

PE2065/C: Improve and prioritise pedestrian safety

COSLA written submission, 19 December 2024

COSLA does not maintain operational information on the above areas. We also typically do not share good practice between councils as we are predominantly a political membership body, which acts on behalf of all 32 Scottish authorities. However, we can respond in a general sense to your questions:

COSLA supports the shared goal to eliminate road fatalities and casualties by 2050 and is committed to working with partners to achieve targets set through the national multi-partner Road Safety Framework to 2030. Ensuring pedestrian safety is a key element of this goal. Local Government is a key delivery partner in the work being conducted to achieve these targets and COSLA works with Transport Scotland to ensure the best use of funding provided through initiatives such as the Road Safety Improvement Fund. COSLA also welcomes the additional resources provided through the Scottish Budget for Active Travel, Road Safety, and other related policies which aid pedestrian safety.

However, following several years of budget reductions and flat cash settlements, Local Government continues to face unprecedented financial pressures. The result is consistent cuts to service areas, such as roads and street cleaning services, and the exacerbation of a workforce capacity and recruitment crisis – both of which impact our councils' ability to implement measures related to the initiatives identified above. For example, as outlined in the Local Government Information Unit's National Benchmarking Overview Report 2022/23, since 2010/11 there has been a 9% reduction in roads spending and a 35% reduction in street cleaning spending across Local Government.

Overall, COSLA supports the implementation of measures to ensure pedestrian safety as part of wider efforts to reduce road casualties and fatalities, and is committed to continued close working with partners such as Transport Scotland, while also noting the key challenges presented by ongoing financial constraints.