

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

---

COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure
DATE	13 September 2011
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Roads Winter Services Plan
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI/11/268

---

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is intended to present Members with the proposed Winter Service Plan and to explain significant changes.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

a) to note the content of this report

b) to agree the "Roads Winter Service Plan" for 2011- 2012 (The Winter Services Plan will be sent to Councilors as an electronic attachment)

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Expenditure will be in accordance with the Council's approved Revenue budgets for Winter Maintenance and Emergencies 2011-2012 of £1.499M. It should be noted that the expenditure for the previous two winters have been £2.08M in 2010-2011 and £2.4M in 2009-2010

### 4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

This report has no direct implications in relation to Equalities & Human Rights Impact Assessment.

SOA & VDFL:

**1.v,xviii**

Aberdeen is an attractive place to do business

**2.vii**

Aberdeen will have high quality employment opportunities for citizens

**3.viii**

Ensure education is appropriate to pupil needs and ensure pupils leave school with skills essential to living

## 5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Failure to have a robust “Roads Winter Service Plan” will leave the Council more vulnerable to 3<sup>rd</sup> party insurance claims.

## 6. REPORT

Aberdeen City Council, Winter Maintenance Specification and Winter Maintenance Plan have evolved over many years and are amended to reflect both national and local requirements. This years plan has taken into account the 2009-2010 recommendations of “Well Maintained Highways”

This year’s amendments have been made to reflect: the following-

### a) Salt Usage and Stocks

During both the winters of 09/10 and 10/11 salt demand outstripped supply on a National basis. During both these winters, Aberdeen City managed to control salt usage by starting the winter season with a healthy salt stock and by introducing salt resilience operations at an early stage in order to manage supplies.

Currently it is unknown whether the situation with regard to national salt stocks will be any better during the forthcoming winter but once again we have increased our stock holding for the start of this season.

Over the last 2 years Transport Scotland has been co-coordinating the monitoring of salt stocks and usage across Scotland. Consideration is currently underway for this function to be carried out nationally by the Department for Transport.

Current salt stocks are nearly 16,000 tonnes. Our salt supplier has indicated that they should be able to supply a further 6,000 tonnes during November. This will put our start of season salt stocks to its highest level ever.

Year	Starting Tonnage	Usage
08/09	9,291	19,386
09/10	13,493	25,476
10/11	14,076	19,799
11/12	15,986 (+6,000)	?

Salt, which is purchased through Scotland Excel procurement, have increased this year from £26.59 per tonne to £29.25 per tonne. In an average winter 20,000 tonnes of salt will be used, this will increase our costs by an expected £53,200 during this financial year.

By prudent management of our salt stocks, Aberdeen City Council avoided the need to purchase salt from strategic reserves. This salt, although available, cost in the order of £60 per tonne ex Balmedie, however quantities were limited and required Transport Scotland's approval prior to purchase.

#### b) De-icing Agent

Severe problems were experienced last year with hard packed snow and ice requiring mechanical excavators to be deployed on carriageways to break them up. Hard packed material on footways had to be broken up by hand.

It is proposed to hold a quantity of de-icing agent in stock to allow trials to take place this winter should similar conditions present themselves. This material may also be trialed on busy shopping areas as an alternative to salt.

The application machinery is already owned by the Council.

#### c) Grit

Last year 3,000 tonnes of grit were used to assist with the clearance of snow and ice. Whilst this was a considerable reduction on the previous winter, this has continued to cause problems and expense for both street sweeping and gully emptying.

Stocks of grit will continue to be held, however they will again only be used in extreme conditions given the consequences following application.

De-icing agents, once suitably trialed, may provide a more acceptable alternative to the use of grit.

#### d) Salt Bins

There are currently approximately 850 salt bins throughout the City. Every year there are demands for further boxes at new locations. Maintaining these boxes is a very labour intensive operation and to continually increase their numbers will only add to the current restocking problems. It is proposed to limit the number of extra grit bins this winter, 15 have been allocated from requests received during last winter, it is proposed that the number of additional bins being allocated this winter is limited to a further 15.

A review of existing bins will be undertaken to ensure that they are still in an appropriate location, if not they will be removed and reallocated

#### e) Vehicles and Plant

It has been practice for several years now for the City Council to purchase second hand lorry chassis (approx 6 years old) and to use re-furbished gritter bodies. This has proved to be the most cost effective option. During the last two years there has been little investment in the gritter fleet, last year the option to purchase an ex demonstrator proved not only fortuitous but also excellent value for money.

Due to this under investment the fleet continues to age, this along with two very severe winters, has taken a toll on the condition and reliability of the vehicles. Replacement vehicles are urgently being sought.

#### f) Service Provision over Festive Period

<u>Day</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Service Available</u>
Fri 23 Dec	Normal Day	Full Service
Sat 24 Dec	Week End	Standby + Nightshift
Sun 25 Dec	Weekend	Standby + Nightshift
Mon 26 Dec	Public Holiday	Standby + Nightshift
Tue 27 Dec	Public Holiday	Standby + Nightshift
Wed 28 Dec	Normal Day	Standby + Rota + Nightshift
Thu 29 Dec	Normal day	Standby + Rota + Nightshift
Fri 30 Dec	Public Holiday	Standby + Nightshift
Sat 31 Dec	Week End	Standby + Nightshift
Sun 1 Jan	Week End	Standby + Nightshift
Mon 2 Jan	Public Holiday	Standby + Nightshift
Tue 3 Jan	Public Holiday	Standby + Nightshift
Wed 4 Jan	Normal Day	Full Service

Standby consists of sufficient staff to operate the 10 Priority 1 carriageway routes and 2 Priority footpath gritter routes. Standby cannot provide a 24 hour service, but will operate an early morning run at 5.45 am and finish with an afternoon treatment of the priority routes. Nightshift provides cover from 7.00 pm until 6.00 am to the main arterial routes throughout the City; this operation does not include any operations within the housing estates. The exception to this is in an emergency situation.

#### g) Public Information

An information section for Winter Operations was introduced to the Council Web Site part way through last winter. This provided information on gritter routes and live information on operations on the main routes.

A total of 1200 contacts were made to this service.

Work is currently underway to improve this information by including weather and road surface advice.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to EP&I Committee "Winter Maintenance Operations 2010 - 2011" 24<sup>th</sup> May 2011

<http://councilcommittees/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=13900>

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Mike Cheyne



01224 522984



[mcheyne@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:mcheyne@aberdeencity.gov.uk)