Members	Lead Officer
Aberdeen City Council	<u>Post May 2022 Elections</u> Cllr M. Hutchison Cllr I. Yuill	Cllr M. Radley Cllr G. Graham	Doug Ritchie
	<u>Pre May 2022 Elections</u> Cllr M. Hutchison Cllr S. Macdonald	Cllr R. Grant Cllr Alex. Nicoll	Doug Ritchie

4. UPDATED INFORMATION SINCE THE ANNUAL REPORT WAS ISSUED AND POST ELECTIONS IN MAY 2022

- 4.1 Since May 2022 all three meetings of the Northern Roads Collaboration Joint Committee have been cancelled on 24th June / 9th September and 25th November 2022.
- 4.2 The next meeting of the committee will have to agree on a Lead Authority / support arrangements and its governance.

Since the establishment of the committee the financial monitoring has been carried out by Highland Council. The Legal, Committee and Lead Officer support has been provided by Aberdeenshire, however they have intimated that this will now be stopping and at the first meeting of the new Committee it will have to appoint and agree the following:

- Appointment of Chair & Vice Chair
- Agree on Lead Authority
- Review of Governance Arrangements & Financial Monitoring
- It's proposed that an Introductory Session to New Members will also be held.

4.3 The Northern Roads Collaboration Joint Committee will continue to receive presentations, be informed through briefings, consider reports, share experiences / knowledge and hopefully take decisions on joint work / collaborations.

4.4 Potential reports on future topics are as follows:

- A9 / A96 Road Improvements – Dualling
- Road Safety Framework & Action Plan
- Network Status & Resilience
- Shared Training Opportunities
- Annual Plan
- Highland Timber Transport Group
- Pavement Parking
- EV Infrastructure
- 20mph

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are staffing and financial implications associated with participation in the Northern Roads Collaboration Joint Committee. The costs are shared across the 7 partners and our current share for 2021 / 2022 is £3060.

5.2 Whilst there are no cost savings directly achieved by Aberdeen City Council's involvement in this partnership it provides officers with contacts in other local authorities, strong and direct links with the National Roads Collaboration Programme and Transport Scotland and also the wider opportunity for knowledge sharing. This participation within this collaboration is therefore considered value for money.

5.3 It also provides the platform for future collaboration for example on delivering design services, the scale to reduce costs in the implementation and purchase of alternative fuel technologies and possible shared working practices with Trunk Road Operators. In previous years we have seen income from providing services to other partners and it is hoped that in future years there will be further opportunities for this approach.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

8. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Increased perception of poor-quality road infrastructure	The collaborative working between Local Authorities will assist to provide the necessary maintenance and improvements for the road network, thus increasing ease of travel whilst reducing the risk to all members of the travelling public	M	Yes
Compliance	Any lack of investment in roads is likely to contribute to an increase in claims against the Council	Continue to prioritise spend in order to repair higher used and higher damaged roads and footpaths	L	Yes
Operational	Ongoing high levels of service demand are placing additional pressure on existing staff resources.	There is a need to ensure that there are sufficient adequately trained staff resources to deliver the proposed programmes / schemes / strategies approved by the Northern Roads Collaboration Joint Committee and within the specified timescales.	H	Yes

Financial	<p>The additional road lengths and structures returned to the Council create additional demand for limited financial resources and may therefore impact on other maintenance budgets in the future.</p> <p>The staffing implications are low given the advantages received from more joint working with other Local Authorities</p>	<p>This will be minimised by prioritising works across the city, by using high-quality design and materials to ensure longevity of renewed infrastructure.</p> <p>The costs are shared across all 7 partners as part of the Northern Roads Collaboration Group</p>	M	Yes
Reputational	Lack of investment in Roads is likely to contribute to an increase in claims against the Council and adverse publicity	Continue to prioritise spend in order to repair higher used and higher damaged roads and footpaths. Works to be determined in line with Roads Asset Management Plan	M	Yes
Environment / Climate	The risks of inaction (not improving maintaining and increasing pedestrian / vehicular and cycle infrastructure) are also significant in terms of a poor quality environment, poor reputation for Aberdeen and a decline in active travel which would have significant implications for the health and wellbeing of the citizens of Aberdeen	Continue to work towards net zero and the implementation of EV / H2 infrastructure.	M	Yes

9. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2022-2023</u>	
Impact of Report	
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</p> <p><u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u></p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspect of the policy statement: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seek to invest in our road and pavement network and commit extra funding to resurface damaged roads and pavements throughout the city..
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	Investment and improvements to the road infrastructure will assist in maximising the economy of the city.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	Using the roads and footways, street lighting and traffic safety measures to assist in making Safe and Resilient Communities for people to live in.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	Supporting different ways for active travel in everyday journeys, working with partners and volunteers to address safety, and infrastructure to assist in the increase of Active Travel.
Regional and City Strategies	<p>The views of affected residents and road users are sought on our performance on specific schemes. Records held in the Confirm (Roads Maintenance Management) System and records of claims by road users against alleged defects can be analysed to indicate areas of concern. Specific surveys may be carried out from time to time to address specific areas of concern. Results of these various analyses can be used in conjunction with inspection data to establish customers' areas of concern and expectations of the maintenance of the roads network.</p>

10. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	This report has no direct implications in relation to Equalities and Human Rights and a full IIA has been completed.

	The Committee is being asked to consider the annual report for financial year 2020 / 2021 and the matter does not have a differential impact on any of the protected characteristics
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None required

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 N/A

12. APPENDICES

12.1 Appendix 1 – Annual Report on Activities. 25 June 2021

12.2 Appendix 2 - Stock Taking Exercise, 10 December 2021.

13. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Doug Ritchie
Title	Roads Infrastructure Manager
Email Address	DRitchie@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	01224 522325