

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 26 FEBRUARY 2019**

**SCOTTISH ROAD MAINTENANCE CONDITION SURVEY RESULTS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

This report informs the Committee of the recent results of the Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey (SRMCS) for Angus and notes Local Government Benchmarking Framework roads maintenance spending.

**2. BACKGROUND**

2.1 A national survey of the condition of roads in Scotland is carried out annually through SCOTS (the Society of Chief Officers for Transportation in Scotland) – the SRMCS. A sample of roads is surveyed each year so the results are averaged over a two-year period to reflect this. Results are published annually for all roads authorities in Scotland.

2.2 Report No. 1007/04 presented to the Infrastructure Services Committee on 2 September 2004 detailed the principles behind the SRMCS and it was noted that the road network is categorised in to “green”, “amber” or “red” where:

- “Green”: Road is in an acceptable condition;
- “Amber”: Road condition indicates that further investigation is needed to establish if remedial treatment is required; or
- “Red”: Road has deteriorated to the point at which repairs to prolong future life should be considered.

2.3 The surveys were started over a decade ago although the first year was for a limited number of “A” class roads only. The survey has developed over the intervening years with the A, B, C and part of the unclassified roads surveyed. Adjustments have been made to compensate for the variations in the statistical returns from the sample survey. The actual amount of unclassified roads surveyed is around 10% across Scotland. As a result previous biennial results were more comparable and a change was implemented in 2016 to move to a rolling four-year average thereby removing some of the annual variations. The change to the four-year average sought to dampen unrepresentative variations arising from partial coverage of the unclassified network year on year and therefore the 2011/12 results onwards are not wholly compatible with the previous years’ figures (shown in italics). Nevertheless the comparisons in year with the Scottish average/other authorities remain valid and relevant.

2.4 The Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) produce roads maintenance costs per kilometre of road. There are some issues over the production of these figures as they also include winter costs making it difficult for a direct comparison to be made between road condition and amount spent. Aberdeen City was the highest spender in 2017/18 at £29,995.62 per km; Dundee (3rd highest) spent £20,120.38 per km, more than triple and double what Angus spent respectively. The Island authorities tend to spend least and Cities more.

**Table 1** overleaf shows the LGBF results for Angus.

**Table 1 – LGBF Spend**

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
<b>Angus (Spend per km)</b>	£7,528.31	£6,659.02	£8,639.07	£9,046.65
<b>Scottish Average (Spend per km)</b>	£10,392.50	£10,709.55	£10,534.61	£10,546.64
<b>Scottish Median ( (Spend per km)</b>	£10,531.50	£11,259.71	£11,429.98	£11,410.06
<b>Angus Routine Maintenance Spend (Total)</b>	£2,342k	£1,991k	£1,826k	£1,901k
<b>Angus Capital Maintenance Spend (Total)</b>	£7,126k	£7,936k	£7,784k	£7,439k

### 3. DETAILS

- 3.1 The results of the SRMCS showing the physical condition of a sample of the local Angus road network 2018/19 are shown in **Table 2**, which based on a total of the ‘red’ and ‘amber’ indicators using a “traffic light” system.

**Table 2 – SRMCS Results**

Year	Two-year combined RCI (Red and Amber, Road Condition Index) for Angus	Scottish Average RCI	Angus Council’s ranking relative to other Scottish Local Authorities (32 total)
2008-08	26.6	34.2	8
2009-10	27.1	36.0	4
2010-11	29.4	37.9	5
2011-12	29.0	36.4	5
2012-13	27.9	36.2	6
2013-14	30.1	36.7	8
2014-15	30.1	36.3	7
2015-16	28.9	36.7	6
2016-17	31.2	36.7	8
2017-18	31.8	36.7	8
2018-19	32.7	36.3	11

The results above are used to produce the following Statutory Performance Indicators (SPI):

- CTPR 0005 - SRMCS results overall**  
 Result shows deterioration from 31.8 in 2017/18 to 32.7% in 2018/19. Angus Council has dropped out of the top quartile of roads authorities (top eight) to 11<sup>th</sup> place out of 32 authorities.
- CTPR 0009 - Percentage of road network resurfaced**  
 In the financial year 2017/18, 23.4km of road was surfaced. Good practice suggests roads should be surfaced once every 40 years, equivalent to 45 km per year in Angus. Our rate of surfacing is on average once every 77 years approximately. Realistically budgets would need to be much higher to reduce this figure and few if any local roads authorities achieve this. An alternative proof of performance of our road network may be taken from reasonably good Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey Results (SRMCS) and reasonably low claim settlement rates, the latter of which Angus achieves.
- CTPR 0010 - Percentage of road surface dressed**  
 In the financial year 2017/18, 52km of road was surface dressed.  
 [‘Surface dressing’ is a cost-effective way of restoring the road surface and sealing it in one process. Surface dressing also: improves skidding resistance which makes the roads safer; helps to make a road waterproof; and protects the road against frost and water damage.]  
 Good practice suggests roads should be surface dressing every 10 years, which equates to 180kms a year in Angus. A target of 2.5% has been set, which was achieved in 2017/18. An alternative proof of performance may be taken from reasonably good Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey Results (SRMCS) and reasonably low claim settlement rates, the latter of which Angus achieves.

- **ENV4a CTPR 023a - Cost of maintenance per kilometre of road (LGBF (Local Government Benchmarking Framework) indicator)**

As shown in Table 1:

2016/17: Angus £8,539.07; Scottish Average £10,534.61; Scottish Median £11,429.98.  
2017/18: Angus £9,046.65; Scottish Average £10,546.64; Scottish Median £11,410.06.

- **ENV4b – A Class Road Condition (red and amber over a 4 year average)**  
“A” class roads have deteriorated since 2016/17, falling from 21.64% to 24% in 2017/18 to 26.5% in 2018/19.
- **ENV4c – B Class Road Condition (red and amber over a 4 year average)**  
“B” class roads have deteriorated since 2016/17, falling from 33.31% to 35.9% in 2017/18 to 37.4% in 2018/19.
- **ENV4d – C Class Road Condition (red and amber over a 4 year average)**  
“C” class roads have deteriorated since 2016/17, falling from 27.70% to 30.2% in 2017/18 to 31.5% in 2018/19.
- **ENV4e – U Class Road Condition (red and amber over a 4 year average)**  
“U” class roads have improved slightly since 2016/17 rising from 34.96% to 33.4% in 2017/18 to stay broadly the same at 33.4% in 2018/19.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 At this stage there are no financial implications. However, reducing capital and revenue budgets are likely to see further deterioration in our SRMCS results and position compared to other local roads authorities. This will correspond with increased risks of claims for damage, increased concerns for road safety, as well as customer satisfaction and the council’s reputation. More reactive pothole filling in future years is the most likely response, which is less efficient and cost effective, and is normally taken entirely from the revenue budget which is under increasing pressure for reductions.

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**NOTE:** The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report are:

- Report No. 1007/04 Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey (SRMCS) Year 2 Survey Results - Infrastructure Services Committee - 2 September 2004