

WINTER SERVICE POLICY 2023/24

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Each year Members consider for approval, Policy. The format and general content of the Winter Service Policy 2023/24 remains similar to that of the 2022/23 Policy.
- 1.2 The policy sf*EMC q72.094 596.02 Tm[)72.094 596.02 Tm[)72.094 ral 872.094

WINTER SERVICE POLICY 2023/24

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report presents the Winter Service Policy 2023/24 which remains in a similar format and covers a similar network to the Policy approved by this Committee in previous years. This generally remains based on the network and times of the public bus service with additional priority and resources allocated to strategic high speed roads.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee:-

Approves the 2023/24 Winter Service Policy Document at Appendix 1.

Approves the Salt Use Reduction and Preservation of Stocks Protocol at Appendix 2.

Notes the Appendices 3 – 6 of this report.

Note that a review of the financial position is being carried out and this will be reported to the Policy and Resources Committee in October.

4.0 DETAIL

Winter Service Policy 2023/24

- 4.1 The proposed Winter Service Policy for 2023/24 at Appendix 1, in terms of treatment standards and routes, remains unchanged from last year.
- 4.2 There have however, been a number of minor operational changes in the past 12 months which are:-

A new Weather Forecast Service Contract Provider has been appointed, this being a joint procurement with several Councils across the West of Scotland.

An operational adjustment was made to Lorn pre-treatment routes with a seventh route L7-Lorn Arc Bus Routes introduced prior to operations commencing in November 2022.

Following the new Generation 6 (G6) trunk road contract for the north west region which has been awarded by Transport Scotland to BEAR Scotland the sub contract services previously provided by the Council for winter and reactive out of hours call outs on the trunk road in Kintyre, since August 2014 when the southern section of the A83 was trunked, will now be delivered directly by BEAR who no longer require the services of the Council. A review of the Kintyre local road network routes will now be part of the assessment of overall capability, in the run up to the Winter Service period.

- 4.3 The advisory signs for alternative routes in severe snow conditions remain similar for the four routes proposed in previous years. Details on sign configuration and locations are contained in Appendix 3 of this report.
- 4.4 Winter stand-by arrangements will commence on Friday 3rd November 2023 and will continue until Friday 12th April 2024. There are a total of 3

weather forecasting etc., that the physical condition of the footways and footpaths makes it necessary and treatments will be effective. Footways and footpaths will usually only be treated during normal working hours. Staffing levels are such that we generally do not have sufficient labour available to deal with footways and footpaths in parallel with treatments of the carriageway. The mobilisation of external resources to assist in footway treatments, is a balance of cost benefit against potential thaw conditions rendering treatments unnecessary. This winter service policy applies to the public road network and a limited number of emergency service and public transport routes. Public car parks, access to council offices, schools etc. all being subject to local arrangements out with the scope of this policy.

- 4.12 In specific locations additional information and diversion signing will be erected to further inform drivers of the hazardous conditions on some routes and advise them of alternative routes where available resources will concentrate on maintaining treatments. There are four roads where signing to indicate specific alternative routes are available. The signs deployed for these road closures are detailed in Appendix 3.

4.12.1

Lomond.

Diversion via A818 Arden - A814 Garelochhead

4.12.2

C46 Glen Aros / Glenbellart road, Mull

Signs at Aros Bridge and Dervaig Primary School

Diversion via A848 Tobermory

4.12.3

C9 Glenfinart Road (The Larach), Cowal

Signs at Whistlefield Hotel and Sligrachan Bus turning head;

Diversion via A880 Cot House

4.12.4

C11 Otter Hill road (Bealach an Drain), Cowal

Signs at Glendaruel A886 and Otter Ferry B8000;

Diversion via A8003 Tighnabruaich and Kames.

Winter Maintenance Budget

- 4.13 Overall the financial cost for winter 2022/23 was recorded as £2.661 million against a budget of £2.120 million, an excess of £541K equivalent to 26%. The actual cost of winter maintenance is dependent upon the severity of the prevailing weather conditions and is a financial risk each year as we respond in accordance with our current policy to what are effectively variable weather events.
- 4.14 There has been an overspend of winter maintenance for a number of years and in 2022/23 this overspend was higher due to inflationary increases (particularly for grit and salt) and the change in respect of the use of red diesel. A review of the financial position is being carried out and will be reported to the Policy and Resources Committee in October.

Salt Stocks and School Routes

4.15 As of

Furnace Village Bus Loop - Off A83

Winter Policy Review

- 4.21 The appointed Route Optimisation Programme provider, is delivering the refuse collection plans at present but it is anticipated that route optimisation will be a fundamental part of any future Winter. A comprehensive winter review is anticipated in 2025/25.

Climate Change

- 4.22 Whist Road and Infrastructure Services have been very successful in introducing several electric and hybrid cars, vans and minibuses into the council fleet there are still limitations in distance range and affordability for larger vehicles such as the winter maintenance fleet. Whilst some manufactures have units available the range and costs are so far prohibitive. However, it is anticipated that with the ongoing advances in technology there will be alternatives to the Internal Combustion Engines (ICE) available in the near to medium future. Officers continue to monitor the market for opportunities.

Appendix 6 - Summary of 2022/23 weather conditions