

# Scottish Government submission of 20 June 2022

## PE1936/A: Remove Potholes from Scotland's Roads

### **TRUNK ROADS**

Transport Scotland, through our Trunk Road Operating Companies and Design Build Finance Operate (DBFO) Concessionaries, is responsible for the management and maintenance of the strategic trunk road network including motorways.

In 2021-22 we are invested £556 million in managing, maintaining, and safely operating the Scottish motorway and trunk road network. In 2022-23 we are investing £586 million. We will continue to invest in our extensive trunk road maintenance and operations programmes, to improve Scotland's road network through essential road maintenance schemes, our bridge strengthening programme, renewal of ancillary assets and increasing the resilience of the network to unplanned events such as landslides, flooding and extreme weather events. In addition, the overall condition of our network is being enhanced through the delivery of our capital investment programme, including the A9 dualling programme.

Transport Scotland has contracts in place with Operating Companies to ensure Scottish trunk roads are safe, efficient and well managed. As part of their continuing inspection and management of the trunk road network, our Operating Companies have an obligation to inspect the network at 7-day intervals. These inspections are primarily to identify defects that require prompt attention (Category 1 defects) because they present, or could present, an immediate hazard to road users. The Scottish Government fully funds the repair of all road surface Category 1 potholes, which are repaired by the Operating Companies within the strict timescales set-out in their contracts.

The Transport Scotland Road Asset Management Plan (RAMP) sets out how Scotland's trunk road network is maintained strategically and

efficiently in order to protect our assets and ensure maximum value for money from our road maintenance activities.

## **LOCAL ROADS**

Local authorities have a duty under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 to manage and maintain local roads in their area and duties under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic.

The vast majority of the funding to local authorities from the Scottish Government is provided by means of a block grant, and the Scottish Government does not stipulate how local authorities should utilise their individual allocations. It is therefore the responsibility of each local authority to manage their own budget and to allocate the total financial resources available to them on the basis of local needs and priorities, having first fulfilled their statutory obligations and the jointly agreed set of national and local priorities.

The 2022-23 Local Government Settlement of almost £12.7 billion is both fair and affordable, under the most challenging of circumstances. The independent Scottish Fiscal Commission highlighted that our overall Scottish Budget in 2022-23 is 2.6 per cent lower than in 2021-22 – a real terms cut of 5.2 per cent. Despite this reduction, the overall local government funding package of almost £12.7 billion represents an increase of over £1 billion or 9.2 per cent in cash terms, or 6.3 per cent in real terms compared with 2021-22. The 2022-23 settlement also offered several fiscal flexibilities, including giving councils the full flexibility they asked for on council tax rate-setting, and a commitment to collaborate on a fiscal framework for local government during 2022.