

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Strategic Lead – Shared Services Roads and Transportation****Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council: 29th January 2020**

Subject: Increased Footway Gritting Update Report.**1. Purpose**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to update members of the supplementary footway treatment actions that have been implemented further to the motion considered by Council on 27th November 2019.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** It is recommended that Council:

- (i) notes the actions implemented by the Neighbourhood and Roads Service detailed within 4.4;
- (ii) approves the proposal to review all footway gritting routes and carry out route optimisation as identified in 4.6 below; and
- (iii) notes that a further report will be presented to Council for consideration until completion of the routes review and following evaluation of the actions detailed in 4.4 on conclusion of Winter 19/20.

3. Background

- 3.1** Council passed the undernoted motion at its meeting on 27th November 2019;

“The recommendations at 2.1 of the report, and welcomes the additional resource allocated to dealing with adverse weather on 12th December 2019. Council also acknowledges that many falls occur throughout the winter months, resulting in attendances at the emergency department, and, in some cases, admission to hospital.

Disabled and elderly people are more likely to have a fall resulting in emergency room attendance or hospital admission. During December 2018 to February 2019, there were 227 falls by over-65s resulting in 51 hospital admissions. HSCP staff estimate that 16% of these falls occurred outdoors. A fall by an elderly person, as well as being traumatic to the individual, costs the HSCP £3,452 per hospital admission. This does not include surgery or the costs of social work etc.

Therefore, this Council, using its power of wellbeing, further agrees that a report should be brought to the next Council meeting detailing how treatment of pavements and footpaths can be extended to reduce falls by elderly and disabled citizens.

In the interim, Council agrees to make a further contingency fund of £100k, from general reserves, available to Roads & Greenspace to scale up treatment of pavements and footpaths throughout the winter months. To asks officers to include within the next issue of Housing News some advice for tenants on how they can avoid falls within the home.”

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** The Council has a 3 year Winter Maintenance Plan which details the Council’s policies and procedures that are in place to ensure reasonable steps are taken to prevent snow and ice endangering the safe passage of vehicles and pedestrians.

Section 34 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 states “a roads authority shall take such steps as they consider reasonable to prevent snow and ice endangering the safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles over public roads”.

In this context “public roads” means all carriageways, footways, footpaths, pedestrian precincts etc. entered in a roads authority’s List of Public Roads.

- 4.2** The Plan details the proposed treatment actions that are consistent with the Council’s priorities, the prevailing weather conditions and the available resources.

Ice or snow on footways for prolonged periods of time can cause particular problems for the elderly, vulnerable users and the community in general.

The plan is reviewed annually and reflects changes to legislation and codes of practice. The routes are also reviewed to ensure they are updated to reflect the location of new infrastructure such as schools, clinics etc.

- 4.3** In the Plan footway treatment is prioritised as follows:

Primary Footway Treatment

Footway Priority treatment is normally only undertaken during normal working hours (8am - 3.30pm Monday to Friday) with priority given to:

- Urban shopping areas and pedestrian precincts
- Main routes to near Schools
- Main access routes to hospitals
- Clinics
- Identified public buildings
- Major sheltered housing complexes
- Public transport hubs
- Busy links between shopping centres and commercial areas
- Main pedestrian routes in major housing developments
- Main access routes to sheltered housing complexes and other establishments

- Identified day centres for older people or people with special needs
- Steps and ramps to underpasses and footbridges together with any 'low level' footpaths associated with the underpasses and the footpaths on the footbridges will also be treated as a priority.

Secondary Footway Treatment

The remainder of the public footway network will only be treated in exceptional weather conditions. To begin, one footway along most streets within built up areas, which best serves pedestrian traffic or serves the most premises, will be gritted/cleared of snow. Treatment will then move on to any remaining areas presenting greater difficulties than general and progressively move onto footway or footpaths of lesser difficulty. A halt to this treatment may be called at any time if, for example, actual or forecast conditions improve or for logistical reasons.

4.4 Further to the motion the following actions have been implemented:

Officers have consulted with operatives and requested volunteers to be included on a standby rota to undertake footway treatment as and when weather conditions require. The rota requires 52 operatives to implement 2 standby teams per week. Each team has 13 operatives.

Prior to the commencement of the standby rota there was no treatment of footways outwith the core working hours of Monday to Friday 08.00 – 3.30. The introduction of the standby rota facilitates treatment outwith these hours and at weekends as required.

The Winter Controller will determine the extent and timing of the footway gritting actions required based on the weather forecast and conditions.

The standby rota commenced on the 6th January 2020 and is in place until the 31st March 2020. There was no standby facility prior to 6th January 2020 for footway treatment. The 4 weekly standby costs are detailed in 6.2 below. Overtime costs are in addition to the standby payment and are based on the actions required in an average 4 week period during the winter period.

4.5 There are currently 40 primary footway routes throughout the local authority area and each treatment takes in the region of 4 hours.

Standby facilitates the priority footway gritting routes to be completed prior to the morning peak pedestrian activity. This includes commute to work, town centres, public transport and safe routes to school. Once completed the squads will, if required, commence treatment of secondary footway gritting routes.

The secondary footway routes cover residential areas that are not on priority routes. This allows the Service to treat footways and footpaths that are additional to those that are treated on a regular basis. It increases the extent of treatment and the regularity.

- 4.6** It is proposed to review the footway gritting routes in Spring 2020. This will shape the routes proposed for inclusion within the Winter Plan for 20/21. It is also proposed to carry out a route optimisation process to ensure that the routes are as efficient in terms of resource, time and material as possible.
- 4.7** The Spring edition of Housing News is circulated in March and will include advice on trips and falls within the home and avoiding falls outdoors in icy weather.

5 People Implications

- 5.1** Greenspace operatives have agreed to volunteer for stand-by rota week commencing 6th January 2020.
- 5.2** As noted above it is considered that 52 operatives are required to deliver what is envisaged by the motion as additional actions.
- 5.3** Standby will require to be paid to all 52 operatives to ensure certainty of resource availability.

6 Financial and Procurement Implications

- 6.1** The financial costs for an average 4 week period during the winter and based on an average call out are as noted in the table below

Item	Cost for 4 weeks
Stand-by rota Payment (52 operatives)	£10,325
Overtime (based on average actions of 4 weekdays/2 weekend)	£16,130
Total (4 weekly)	£26,455
Total for 06 Jan to 31 March 2020	£86,000

- 6.2** The total of £26,455 for stand-by and overtime detailed above provides a cost based on an average 4 weeks actions for responding to adverse weather. The weather forecast will determine the actual hours of treatment required however the costs above include an assumption based on past winters and expected actions. The costs may be greater if weather is severe and/or prolonged but will be less if weather conditions are favourable.

The annual Winter Plan commences on 1st November and concludes on the 31st March, a period of 21 weeks. The total for a full winter's standby and overtime costs would be **£139,000**.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** There is a risk that resources do not wish to agree to undertake standby.
- 7.2** There is a risk that the costs could increase if the winter weather is worse than an average winter.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** There is no equalities impact as the report does not recommend a change to existing policy, function or strategy.

9. Consultation

- 9.1** Consultation on the report content has been carried out with the Strategic Leads for Legal and Finance.

10. Strategic Assessment

- 10.1** At its meeting on 25 October 2017, the Council agreed that the action noted below is among its five main strategic priorities for 2017 – 2022;
- Efficient and effective frontline services that improve the everyday lives of residents
- 10.2** The proposed actions support this commitment.

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Date: 23 January 2020

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Appendices: None
Background Papers: **Winter Maintenance Plan**

Wards Affected: All council wards.