

**WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL****Report by Strategic Lead – Shared Services Roads and Transportation****Council: 27 November 2019**

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**Subject: UK Parliamentary Election 12 December 2019 – Adverse Weather Planning.**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to update members of the supplementary actions proposed to assist in facilitating safe access in and around polling stations and the additional costs further to the motion considered by Council on 30th October 2019.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1** It is recommended that Council:

(i) notes that the Council has a robust Winter Maintenance Plan with an extensive provision of Grit Bins available for public use.

(ii) notes the proposed additional resource identified in 4.6 below; and

(iii) approves the indicative expenditure detailed in 6.2 below from free reserves.

**3. Background**

- 3.1** Council passed the undernoted motion at its meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2019;

“Council notes that it is likely there will be a UK General Election on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

Council asks officers to prepare a report for November Council with a plan to ensure that roads and pavements around polling places, and walking routes between bus stops and polling places are kept free from ice/snow should action be required on the day.

The plan should also include steps to ensure that drains in the vicinity of polling stations are checked in advance of the election and maintained free from blockages to avoid flooding.

Any extra costs associated with this plan should be included in the report to allow elected members to agree how it can be properly resourced to ensure the safety of voters on election day.”

#### **4. Main Issues**

- 4.1** The UK Parliamentary Election is to be held on the 12<sup>th</sup> December during the winter season. This necessitates severe weather contingency planning to ensure that the Council is able to facilitate the electoral process. In advance of the election being confirmed, representatives of the Roads & Transportation services and the Election Team have been meeting since September to assess and identify any supplementary requirements and develop a response plan.
- 4.2** Following these meetings, further discussions between the Election Team, Roads & Transportation, Health & Safety, Housing Maintenance and the Resilience Group of the Civil Contingency Services have taken place and the proposals noted below considered.
- 4.3** West Dunbartonshire Council has a robust winter maintenance service plan, which is reviewed annually. This plan defines and details actions for carriageway and footway gritting treatments in accordance with the Well Maintained Highways Code of Practice.
- 4.4** The locations of the polling stations have been reviewed in relation to the priority gritting routes. It has been determined that the majority will require additional focus during adverse weather events due to their location.
- 4.5** It is considered that the most appropriate method of addressing the potential issues identified is to adopt the “cluster system” currently utilised by the Election Team. This aggregates the locations into 13 “clusters” principally based on geographical locations and historically used by the teams supporting the election team.
- 4.6** It is proposed that this comprises of:
- 4 operatives per polling station cluster, covering both morning and evening polling hours {52 operatives} undertaking gritting treatment;
  - 4 operatives for count venue including alternative venue and emergency venue, covering both polling and count hours undertaking gritting treatment; and
  - 4 operatives for a gulley motor, covering polling hours undertaking flood preventative measures as required. (Costs for the works carried out during the working day are not included.)

This requires a total of 60 operatives.

- 4.7** To service these clusters it will be necessary to supplement the existing winter maintenance resource. It is anticipated that the additional operatives required will be sourced from Greenspace and Housing Maintenance teams. Input from the relevant service managers has resulted in a recommendation that the additional operatives required should be placed on stand-by week commencing 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

4.8 For ease of transportation, use and to mitigate against incurring increased cleaning costs it is proposed to utilise white rock salt which is used in schools and council premises. The Service will make arrangements for rock salt to be delivered to the Polling Stations for use as required in advance of the election. The rock salt will be used within the curtilage of the polling stations and road grit will be used for treatment of the routes outwith the curtilage.

4.9 Carriageway treatment and standby of associated Roads operatives are not included in the costs below as the actions would be identified and instructed following the Winter Maintenance Plan.

## 5 People Implications

5.1 It is agreed that Greenspace and Housing operatives be approached to confirm availability for stand-by rota week commencing 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019. Service managers have indicated a high degree of co-operation and participation is expected.

5.2 As noted above it is considered that 60 operatives are required to deliver what is envisaged by the motion as additional actions in the event of adverse weather. It is noted that this will cover all adverse weather.

5.3 Standby will require to be paid to all 60 operatives to ensure certainty of resource availability.

## 6 Financial and Procurement Implications

6.1 The indicative financial costs are as noted in table 6.2

6.2

Item	Cost
Stand-by Payment (additional resource)	£ 5,447
Salt	£ 4,483
Overtime{10hours @1.5 assumed}	£32,400
Vehicles (outwith working hours)	£ 3,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£45,330</b>

6.3 The total cost of £9,930 for stand-by and salt purchase detailed above provides a high degree of confidence in responding to adverse weather. The weather forecast will determine the actual hours of treatment required. The costs may be greater if weather is severe and/or prolonged but will be less if weather conditions are favourable.

## 7. Risk Analysis

7.1 There is a risk that resources do not wish to agree to undertake standby.

## **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, Finance, Roads & Neighbourhood, Housing Maintenance, Health & Safety and the Election Team. Additional consultation has been carried out with the Civil Contingency Team.

## **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;

- Meaningful community engagement with active empowered and informed citizens who feel safe and engaged.

**10.2** The proposed actions support this commitment.

**Gail Macfarlane**  
**Strategic Lead Roads and Transportation**  
**14 November 2019**

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**Person to Contact:** Raymond Walsh  
Interim Manager Roads and Transportation  
Raymond.Walsh@west-dunbarton.gov.uk  
Tel 01389 73 7615

**Appendices:** None

**Background Papers:** Winter Maintenance Plan

**Wards Affected:** All