REPORT TO:    ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE
              SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 10 SEPTEMBER 2019

SUBJECT:      SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT CALL FOR VIEWS – PRE-
              BUDGET/FINANCIAL SCRUTINY ON ROADS MAINTENANCE IN
              SCOTLAND

BY:           CORPORATE DIRECTOR (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
              PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE)

## 1.    REASON FOR REPORT

1.1    In June 2019 the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee of the Scottish Parliament, as part of their Pre-Budget/Financial scrutiny on roads maintenance in Scotland issued a Call for Views.

1.2    It is important that the views of local authorities should be made known to the Scottish Parliament so the Committee is requested to review and approve the response on behalf of Moray Council so that it can be submitted as close to the deadline of 6 September as possible. Due to the timing of Committee, an extension to the deadline has been requested and subsequently approved to allow Moray Council to share its views.

1.3    This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (F) (15) of the Council's Scheme of Administration as Roads Authority.

## 2.    RECOMMENDATION

**2.1    The Committee is asked to approve the response set out in Appendix 1 to the Call for Views by the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee of the Scottish Parliament for their Pre-Budget/Financial scrutiny on roads maintenance in Scotland.**

## 3.    BACKGROUND

3.1    The information the Council has included within the Call for Views, **(Appendix 1),** makes reference to work on managing and maintaining the local road network by Audit Scotland and the Society of Chief Officers for Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS).  Audit Scotland has published several reports into road maintenance in Scotland since 2004.  These have been referred to in previous reports to this Committee; (23 Nov 16, para 5 and 31 Oct 17, para 11).

3.2    Following the 2011 Audit Scotland report, Transport Scotland, working with local authority partners, undertook a review of road maintenance in Scotland. This National Road Maintenance Review set out 30 options for consideration and implementation, with a strong emphasis on the development of shared road maintenance functions amongst local authorities.  As part of the output from that work, the Council has played a leading role in establishing the Northern Roads Collaboration Joint Committee, which provides a governance structure to facilitate collaborative working on roads functions in the area.

3.3    SCOTS have also recently commissioned a piece of work to consider the wider value of the local road network to society. This initial report is due to be published in the coming weeks and will most likely form part of the submission by SCOTS to the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee.

3.4    This work has engaged over 30 organisations, over 200 community councils and a wide range of industry leads, to show the various aspects of social value of the local roads network. It has links to approach set out in the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework and reflects the commitments in the draft National Transport Strategy as published on 31 July.

3.5    In addition, it will draw on criteria used in Scotland to inform approaches to placemaking, inclusive growth, and social value as a whole. As this work progresses, it will be brought back to this Committee for future consideration.

4.    **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a)    **Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

Several objectives of these plans are influenced by the condition of the public roads network.

A Growing, Diverse and Sustainable Economy – the public road network is used by all sections of society, to access shops and services and to transport goods within and to and from Moray.

Building a better future for children and young people in Moray - encouraging active travel options of walking and cycling require well maintained facilities.

Empowering and connecting communities – the road and footway network provides an essential link between communities, and a robust inspection and maintenance regime is vital to its continued safe use.

(b)    **Policy and Legal**

The Council is responsible for the maintenance of over 1558km of roads and over 599km of footways, footpaths and cycle tracks which have been adopted by the Local Authority onto the List of Public Roads in terms of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.

The Act places a duty on the Local Authority to manage and maintain all roads entered on the List of Public Roads but does not prescribe the level of maintenance to be delivered.

**(c) Financial implications**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this response to the call for views. However, if the Scottish Parliament were to instigate a change in the arrangements for the management and maintenance of Scotland's road network, this could have significant financial implications for all Councils

**(d) Risk Implications**

There is no risk involved in responding to this call for views.  However, if Councils did not respond, there would be a risk that the views of local government might not be fully taken into account by the Scottish Parliament.

**(e) Staffing Implications**

There are no direct staffing implications arising from this response to the call for views. However, if the Scottish Parliament were to instigate a change in the arrangements for the management and maintenance of Scotland's road network, this could have significant staffing implications for all Councils.

**(f) Property**

There are no property implications as a result of this report.

**(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**

There are no equalities implications as a result of this report.

**(h) Consultations**

The Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning & Infrastructure), Legal Services Manager, Equal Opportunities Officer, Committee Services Officer (L Rowan) have been consulted and any comments taken into consideration.

## 5. <u>CONCLUSION</u>

**5.1 The Committee is asked to consider and approve the proposed response to the Call for Views by the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee of the Scottish Parliament**.

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Background Papers:
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