

Agenda Item	5
Report No	DSA/11/25

# The Highland Council

**Committee:** Dingwall and Seaforth

**Date:** 26 May 2025

**Report Title:** Comparison of Recent Capital Programmes and Required Works

**Report By:** Assistant Chief Executive - Place

## 1 Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This reports provides an indication of the capital investment required for Dingwall and Seaforth to repair all road defects and a comparison on the capital spend over the last five years.

## 2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to **note** the contents of the report.

## 3 Implications

3.1 **Resource** - This report has no impact on Resource considerations.

3.2 **Legal** - The combined programme for Structural Resurfacing and Structural Integrity Improvements enables the Council to meet its duty under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 within the Local Committee area.

3.3 **Risk** - The level of investment across Highland falls short of the budget requirements to maintain a steady state condition of the road network. Deterioration of the overall network will occur with a corresponding risk to the travelling public. An increase in damage claims can also be expected, as the road defects develop.

3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** - This report has no impact on Health and Safety considerations.

3.5 **Gaelic** - This report has no impact on Gaelic considerations.

## **4 Impacts**

- 4.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children's Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.
- 4.2 Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.
- 4.3 This is a monitoring report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

## **5 Methodology for Assessing All Capital Works Required**

- 5.1 The annual Area Roads Capital Programme that Dingwall and Seaforth Committee approves each January requires approximately 6 months to develop to a point that it can be presented to committee for approval.

It is therefore impractical to take this same approach to consider all capital works required in Dingwall and Seaforth.

- 5.2 The road network was assessed using Vaisala Road AI software. A high specification mobile phone is attached to a van and the road is videoed as the van drives across the road network.

A GPS tracker identifies which section of road is being surveyed at one moment.

The video is then uploaded, and the software identifies potholes, crazing, cracking, rutting and edge deterioration. A report is then generated for every 10m of road.

By analysing the report the condition of the road can be indicated.

Considering the road being surveyed and approximation can be made to the length and width of the defects. Similarly whether the defects need an overlay, inlay or a patch can also be assessed.

Typical rates were then applied to these defects to indicate the capital budget required for a capital programme to resolve all the defects.

The Vaisala Road AI survey is ongoing, but a significant proportion of the Dingwall and Seaforth Road network was surveyed in the last two years. This is the most up to date survey.

- 5.3 The analysis does not include for surface dressing. However the majority of surface dressing sites includes for patching or overlay.
- 5.4 Vaisala Road AI software is taught to recognise defects, but the results have not been verified by a site inspection due to resources.

## 6 Methodology for Assessing Capital Spend Over The Previous Five Years

- 6.1 Each capital scheme has its own job code to help identify costs attributed to specific works. However the costs of hiring in surface dressing and surfacing plant are coded to a generic Ross and Cromarty code and cannot be disaggregated with any certainty.
- 6.2 Staff time is also coded to a generic code as each area will have several schemes of varying sizes and complexities. Again these cannot be disaggregated into specific schemes.
- 6.3 The Ross and Cromarty capital budget is split into the three committee areas based on road mileage. This methodology has remained consistent over time. Consequently the budget for capital schemes in Ross and Cromarty has been used rather than the reported actual spend.

## 7 Results of Analysis

- 7.1 Indicative value of capital work required in Dingwall and Seaforth amounts to £3,900,000.
- 7.2 Budgets for capital work in Dingwall and Seaforth for the last five years are set out as follows:-

Financial Year	Capital Budget	Notes
FY21/22	£42,336	
FY22/23	£170,000	Includes £100,000 ward budget to be allocated by Members
FY23/24	£84,495	
FY24/25	£155,205	Excludes £1.308m strategic allocation
FY25/26	£318,799	

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

Date: 6 May 2025

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Background Papers: None

Appendices: None