
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

04 June 2026

Audit and Scrutiny Committee

Title: Roads Maintenance and Repairs: Policies and Procedures

Purpose: To inform the Committee of the arrangements for monitoring and control of utility works on the public road network and for planning, scheduling and undertaking Council operations.

Recommendation: That the Committee notes the processes in place for undertaking, co-ordinating and monitoring street works.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 At the Audit and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 29 January 2026 members were invited to consider potential items of scrutiny business for future meetings. It was proposed a report be submitted outlining the Council's roads maintenance and repairs policies and procedures, including the arrangements for works led by the Council and those delivered by third parties. The report was requested to include information on how this is monitored, enforced and implemented, as well as how the Council liaises with third parties in relation to works in common areas, including coordination and scheduling, and the reinstatement of road markings.

2. Background

Road Maintenance

- 2.1 North Ayrshire Council has a statutory obligation under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 to manage and maintain its public road network.
- 2.2 The Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 Section 1, states that "...a local roads authority shall manage and maintain all such roads in their area as are for the time being entered in a list (in this Act referred to as their "list of public roads") prepared and kept by them under this section."
- 2.3 The adopted road network within North Ayrshire has a total length of 1055km.

Planned Works

- 2.4 The [Roads Structures & Streetlighting Maintenance Programme 2026/27](#) details the process followed for the various different road assets to identify the locations for their annual programme. Programmes are considered to support joint priorities and co-ordinated scheduling to encourage shared road closures and avoid uncoordinated excavations. Where priorities are diverse, mitigations like installing ducting for future use before surfacing is considered.
- 2.5 The Council's Roads Service has adopted an asset management approach to road maintenance to allocate available road maintenance funds to locations that will offer the most beneficial return on the investment.
- 2.6 This programme is delivered through a combination of inhouse operations teams and external contractors. Where external contractors are used, they are procured and managed via the Roads Minor Works framework Contract, which is a joint contract between the three Ayrshires and West Lothian Council.

Reactive Works

- 2.7 The [Road asset safety inspection policy](#) has been developed to encourage a consistent approach to safety inspections and defect categorisation. The policy is based on the Scottish Collaboration of Transportation Specialists (SCOTS) Risk Based Approach (RBA) guidance.
- 2.8 'Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice', UKRLG, October 2016' has specific recommendations regarding inspections of all road elements. This Policy document specifically relates to the procedure for carrying out road safety inspections. Recommendation 7 of the code of practice is that Road Authorities should adopt a Risk Based Approach to all aspects of road maintenance.
- 2.9 Inspectors will assess and categorise safety defects in accordance with the policy which may result in an instruction for repair being created. The instruction will then be passed to the operation workforce to schedule the repair, subject to resources.
- 2.10 The reactive repairs (non-Emergency) are then co-ordinated with other scheduled repairs and services where appropriate in the same manner as planned works.

Coordination of Roadworks

- 2.11 With such a significant volume of works being undertaken on our roads, including those by essential utility services such as gas, water, drainage, electricity and telecommunications; it is essential that they are well planned, well managed and well co-ordinated with the aim of ensuring that they are completed as quickly as possible causing the minimum inconvenience to the public.
- 2.12 Section 118(1) of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (the 1991 Act) places a duty on road works authorities to co-ordinate the execution of works of all kinds (including works for road purposes) in roads for which they are responsible:
- a) in the interests of safety;

- b) to minimise inconvenience to persons using the road; and
- c) to protect the structure of the road and integrity of apparatus in it.

2.13 Although primary legislation and regulations set out the general framework for the co-ordination and planning of works on roads, it is the Code of Practice for the Co-ordination of Works in Roads which sets in place the practical guidance which allows the process to operate on a day-to-day basis.

Scottish Road Works Register

- 2.14 The main component that allows co-ordination to function is the Scottish Roads Works Register (SRWR), the system that all road works are recorded through by local Road Authorities (RA) and Statutory Undertakers (SU). This system is managed by the office of the Scottish Road Works Commissioner (SRWC), and they monitor performance on a national level.
- 2.15 Each quarter the SRWC circulates the current performance of organisations in the form of their predetermined KPIs with updates circulated via Roads Authorities and Utilities Committee of Scotland (RAUCS). Each organisation is required to monitor their KPIs and report to the SRWC quarterly on any indicators that haven't achieved the targets set by the Commissioner.
- 2.16 The SRWC provides each Chief Executive an annual performance review. These reviews consider how well organisations are meeting their statutory obligations and highlight areas the Scottish Road Works Commissioner wishes to see improve. For the last monitoring period, 2024/25, our performance was considered Satisfactory.

3rd Party Utility Works

- 2.17 In relation to road works being carried out by Statutory Undertakers (SU), they have a duty to coordinate with the Local Authority (LA) as well as each other. Where required, the SU must apply to the LA for a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order prior to installing traffic management on the road network.
- 2.18 Installation and maintenance of utility networks, including high speed fibre networks, is undertaken by Statutory Undertakers such as BT, Vodafone, Scottish Water, Scottish Gas etc. Unfortunately, North Ayrshire Council has no control over the private infrastructure investments which these organisations may make. However, North Ayrshire Council registers all planned capital projects in advance on the Scottish Road Works Register. This affords an opportunity for Statutory Undertakers to identify locations that may be of communal interest and co-ordinate works, particularly where shared excavation would be advantageous. All Statutory Undertakers are obliged to do the same with their own projects to ensure that road works in the region are planned and coordinated. Where the opportunity arises, we are more than happy to discuss coordination of excavation works with Statutory Undertakers to minimise disruption.
- 2.19 At the start of each financial year, each LA & SU must agree the number of sample inspections that the LA will carry out on the SU road works. This allocation is generated by the SRWR and is based on the number of works the undertaker usually carries out. The sample inspections are split into 3 categories:

- Sample A – Undertaken while the works are in progress
- Sample B – Undertaken within 6 months following reinstatement.
- Sample C – Undertaken 3 months prior to the guarantee period ending

- 2.20 These inspections are carried out via the SRWR apps and allows the SRWC to monitor performance of the SU across the country based on each LA inspections. It also allows each LA to monitor the performance of SU at the local level.
- 2.21 Third Party inspections can also be recorded where the LA receives an external report of an issue with the works.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Committee notes processes in place for undertaking, co-ordinating and monitoring street works.

4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

- 4.1 None.

Human Resources

- 4.2 None.

Legal

- 4.3 None.

Equality/Socio-economic

- 4.4 None.

Climate Change and Carbon

- 4.5 None.

Key Priorities

- 4.6 The work of Roads Services helps to support the efficient delivery of the strategic priorities within Our Council Plan 2023-2028.

Community Wealth Building

- 4.7 None.

Islands Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA)

4.8 None.

United Nations Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

4.9 None.

Consumer Duty

4.10 None.

5. Consultation

5.1 None.

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For further information please contact **Gary Wilson, Senior Manager (Roads)**, on **gwilson@north-ayrshire.gov.uk**.

Background Papers None

