

Roads Asset Management Plan (RAMP) – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is the East Lothian Council Road Asset Management Plan?

The Road Asset Management Plan or RAMP describes the Council's approach to road maintenance and management in the form of best practice outcomes to examine methods and treatments to reduce costs and deliver value for money for all road users and practitioners. In these challenging times, it is essential that good stewardship be applied to the network to promote ways to improve the condition of the assets and slow down deterioration where possible. The plan takes cognisance of the views of road users and residents and places a requirement on meeting standards that are designed to assist in the delivery of the Council plan.

What is the size of East Lothian Council's road network?

East Lothian Council currently maintains 921km of A, B, C and Unclassified roads. There are 481 km of footpath/ cycleway, 374 road bridges and culverts, and 18,102 street lighting columns. The value of the assets in 2016/17 was £1,528 million and with increased demand from Housing development over the next 10 years, the network is predicted to grow by 17%

How does the Council intend to deliver the RAMP?

The Council proposes to adopt a preventative asset management strategy whereupon investment is used to make improvements before the asset deteriorates to a point where significant corrective repairs are necessary. This can take the form of sealing the carriageway through surface dressing (spray and chip) or using materials with extend the serviceable life so minimising unwarranted spend and maximises value for money.

How much does the Council currently spend on the maintenance of local Roads?

East Lothian Council currently invests £5.5 million of capital money on improvements and infrastructure renewals. Approximately, £3million is spent on carriageways, £900k on footpaths, traffic and safety, £800k on street lighting, £200k on structures and £100k on traffic signal upgrades. The Council also invests £300k on Area Partnership proposals, and £200k on infrastructure improvements.

Under revenue expenditure, £1m annually is spent on winter maintenance (snow clearing gritting) and £912k on cyclic revenue activities which include for gully emptying, flood and drainage works, verge cutting, bus shelter repairs, temporary carriageway repairs and the use of the jetpatcher.

What are the options available to the Council over the longer term?

The Road Service prepares an asset status and option report annually to advise on the condition of the asset groups and options going forward. Each year the condition of the asset is weighed against the available funds and options given to reduce investment, maintain current spend, maintain current condition or improve standards longer term. This report will be taken forward into the budgetary cycle for Council to debate.

How does the weather influence the condition of roads and investment longer term?

The weather can have a major impact on the condition of the network particularly following considerable flooding events or harsh winters. If such events occur, it may be necessary to postpone the plan and focus on repairing the immediate damage to the road network. This may require a re-evaluation of certain standards and priorities in the short term and delay programmes over several financial years unless additional funding is provided from central government.

How does the RAMP propose to deliver efficiencies?

The plan makes several policy recommendations to intervene before carriageways and footpath deteriorate to a point where significant investment is needed. It also looks to invest in new technologies and materials to save revenue costs and assess the condition of the network frequently so a well-informed understanding of service lives is known and evidenced decisions made at the correct time.

How will we measure success?

The Council working with Society of Chief Officers for Transportation Scotland (SCOTS) have developed a series of key performance indicators (KPI's) to measure the effectiveness of strategies and that the Council is complying with recommended standards. It is paramount that the Council understands how changes in investment longer-term affect the strategies and what adaptations are required to maximise benefits. It is essential that lessons be learnt to ensure we invest appropriate funding in maintaining road asset condition.

How will East Lothian Council decided on the outcome of this Consultation and what are the next steps?

Given the scope of the consultation, a report will be prepared by officials to identify priorities and key outcomes from the process. Feedback through the consultation process will be taken into account in the final drafting of the strategies and associated plans before coming back to Council for further scrutiny, debate and adoption subject to agreement.