

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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| COMMITTEE       | Enterprise, Strategic Planning & Infrastructure |
| DATE            | 12 November 2013                                |
| DIRECTOR        | Gordon McIntosh                                 |
| TITLE OF REPORT | Amended Roads Winter Service Plan 2013 - 14     |
| REPORT NUMBER:  | EPI/13/217                                      |

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

Officers were requested to report back to committee on how a range of identified cycle routes could be included in the Roads Winter Service Plan 2013-14 where appropriate:

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee

- a) note the content of this report
- b) instruct officers to amend "Roads Winter Service Plan" for 2013 – 2014, Appendix A, to include cycleways within the amended footway treatment section.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Expenditure on winter maintenance will be in accordance with the Council's approved Revenue budgets for Winter Maintenance and Emergencies 2013-2014 of £1.977M. It should be noted that the expenditure for the previous three winters has been £1.986M in 2012-13, £2.12M in 2011-12 and £2.08M in 2010-2011.

The budget was increased for delivery of the winter service in 2013-14 to £1.977M, which is still less than the actual spend for the last three winters. Any additional treatment required to give greater priority to any aspect of the road network would lead to a reduction of the existing service or a future overspend of the existing Revenue budget.

Gritting the list of cycle paths, referred to in the Committee Decision Sheet of the ESP&I Committee of 29 August 2013, before morning peak commuting time would effectively give them Priority 1 or 2 status and would cost an additional £132,000 per year.

#### 4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

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

##### Council Policy Statements

'Aberdeen – The Smarter City' identifies as a high priority that the Council will provide and promote a sustainable transport system, including cycling, which reduces our carbon emissions.

Winter treatment priority is given to bus routes to encourage the use of public transport.

#### 5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

As resources are currently not available to deliver an expanded service the quickest way to have such a resource in place would be to contract with a third party which would require a procurement to be undertaken.

#### 6. REPORT

6.1 At it's meeting on 29 August 2013 this Committee agreed that

Officers were requested to report back to committee on how the following list of cycle routes could be included in the Roads Winter Service Plan 2013-14 where appropriate:

- The Deeside Line;
- The Westhill path (from City boundary to Hazlehead Roundabout);
- Howes Road;
- The Shell path;
- The A96 path, from Great Northern Road to Aberdeen Airport;
- Cycle paths along Stoneywood Road (section of National Cycle Network);
- Wellington Brae to Wellington Road via Wellington Bridge (section of National Cycle Network);
- Cove Road to Duthie Park;
- Wellheads Drive cycle path;
- Cycle paths along Wellington Road;
- Don Terrace to Persley Walled Garden (section of National Cycle Network)

6.2 The Scottish Government produce annually detailed guidance on a range of different topics relating to winter weather and how it affects travel etc, The guidance is provided for all road users and therefore is applicable as much to cyclists and pedestrians as it is to drivers or indeed public transport users. The most recently published and launched document '*Safer Scotland – Scottish Government, Ready for Winter?*' (September 2013) gives the following general advice, which is applicable:

Before travelling in bad weather, you should:

- Check the weather forecast and road conditions
- Consider whether you need to travel right now or if you can wait until the weather improves
- Consider alternative routes
- Consider alternative modes of transport
- Allow extra time for your journey
- Make sure your mobile phone is fully charged
- Tell someone your destination and when you expect to arrive
- Consider fitting winter tyres to your vehicle

It should be noted that, with reference to the Scottish Government advice above, for each of the identified roads listed in 6.1 above there are alternate routes to these cycle ways available on the existing Priority 1 gritting routes.

The priority of treating all of the routes identified, the timing of treatment and the ability to treat the routes to a level which would provide safe passage every day is significant. There are particular problems with accessing the remote routes with vehicles to supply the footway gritters with salt, which makes the clearing of these routes, logistically, very difficult. In some cases access to routes are not at ends but at mid points and may not be fully accessible over the route. Some routes are located where they are in shade or cover which would lead to practical difficulties in ensuring snow or ice thaws and doesn't return.

It should be noted that area treatments are undertaken as resources are freed up from treating the Priority 1 and 2 routes. With there being 24 geographic areas in the city our current resource of 21 footway gritters is already stretched and on occasion we will supplement the resources deployed with others plant to treat the weather conditions.

If treated as Priority 1 or 2 status it is estimated that five additional footway gritters would be required each with a backup pick up truck and driver. This would require 10 No. additional operatives, each week, to volunteer for the early morning winter stand-by rota. Currently this is a 3 weekly rota comprising early morning treatment, stand-by for call outs and a stand down week on standard working hours, requiring a complement of 30 No. additional operatives to provide this additional service (the working patterns are to comply with working time legislation). The Council does not currently have

these additional staff available. With the present staff establishment level based around the existing winter service plan provision there would be a need to bring in additional resources either through recruitment or through outsourcing this additional element of work.

An alternative approach would be to include the cycle routes within the Winter Service Plan 2013-14 as general footway treatment with Section 2.2, Priorities and Standards – Footways, being amended to include cycleways. Consequently, the cycleways will be treated as part of the area based treatment which occurs during prolonged winter conditions. Appendix B shows those cycle routes already dealt with as part of an Area response. Plans will be provided to groups representing cyclists showing roads treated as Priority 1 and 2 and this will provide the means for individuals to be aware of alternative routes prior to making their journey.



## 7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Roads Winter Service Plan” for 2013 – 2014 Appendix A

Committee Decision Sheet, Enterprise, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee – Thursday, 29 August 2013

Safer Scotland – Scottish Government, Ready for Winter? Partner Briefing Information September 2013

## 8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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## Appendix B

| Location  | Operational Status | Reasons   |
|---|--------------------|---|
| The Deeside Line  | Not Actioned       | Access problems, shaded with drainage problems  |
| The Westhill path (from City boundary to Hazlehead Roundabout);                               | Actioned           | Once other footpaths in the Kingswells area have been completed. This path is not done on every occasion                        |
| Howes Road  | Not Actioned       | Access difficulty, shaded area, low usage with drainage problems  |
| The Shell path  | Actioned           | Part of an Area response, but usually about 7.45 am   |
| The A96 path, from Great Northern Road to Aberdeen Airport                                    | Not Actioned       | Gt Northern Road to Dyce Drive is Trunk Road. Trunk Road. Priority Footpath is the short section outside the shops at Bucksburn |
| Cycle paths along Stoneywood Road (section of National Cycle Network);                        | Actioned           | Shared footpath done as an Area response  |
| Wellington Brae to Wellington Road via Wellington Bridge (section of National Cycle Network); | Not Actioned       | Access Problems, manual spread only   |
| Cove Road to Duthie Park  | Partially Actioned | Where cycleway is part of a shared footpath it is actioned as part of an Area response  |
| Wellheads Drive cycle path  | Actioned           | Shared footpath done as an Area response  |
| Cycle paths along Wellington Road   | Actioned           | Shared footpath done as an Area response  |
| Don Terrace to Persley Walled Garden (section of National Cycle Network)                      | Not Actioned       | Off road paths no easy access, shaded area, low usage   |

