

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Acting Executive Director of Housing, Environmental & Economic Development (Land and Environment)

**Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee:
7 November 2007**

Subject: Winter Maintenance Strategy - 2007

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to apprise the Committee of the Council's statutory obligations under Section 34 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 and seek approval of the **Winter Maintenance Strategy – 2007** appended hereto.

2. Background

- 2.1** Section 34 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 requires the local roads authority to take such steps as they consider reasonable to prevent snow and ice endangering the safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles over public roads.
- 2.2** The Winter Maintenance Strategy –2007 outlines the proposed procedures to fulfil this statutory requirement.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** It should be noted that as all roads cannot be treated at once, the Winter Maintenance Strategy defines priorities. Conditions may however on occasion be so severe that all resources are directed to keep the category (i) roads open, to the detriment of other roads.
- 3.2** During the winter of 2006/7, the primary routes were treated 70 times (86 times the previous year), and over all classes of roads and footways, some 4500 tonnes (5200 tonnes previous year) of salt were used.
- 3.3** It should be noted that the A82 Trunk Road through West Dunbartonshire is maintained by Transerve and Amey Highways on behalf of the Scottish Government. The Strategy recommends that Council resources be utilised to provide assistance, if requested by these contractors, should they be unable to keep this vital strategic route open during severe weather.
- 3.4** The Strategy defines the responsibilities relative to public roads as defined in the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 and included on the Register of Adopted Roads. Housing, Environmental & Economic Development will liaise with other service departments to ensure that arrangements for snow clearing and gritting are in place.

3.5 It is a statutory requirement to provide a Winter Maintenance service for public roads and the Council is open to public liability claims should this service not be provided. The standard of service provided in the Winter Maintenance Strategy – 2007 is consistent to maintain the level of service previously supplied to the residents of West Dunbartonshire. Our response to footway treatment is amongst the most pro-active in the country and this is recognised by our local communities.

3.6 The following paragraphs relate to the service provision:

- (a) formal priority pedestrian routes cards are included in the Winter Maintenance Strategy – October 2007

Category 1 - Major Urban Shopping Areas. access routes to/from sheltered housing complexes

Category 2 - High Pedestrian Areas (railway stations, schools, hospitals, etc.)

Category 3 - steep hills on main routes.

This action will generally be undertaken with Category (3) carriageway routes. However treatment may commence with Category (1) carriageway routes should the weather forecast conditions merit this action, and resources already deployed in the vicinity.

- (b) Formal arrangements have been agreed with other sections service to ensure maximum use of resources during adverse weather conditions.
- (c) The department will continue to receive weather forecasts based on the A82 ice station, a station at A811 at Gartocharn (upgraded in 2004), a station on the A814 at Westcliff (introduced in 2006) and one at Hardgate.

3.7 The route cards and grit bin locations as detailed in the Strategy document are reviewed at the start of each season, and may be subject to minor adjustments.

3.8 In 2004, proprietary spreading equipment was introduced to replace hand-casting of salt for footways. This was a major success, with footways treated more quickly, with less material used and more consistent rate of spread possible. The use of these spreaders was extended in 2005/6 and was further enhanced in 2006/7 with the use of multi-purpose footway cleaning equipment with gritting attachments. Such efficiency improvements are sought each year.

4. Personnel Implications

4.1 Existing Council resources will be augmented with private sector assistance if necessary where severe conditions are experienced.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 Budgetary provision for 2007/2008 in the sum of some £650,000 is based on costs incurred in an average year, but does not reflect a worst case scenario. It is difficult to predict accurately the outturn costs of this service.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1 The implications of not undertaking this service would result in unacceptable risk to all road users of West Dunbartonshire. Given the nature of the service, there is always a risk of service breakdown if the weather conditions are severe. However, the Winter Maintenance Strategy has been developed using risk analysis techniques, and the likelihood of service failure has been minimized.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 West Dunbartonshire Council has a statutory duty to provide a winter maintenance service for its network of public roads, and the actions proposed to meet this duty are shown in the document: Winter Maintenance Strategy 2007 which is reviewed and approved annually.

8. Recommendations

8.1 The Committee is invited to:-

- (a) note the content of this report;
- (b) delegate authority to the Acting Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development (Land and Environmental) to provide assistance to Transerve and Amey Highways, if requested, to keep the A82 Trunk Road open during severe weather;
- (c) approve the Winter Maintenance Strategy – 2007 for use in winter 2007/8.

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Date: 20 October 2007

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Appendix: Winter Maintenance Strategy – 2007

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected: All