

ANGUS COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 25 MAY 2021

WINTER MAINTENANCE 2020-21 ACTIVITY REVIEW

INFORMATION REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

This report outlines the service delivery, weather severity and outturn expenditure on winter road maintenance for 2020/21.

2. UPDATE

2.1 The full standby period for winter treatment was established as 5am 2 November 2020 to 11pm on 28 March 2021 with lead-in and out periods and reduced resources available on standby of two weeks each side. The lead-out has currently been extended by a further two weeks to 18 April 2021.

2.2 The winter just experienced was one of the hardest in recent times. Many of our customers are unaware of our treatment activities where freezing conditions require attention often in the early hours of the morning. Routes frequently require retreatment with rain washing off salt after treatment.

2.3 The relevant weather statistics are provided in Annex A of this report, and the treatment figures are provided in Annex B. Analysis to compare the 2020/21 winter season against the last 15 years has indicated that 2020/21 had:

- seventh highest number of days with fresh lying snow;
- twelve lowest number of priority carriageway routes treated in the morning;
- third highest number of priority footway routes treated;
- fifth highest non-priority footway routes treated in 15 years; and
- seventh lowest number of auxiliary routes treated.

2.4 The first road treatment of the season was undertaken on 19 November 2020. The second half of the season required higher than average treatment, especially in January and February which saw sustained sub-zero temperatures and snow. The lowest temperature on the network was recorded as minus 13.1 degrees Celsius at Lochlair on 10 February 2021.

2.5 Approximately 14,130 tonnes of salt was used during the winter of 2020/21 not including leachate losses. Just over 19,000 tonnes of salt was in stock at the start of winter with another 4,000T more rock salt ordered towards the end of the season when it appeared that winter may continue and salt may be difficult to procure. During extremes of snow, an amount of sand was mixed with salt on a 50/50 basis to help with traction in line with the Winter Services Policy.

2.6 Salt is procured by Tayside Contracts under joint tender for Dundee City Council, Perth and Kinross Council and Angus Council gaining the benefits of economies of scale. The salt was procured through our normal suppliers and with all UK road authorities having increased their resilience since 2010/11, salt orders were timeously received. Over the summer, supplies will be restocked to approximately 19,000 tonnes - 13,000 tonnes of which will be marine salt (to be stored in Forfar and Arbroath) and 6,000 tonnes of rock salt (to be held in the covered store in Forfar) for the start of winter 2021/22.

- 2.7 Weather forecasting and data management and ice station maintenance is procured through the Tayside Procurement Consortium, together with Dundee City, Perth and Kinross, Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen City and Moray Councils.
- 2.8 The examples in section 2.6 and 2.7 show effective application of shared services and collaborative working.
- 2.9 The A90 trunk road in Angus, which is maintained by BEAR Scotland Ltd on behalf of Transport Scotland, experienced generally the same weather conditions as the local roads and it was not necessary for the council to assist with winter maintenance on the trunk road at any time during 2020/21. The A92 between Claypotts in Dundee and Elliott in Arbroath, which is a Design, Build, Finance and Operate road for Dundee and Angus, is also currently maintained by BEAR Scotland Ltd for Claymore.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The net budget for winter maintenance was set for 2020/21 at £2,641,000. This included Standing Charges for Tayside Contracts of £1,424,568 for plant, standby arrangements, depot costs and unscheduled vehicle maintenance; leaving a balance of £1,216,432 (46% of the budget) available for the day-to-day operational costs, which includes salting/snow clearing activities and weather forecast costs.
- 3.2 The unaudited outturn expenditure figures for the 2020/21 winter service indicate a total cost of £3,098,000, which is £457,000 higher than the 2020/21 revenue budget allocation for winter maintenance of £2,641,000. The completion of the 2020/21 annual accounts process is currently ongoing. Any alteration to this position will be reported at a later date to the council as part of the finalisation of the 2020/21 annual accounts process.

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NOTE: The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report are:

- Report No. 199/20 Winter Service Policy and Provision for 2020/21 – Communities Committee, 18 August 2020

List of Annexes:

- Annex A – Winter Maintenance Expenditure 2020/21 Review Weather Statistics
- Annex B – Winter Maintenance Expenditure 2020/21 Operational Activity Statistics