Programme Manager: Alexandra Ostroumoff-Croucher

T: 07879 435756

E: alexandra.ostroumoff-croucher@improvementservice.org.uk

Business Analyst: William McKee

T: 07789 271434

E: william.mckee@improvmentservice.org.uk

**Roads Collaboration Programme Mandate**

## Purpose

The purpose of the Programme Mandate is to set out the scope and required outcomes of the Roads Collaboration Programme, based on the strategic policy objectives set out by the Strategic Action Group. The following narrative aims to answer a set of ‘*common questions’* to help stakeholders understand at a high-level, the aims and objectives of the programme.

Following engagement with programme stakeholders, a fully designed programme brief will be published, outlining specific activities, deliverables and resources in place.

## What is the Background to the Programme?

The National Roads Maintenance Review (NRMR) final report was published in July 2012, following a recommendation from Audit Scotland to ***consider a national review on how the road network is managed and maintained, with a view to stimulating service re-design and increasing the pace of examining the potential for shared services***. The review aimed to identify how those responsible for, and working in, Scotland’s roads maintenance sector could deliver efficiently managed roads for all within the budgets available and identify opportunities for innovation, collaborative working and sharing services. The review also considered how the Scottish Government could work better with local authorities.

The review concluded by identifying a strategic framework for change, within which a number of different themes and recommendations were identified. Thirty options with specific actions were mapped to the framework. The so-called “Option 30 Report” which explored the optimum delivery of roads maintenance services concluded that improvement on current arrangements can be achieved and that the sharing of services should be explored by all roads authorities in the short term. It also recommended that structural change could be considered in future if the anticipated benefits of shared services are not sufficiently realized.

## How is the Programme Governed?

The Option 30 report recommended that a suitable central resource, overseen by COSLA and Scottish Ministers, be put in place to drive forward change. This group now exists in the form of the Strategic Action Group (SAG).

SAG appointed a Programme Board to lead the Roads Collaboration Programme at a strategic level, overseeing a team of programme support officers managed from the Improvement Service. The board is chaired by the Improvement Service with membership from Transport Scotland, local authority roads services, SCOTS and SOLACE.

## What will the programme deliver?

The aim of the programme is to:

* Support the design and delivery of existing roads authority initiatives to share services/capacity within Roads Services.
* Develop existing shared initiatives further, considering the potential to widen the scope of what could be shared, widen partnerships, remove/manage barriers to change, escalating the business case design stage to drive forward a faster pace of change.
* Identify new opportunities for collaboration between the 33 roads authorities and to develop these.
* Encourage and support communication cross-authority boundaries via a number of channels to promote the sharing of best practice, innovation and expertise and regular re-visiting of further opportunities for collaboration and shared services development.
* Encourage the consistent use of roads-related data, maximizing the potential to use the data to drive improvement. This work will include the delivery of a Collaboration Toolkit to guide authorities on the steps needed to identify opportunities, potential partners and development/delivery of initiatives.
* Support local authorities and their partners to establish sound governance arrangements for shared initiatives that meet all EU procurement guidelines.

The overall output of the programme will be a robust portfolio of delivered and planned shared service/capacity initiatives that see local authorities and Transport Scotland working together across organizational boundaries, with demonstrable efficiency savings, improved ways of working and service delivery and a sustainable and resilient roads service.

## What existing initiatives will be included in the programme?

The programme team is aware of several initiatives underway in certain local authorities to collaborate within Roads Services. This includes work currently underway within the Ayrshire Alliance, Inverclyde, Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire Councils, local authorities aligned to the Lothian Forum and the Clyde Valley and Tayside Contracts. It is hoped that the local authorities involved in these initiatives will welcome support to help deliver these collaborative services and be willing to share their experiences with colleagues in other local authorities.

## How will the delivery of roads services be improved?

More local and national collaboration will allow for the sharing of expertise and equipment, allowing local authorities to benefit from the associated efficiency savings and the resilience that streamlining processes and aligning strategy offers. Collaborating and integrating road asset management plans and strategies will promote smarter working in roads services, allowing for a more streamlined approach to procurement, resource management and overall service delivery.

## What are the drivers which support the need for this work?

Local authorities are all facing the same challenge of constrained budgets, roads services with limited staff, expertise and the specialized equipment required to meet public expectations. The ability to work together must therefore be considered a top priority in order to deliver the necessary efficiencies to ensure the continued delivery of public services for Scottish communities.

Scotland has an ageing population and, by extension, an ageing workforce. This is a recognised issue within the demographic of roads services. This, coupled with a reduced workforce number with the necessary specialised skills required means it will be necessary to address workforce planning strategies and look at opportunities to re-train in certain areas and share capacity.

This programme strongly aligns with Scottish Government’s shared services agenda. In Scottish Government’s response to the Christie Commission Report they stated that Scotland will reform public services through a decisive shift towards prevention; greater integration at a local level driven by better partnership, workforce development and a sharper, more transparent focus on performance. It is recognised that public services must challenge themselves to work collaboratively, including engaging in sharing services. MSP John Swinney has been very vocal on his support and encouragement for local authorities to lead the development of these services locally. Additionally Minster Keith Brown, MSP for Transport and Veterans has demonstrated his support for this programme of work, stressing the need to continue the good relationship fostered between local and Scottish government during the National Roads Maintenance Review.

Shared Services can support the Scottish Government’s green agenda by potentially utilising virtual shared service centres of expertise. Exactly how this could feature within roads services should be explored.

## How does this work fit with national objectives?

Collaboration and integration of services are key elements of Scottish Government’s Public Service Reform and efficiency agendas. Additionally, this programme supports a number of the Scottish Government’s National Outcomes, including:

* *Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people’s needs.*
* *We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.*
* *We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations.*
* *We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger.*
* *We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production.*

## What is the timescale for delivery?

The Roads Collaboration Programme will run for an initial two years. The first year will see roads authorities supported in identifying opportunities for collaboration and shared services, improving cross-organisational communication, business case design and development and resource management to encourage rapid delivery of change. A first key milestone is a Roads Collaboration Event to be held in Edinburgh on 19th February 2014 where delegates will be given the opportunity to actively shape the design of the programme of support available by contributing to discussions on the opportunities which could be taken forward in the coming twelve months. Delegates will include local authority officers and elected members, Scottish Government including Transport Scotland, Audit Scotland and the Improvement Service.

## What resources will be required?

A Programme Manager and a Business Analyst have been recruited to the Improvement Service by the Programme Board to lead the programme. The team will work closely with officers and project teams within roads authorities to support them in the design and delivery of their initiatives.

## What do we know about the current landscape?

There has been substantial development work undertaken within a number of roads authorities in recent months on developing shared service and shared capacity initiatives, including the triangulation of RAMPS, sharing of major assets and collaborative delivery of specialist functions. Local authorities are in some cases struggling to overcome barriers to full transition to formal sharing due to the complexities of EU procurement and competition law, as is the case in other shared service initiatives across wider local authority services. An independent piece of research has been commissioned by the Improvement Service to address this issue to determine suitable governance arrangements that could be put in place to remove such barriers. The outcome of that work will be available in February 2014.

In order to build a more national picture of the current landscape a questionnaire has been issued to all Heads of Roads Services in roads authorities to gather high-level information on planned initiatives, those in development, or indeed those already delivered. A summary of findings, including key themes and opportunities for local authorities to work together around common areas will be shared with delegates at the Roads Collaboration event in February.

## What specific activities will be underway in the first year?

The design of the support programme has yet to be finalized and is dependent on the finding of the landscaping questionnaire and the opportunities identified at the Roads Collaboration Event. At the event, delegates including officers and politicians working in roads services, will be asked to work collectively to identify opportunities for collaborative working over the next twelve months and consider where support from the programme team could deliver the greatest benefit. Opportunities based on geographical proximity and wider opportunities with authorities that may not be an immediate neighbor will both be considered. A fully designed programme of work will then be made available in Spring 2014 and will include:

* A **Programme Brief**, outlining an agreed vision for the programme including strategic objectives, scope of activity, anticipated benefits, risks and constraints.
* A **Programme Plan**, summarizing key tasks, resources and timescale for delivery.
* A **Stakeholder Engagement and Communication Plan** proposing how programme partners and project teams within local authorities will communicate and work together to deliver national and local initiatives.

## High-level Plan (pre-event)

What follows is a high-level summary of programme activity leading up to the February event. A more detailed second stage plan will be available in March 2014.



For further information relating to the Roads Collaboration Programme please contact the programme team using the contact details listed above.