

— THE OFFICE OF THE —

# SCOTTISH ROAD WORKS COMMISSIONER

## PUBLIC SERVICES REFORM (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010

### SUSTAINABILITY, EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND ECONOMY STATEMENT

The Scottish Road Works Commissioner (SRWC) has a duty to report measures taken to promote and increase sustainable growth and to improve efficiency, effectiveness and economy in exercising his functions. This is the SRWC's statement for the financial year **1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018**

#### FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMISSIONER

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 details the three statutory functions that the Commissioner is required to carry out –

- (a) Monitoring the carrying out of works in roads in Scotland;
- (b) Promoting compliance with the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 Act and the obligations imposed under it; and
- (c) Promoting the pursuit of good practice.

#### EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND ECONOMY

The office of the Scottish Road Works Commissioner (oSRWC) is a small organisation, with 5 permanent members of staff in addition to the Commissioner. During the financial year 2017/18, efficiency, effectiveness and economy were forefront in guiding the development of the business and corporate plans, as well as in relation to management of the office.

#### EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

The majority of the oSRWC resources are dedicated to helping the SRWC meet the statutory obligations set out by the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005. There is a significant requirement for experienced, competent staff in order to carry out the core functions of the five business areas of the office as defined within the 2018-19 business plan. In practice this means that the majority of the oSRWC's financial resource is spent on staffing.

The oSRWC has had recent need for maternity cover. In order to as effectively provide cover as possible, and to efficiently share a level of technical expertise with Scottish Government, a shared cover arrangement was made between the two offices allowing a single individual to provide time to both departments on a secondment basis.

The staff working for the Commissioner remain the main asset for the organisation. In order to focus on staff development and retention, the oSRWC has committed to on-going training opportunities for staff, on subjects such as General Data Protection Regulations, Cyber Resilience and Effective Data Visualisation. Additionally the oSRWC Business Officer has attended SRWR 'user forums' in order to develop a greater knowledge of the SRWR. As with previous years, accountancy support is still sought on an 'as required' basis from a Chartered Accountant. This has represented a significant continued saving for the organisation.

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## ECONOMY

As the office of a 'Significant Other Body' and independent public official, the oSRWC has the option to be based in any location. The Office of the Scottish Road Works Commissioner is located in Saughton House, which is part of the Scottish Government estate. The annual cost is approximately 25% of the cost of leasing commercial premises. In addition to the financial benefit of co-location, the oSRWC also utilises the following shared services, benefiting from economies of scale:

- IT, payroll and pension services provided by the Scottish Government.
- Scottish Government banking services, including the cost benefits from competitive rates.
- Scottish Government SEAS payment system.

In 2017/18 the office was able to rationalise access to the SEAS system and reduce the need for one of the three licences, resulting in a reduction of costs overall, as detailed in the SRWC annual accounts.

Procurement of major services such as the supply of the Scottish Road Works Register has been by means of competitive tender. The re-tender for the Scottish Road Works Register (2018 onwards) was concluded successfully with the support and resources of Scottish Government specialists and Community stakeholders. The community and SRWC therefore have confidence that the associated risk with any procurement exercise has been ameliorated as far as possible.

## SUSTAINABILITY

The Commissioner's primary functions are those laid out in the Transport (Scotland) 2005 and are detailed at the start of this report. The oSRWC is a small organisation with a specific remit. It is challenging to make a significant contribution to sustainable growth, however, the oSRWC uses all reasonable endeavours in pursuance of sustainability through management of staff and resources.

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## CARBON MANAGEMENT

The oSRWC is accommodated within a Scottish Government building and as such, benefits from facilities provided by the Scottish Government for Carbon Management. In pursuance of sustainability, the staff of the oSRWC are encouraged to:

- Reduce the need to travel.
- To take public transport/pooled vehicle if travel is necessary;
- Choose more sustainable transport for commuting when possible;
- Use recycling facilities where available in Saughton House;
- Use recycled office materials where possible;
- Use reusable cups for beverages at meetings and within the office;
- Reduce the quantity of publications issued on paper e.g. the Annual Report, using electronic means as the prime method for distribution;

In order to reduce travel by personal vehicle, meetings and site visits are arranged with special cognisance of the availability of the pool vehicle. For example, using the pool vehicle to attend a necessary training event in Aberdeen in March 2018 was combined with planned site investigations by the technical consultant. Due to the weight of the lightweight deflectometer public transport is not appropriate for site inspections, by arranging the dates to coincide the pool vehicle was used to make a single unavoidable long mileage trip with multiple passengers rather than two or more separate journeys.

As Saughton House is situated near excellent integrated public transport links, with wider links to both an international airport and train services. This benefits not only the oSRWC in terms of travel opportunities, but visitors to the SRWC who can make use of public transport. A delegation representing roads authorities from Wales and Northern Ireland to the office in May 2018 were able to use airport/tram/train links between them to reduce the need for journey by private vehicle.

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#### PURSUANCE OF COMMISSIONER'S FUNCTIONS

In undertaking the functions outlined above, the Commissioner contributes towards improved planning, co-ordination and quality of road works in Scotland. This, in turn, leads to a reduction in the disruption caused by such works and contributes towards sustainable growth within Scotland. Less disruption means less delay. Reduced delays on roads can reduce carbon emissions from waiting traffic.

The SRWC currently sponsors two Scottish Roads Research Board (SRRB) projects to further innovate road works in Scotland. Both projects focus on Long Term Damage to roads as a consequence of utility company reinstatements looking specifically at "Compaction" and "Joints". Improvement and innovation in these fields will lead to a reduction in disruption caused by road works and deliver cost savings to roads authorities.

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