

Midlothian Council Conservative Group

"Midlothian Council, by way of a Motion passed by Council on 27 March 2018, recognised the efforts of its staff in rising to the challenge of the exceptional weather conditions of March 2018, and agreed to seek a further report on the engagement with community groups and others in order to review preparedness for the future. One of the lessons learned from the experiences of the severe and damaging weather conditions is the highly damaging consequential impact it had on the Midlothian road network.

The Council notes with concern that access to the Bellwin Scheme and associated support for road repairs, a requirement estimated to be worth £50m to local authorities across Scotland, has been in practice been avoided by the Scottish Government in favour of an arbitrary £10m ad-hoc compensation package. In our case a £149,000 contribution has been received compared to a £686,000 adverse variance on winter maintenance alone for last year. year.

Midlothian Council further notes:

- the need for substantially higher payments than implied by the substitute arrangement, particularly for the Councils worst affected by heavy snowfalls
- the subsequent pothole pandemic, in which further financial support is vital to avert persistently degraded roads, leading to vehicle damage and serious risk to pedal and motorcyclists;
- the desirability of funding longer-term road reconstruction as constituting better taxpayer value

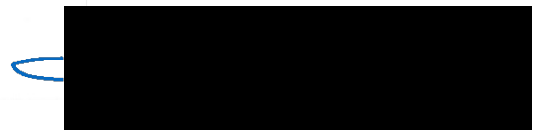
Midlothian Council calls on the Scottish Government to revisit the £10m settlement, provide a more realistic sum, and enter into dialogue so as to support our citizens' reasonable expectations for the maintenance of our road network; and to confirm the important principle of appropriate support being provided to local authorities in the event of severe weather conditions."

Proposed by:

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Councillor Smail

Seconded by:

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Councillor Lay-Douglas

Date: 11 June 2018