

Public Document Pack

SECOND ADDITIONAL CIRCULATION



ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

To: Councillor Dean, Convener; Councillor McCaig, Vice-Convener; and Councillors Adam, Allan, Boulton, Clark, Corall, Cormie, Crockett, Greig, Jaffrey, Milne, Penny, Robertson and Kevin Stewart.

Town House,
ABERDEEN 11 January 2010

ENTERPRISE, PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

The undernoted item is circulated in connection with the meeting of the **ENTERPRISE, PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE** to be held here in the Town House on **TUESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2010 at 2.00 pm.**

RODERICK MACBEATH
ACTING HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

B U S I N E S S

OTHER TRANSPORTATION, ROADS AND PARKING ISSUES

- 8.5 Emergency Motion by Councillor Adam – Background Information (Pages 1 - 8)

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Allison Swanson, tel. 522822 or email aswanson@aberdeencity.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Environment, Planning and Infrastructure Committee Meeting 12th January 2010

Background Report on Winter Maintenance Operations 18th December 2009 – 3rd January 2010

Background:

The start of Winter Maintenance operations were held back this year by two weeks in order to achieve part of the approved budget savings. Due to some early morning frosts drivers were called in to treat priority routes as and when required.

Winter Maintenance Co-ordinators commenced on	26/10/09
Nightshift driver commenced on	14/11/09
Early morning operations commenced on	23/11/09
Standby operations commenced on	23/11/09

These operations were for Priority 1 &2 gritting routes and Priority 1 footpaths as described in the approved Winter Maintenance Plan.

This rota consists of the following resources:

- 2 Winter Maintenance Co-ordinators
- 2 Night Shift Drivers
- 8 Early Morning Drivers
- 3 Plant Operators
- 3 Tractor Gritters drivers
- 2 Kubota Drivers
- 1 Supervisor

The Standby Rota Consists of:

- 10 Early Morning Drivers
- 3 Plant Operators
- 2 Kubota Drivers
- 1 Supervisor

Along with these early morning operations to the priority routes, salting is also carried out to the access roads and car parks at the two park and ride sites

At the commencement of the current period of prolonged winter weather operations on the 18th December 2009 there was **13042** tonnes of rock salt in stock.

Breakdown of Resources Deployed

Winter operations commenced on the **18th December** with an early morning run of the priority 1&2 routes and when snow started to fall around **14.00 hrs** frontline staff were called back to the respective depots to carry out a further salting of the priority routes.

Due to this being one of the busiest nights for the pubs and clubs in the city centre it was decided to keep the majority of staff working until midnight to ensure that revelers could still travel safely, by either bus or taxi, home. After that time the nightshift drivers carried on with the operation.

Early morning operations on **19th December** commenced at **4.45 am** treating priority routes and footpaths, after that additional resources were deployed to the city centre to ensure that the roads and footpaths were treated to allow the public to carry on with their Christmas shopping. This process was **repeated** on the **20th December**. During these two days there were continual snow showers with surface and air temperatures remaining below freezing for a large period of the day.

After the completion of the priority routes on **21st December** operations **continued** on into the areas, as per the Winter Maintenance Plan, which include both footpaths and roads.

Due to the almost continual snow on the **22nd December** these operations were hampered by the need to return to the priority routes in times of high snow fall therefore there was not a large amount of area operations on minor roads and footways. Kubotas continued to work on footpaths but with almost **200mm** of snow that day the areas cleared quickly filled back in.

Any minor road or footway treated, or where a surface melt had occurred, quickly froze in the low temperatures that occurred, especially as soon as the sun went down around 15.00 hrs. This was the pattern that continued through the rest of the week, snow falling on frozen surfaces and the salt that was spread on the footpaths not fully working due to the extremely low temperatures but also because of the footfall on the pavements.

In order for salt to melt the ice it has to change from a solid to a liquid and it is the brine solution that melts the ice and snow, to speed up this process it is helpful for the salt solution to be worked into the ice and snow. On the roads this is carried out by the wheels of the cars but on footpaths this is dependant on the footfall/pedestrian movements to carry out the same process. In areas of low footfall the salt does not go fully into solution so the salt forms a hole through the ice and once the solution is diluted with further snow it eventually freeze over leaving a more polished, more slippery surface.

Due to the above conditions it was decided to change from a pure salt mix on the pavements to a salt sand mix which would help to give greater grip on the icy surfaces. The weather did not help through the period with periods of melt during the day being quickly refrozen during the late afternoon resulting in the sand became encased in the ice.

For the period of **25th, 26th, 27th & 28th December**, the public holidays and weekend, the allocated resources should have been only the staff and drivers on the **Standby Rota** (17

members of staff) who carried out the salting operations to the priority routes. On the 25th 26th this was the level of resource available. The supervisor spent time on phone on the 26th December calling drivers and footpath operators to seek support where possible and so we were able to increase the numbers. Staff who should have been on holiday came into work increasing the workforce to around **30** for the **27th and 28th December**. Another series of phone calls raised the level of men to around **90** for the following two days (**29th and 30th December**). On the 29th December some other staff were diverted to preparations for the firework display on Hogmanay

For the period **31st December 2009** until the **3rd January 2010** the workforce reverted to those on the **Standby Rota** (17 members of staff) and operations returned to Priority routes.

During this whole period the operations were carried out in accordance with the Winter Maintenance Plan so the Priority routes were returned to as and when required and this helped to keep traffic flowing during this sever winter period.

During this period approx **6900 man hours** have been expended on the operation

Footpaths

After a public consultation exercise on Winter Operations in 2001 a decision was taken to increase Footpath clearing operations. A tender was issued for the lease of 6 No. Footpath Ploughs plus spreaders. This was duly awarded and the lease commenced in October 2001 for a period of 8 years. This lease ended in October 2009.

As part of budget savings in 2008-2009 a number of options were considered following benchmarking of winter maintenance operations. The approved option was to reduce footpath operations by reducing the size of the fleet by 6 No footpath plough. This was achieved by not extending or buying the leased Kubotas.

Another part of the saving was to stop standby operations for footpaths, and only commence footpath operations at 7.45am instead of 4.45am. This meant that the priority footpaths, as set out in the Winter Maintenance Operations Plan, were the only routes to be covered as part of the early morning operations. This change in operations was approved by the Policy Committee in 2008.

This reduction in Standby Staff meant that there was only 2 people on call for footpaths over the Christmas period but with the perseverance of the Supervisors and the willingness of some of the men to come in, even though they were on holiday, we were able to increase this resource and have had the majority of available Kubotas deployed. Squads of men were also carrying out hand spreading to some footpaths but with **over 1200km of footways** it was not feasible to have widespread coverage as anticipated by many members of the public. With a further **40% of remote paths** and areas within our Council housing estates requiring treatment the widespread expectation of "black" roads, footpaths and car parks would not be achievable in the circumstances even if all of the resources had been available.

The speed that a Kubota can deal with the footpaths are dependant on several criteria, depth of snow, whether there is ice on the footpaths and programming operations with the back up team in order that a continual supply of salt/salt sand can be provided to the spreader. Street furniture, poorly parked cars and wheelie bins also make this process slower.

With the current conditions and a full compliment of staff this would take between 8 - 10 days to complete, this is not allowing for return visits to the shopping areas etc during periods of further snow.

Salt

The season commenced with **13493 Tonnes** of rock salt in stock, a further 1000 tonne of 6mm salt for the Trunk Road was delivered during December.

Monitoring of our stocks during this period showed that we were using high levels of salt to combat the continual snow showers and the very low temperatures. To bring the stocks back to level contact was made with our suppliers, Cleveland Potash, over the Christmas period to start the process of obtaining a delivery of salt by boat. This arrived on the 4th January. With the salt shortages across Scotland the supply was shared between Aberdeenshire, BEAR Scotland and the City.

During the period between 18th December and 3rd January over 12,000 tonnes of salt were spread on the streets and footpaths of Aberdeen City.

Other Operations

During this period there were major difficulties in dealing with parked cars because a high percentage of people were at home during the day making operations longer. The increased level of pedestrian activity in the city centre in the run up to Christmas meant that we were restricted to early morning operations for treatment of footways. In order to support other services using our roads assistance was given to the Refuse Collection service in order that they could access some difficult areas of their routes. Assistance was also provided to the emergency services where required and access routes to Hospitals maintained.

Winter Maintenance Budgets

<u>Year</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Spend</u>	<u>Emergencies</u>	<u>Spend</u>
2005-2006	£1641K	£2218K	£0	£328K
Contingencies	£1000K			
2006-2007	£1641K	£1615K	£300K	£245K
2007-2008	£1641K	£1741K	£300K	£327K
2008-2009	£1590K	£1878K	£0	£288K
2009-2010	£1499K		£0	

Web Link to Aberdeen City Council Winter Maintenance Plan

http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/Roads/roa/roa_winter_main.asp

In the ACC Website

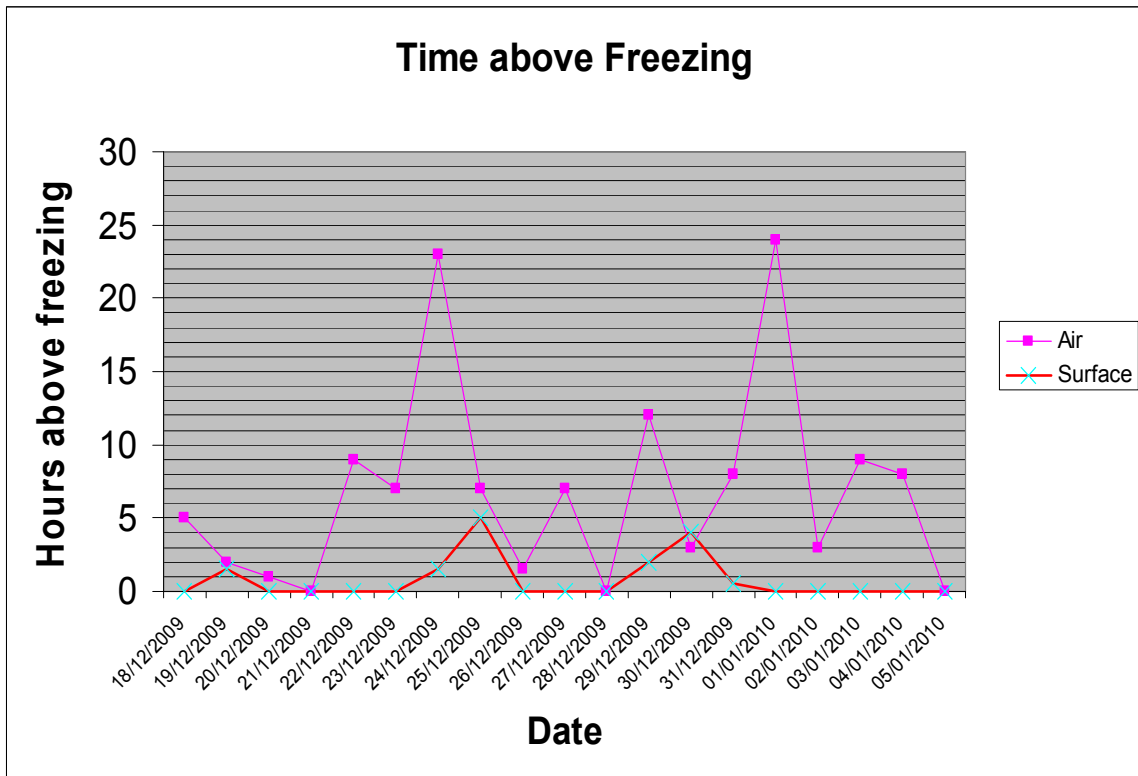
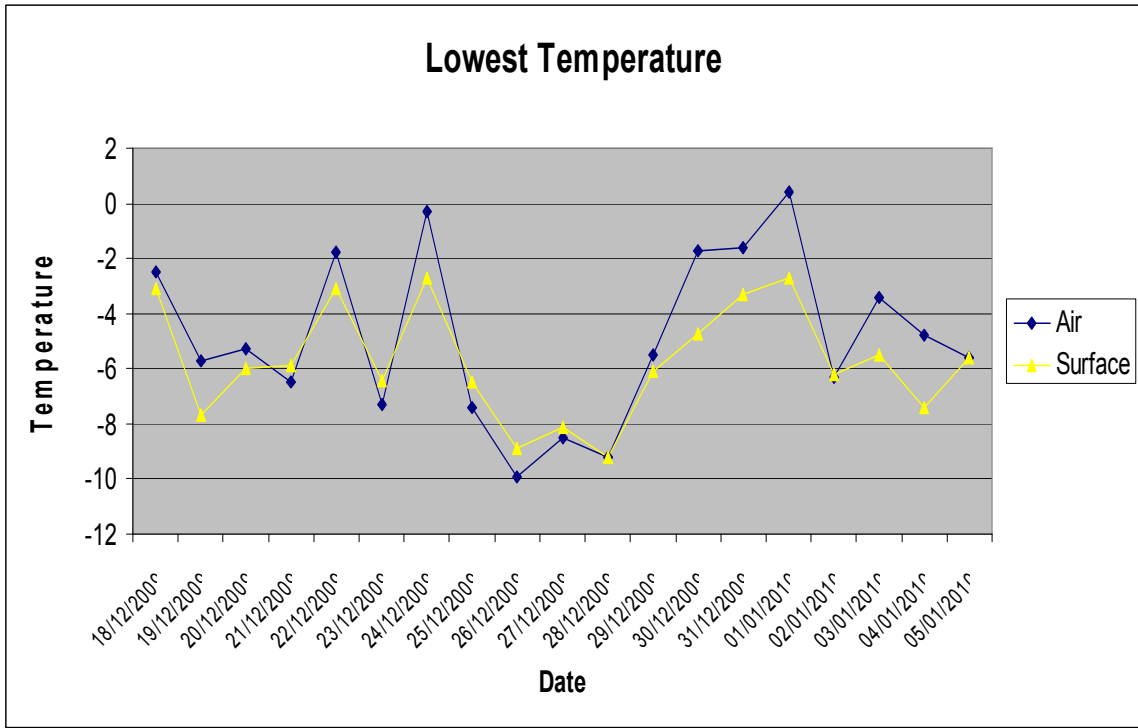
Click on R

Click on Roads

Click on Snow Clearing

Winter Maintenance Plan is available as a download on the left of the page

Temperatures Recorded During The Period 18/12/09-03/01/10



Profile of Work over the period 18/12/09 to 03/01/10

