

**2016/17 Pre-Winter Update****Report by Ricky Moffat, Head of Commercial Operations****1 Purpose of Report**

At its meeting of 4 November 2014 Council were advised of the resources that were available to the Council to deal with effects of normal to severe winters.

This report updates Council on the plans in place for the forthcoming winter season and advises of the financial implications of providing the current level of service.

**2 Background**

- 2.1** The severe winters of 2009/10 and 2010/11 have been reported previously to Council. The winters of 2011/12 and 2013/14 were mild by comparison, however the winter of 2012/13 whilst not as cold as 2009/10 and 2010/11, there were more days of snow which led to some disruption of the road network but did not have any significant impact on the delivery of key public services across Midlothian.

The winter of 2015/16 was relatively mild when compared to the winters experienced at the start of the decade.

Whilst there were a few snow days, with the exception of one day when the actual weather forecast information provided by the Met Office was incorrect there was generally minimal disruption to the travelling public and there was no significant impact on the delivery of key services across Midlothian.

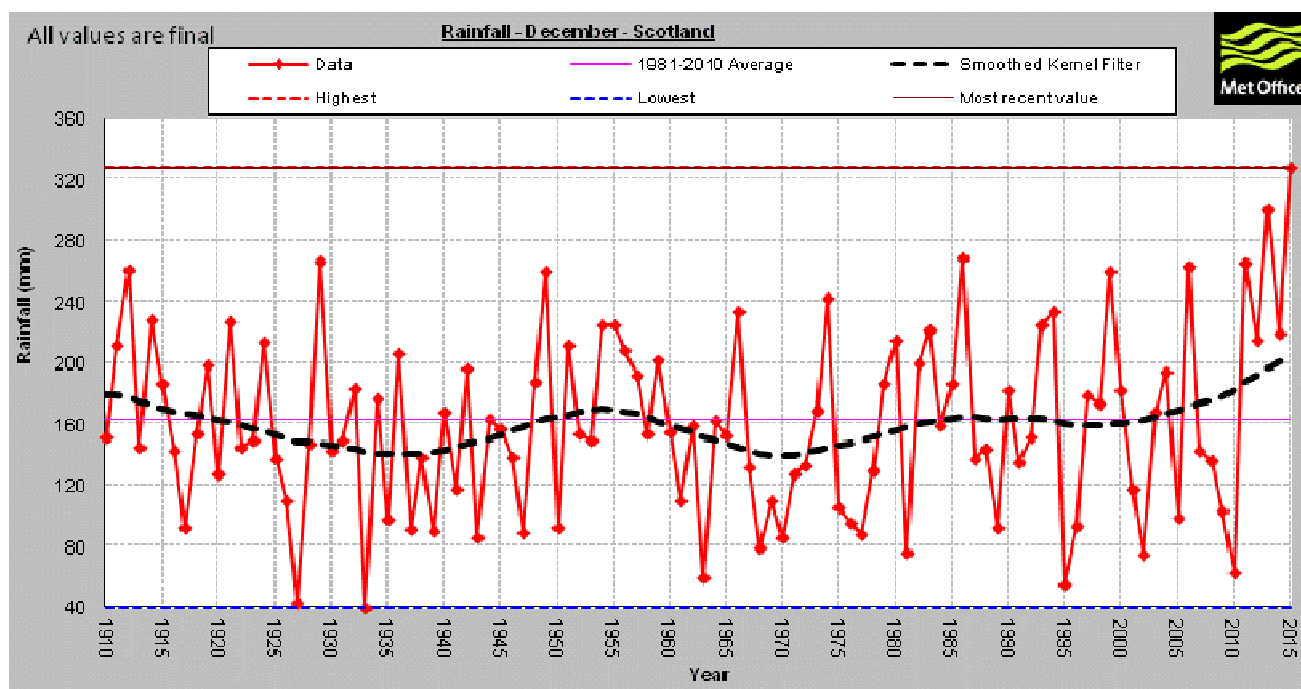
However there were higher levels of rainfall experienced, with December 2015 being one of the wettest on record.

Through December the UK was in a warm and moist tropical air mass for most of the month, bringing unseasonably mild conditions to England and Wales, although Scotland and Northern Ireland were colder at times, particularly in the second week. It was also exceptionally wet and often windy, with frequent deep depressions and frontal systems - including storms Desmond, Eva and Frank - bringing record-breaking rainfall over much of Scotland.

Scotland normally has precipitation on 12 days in any given December, this compares to 25 days when rain fell during December 2015, which was more than double the normal.

The table below from the Met office shows the recorded rainfall in Scotland since 1910. This shows that in four out of the last five years

rainfall during December has been above the average with 2015 being the highest recorded to date. It is also worth noting that since 2000 there has been a consistent increase in average rainfall during December.



Road Services utilised its core staffing complement of 36 operatives to treat the road and footpath network during periods of adverse weather. There are 27 items of plant and vehicles available to provide the winter service based at the Fushiebridge Depot. When required these resources are supplemented through the use of Council staff within Land and Countryside Services, Property Maintenance and Waste Services. In addition through a Winter Framework contract companies are engaged through competitive tendering via the Council's procurement process.

The Midlothian Council Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan states that:

*'The purpose of this Winter Service Policy and Plan is to demonstrate that Midlothian Council has taken such steps as it considers reasonable to prevent snow and ice endangering the safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles over public roads, to fulfil its' Statutory responsibilities as defined in Section 34 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.*

*Furthermore this plan takes into consideration the recommendations set out in the Code of Practice (July 2005), 'Well Maintained Highways' (Code of Practice), Appendix H, Winter Service Practical Guidance. Given that the Code of Practice is only making recommendations, it should be noted that Midlothian Council may deviate in certain ways to meet local conditions.'*

The Winter Service Policy also states:

*'Given the scale of financial and other resources involved in delivering the winter service it is not reasonable either to:*

- *Provide the same service on all parts of the network*
- *Ensure running surfaces are kept free of ice and snow at all times, even on treated parts of the network*

Accordingly Midlothian Council Road Services have in place operational procedures to deliver an efficient and effective winter service in accordance with the Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan.

The Winter Service Policy and Operation Plan include details of the carriageway and footway priority hierarchy and route plans. Copies of the route plans are held at Fushiebridge Depot and Midlothian House, Dalkeith and are based on the following categories.

### **Carriageway Priorities**

Priorities are as follows:-

- Priority Routes:** Important principal roads and bus routes – to hospitals, ambulance depots, fire stations and local danger spots (e.g. very steep hills)
- Secondary Routes:** Cross routes, connecting routes and accesses into industrial areas.
- Tertiary Routes:** Residential areas, other unclassified roads.

Note: Details of these routes can be found on Council's website via the following link;

[www.midlothian.gov.uk/downloads/download/199/midlothian\\_priority\\_gritting\\_routes](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/downloads/download/199/midlothian_priority_gritting_routes)

### **Footway Priorities**

Priorities are as follows:-

- Priority Routes:** Agreed 'access routes' to schools, health clinics, and town centres.
- Secondary Routes:** Footways on hills and connecting footways
- Tertiary Routes:** Flat lying and residential areas

It should be noted that during periods of snowfall, it is likely that it will be several days before treatment is provided on tertiary routes, due to the length of Priority and Secondary routes to be cleared prior to treating tertiary routes.

A copy of the Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan can be found in Appendix A.

In addition to treating the road and footpath network during the winter period, Road Services have in place a Winter Service Level Agreement to cover other essential services.

The Winter Service Level Agreement can be found in Appendix B

This Service Level Agreement covers the following:-

- Social Work Buildings
- Educational Establishments
- Access for Additional support needs pupils (at their home address)
- Access for other vulnerable residents in Midlothian (at their home address)
- Public Buildings
- National Health Service facilities within the Midlothian Area. This service is at the request of NHS Lothian following a successful pilot scheme during the 2012/13 winter season and continues for 2016/17.

Road Services have the in-house resources to meet the demands of a 'normal' winter which typically equates to an average of 7 days of snowfall. However, given the recent historic severe weather events it has been determined that additional resources be placed on standby to deliver the service level agreement and to meet public expectations.

### **Care for People in Emergencies**

The Midlothian Care for People Group was established as part of the Lothian and Borders Strategic Co-ordination Group.

During previous winters, successful partnership working has been undertaken between Midlothian Council, NHS Lothian, the emergency services and the voluntary sector. These arrangements remain in place to respond to the needs of those who may be at risk in the event of severe weather.

The following are key areas of activity of the Care for People Group in preparing for winter emergencies.

- Care providers have plans in place to ensure that car home support services can be reprioritised to meet the needs of individual service users who are at greatest risk.
- Close liaison with NHS facilitating the continuing discharge of patients from hospital during adverse weather conditions.

- Plans are in place to ensure continuing access for staff, goods and services to care establishments in adverse weather conditions.
- Plans to identify other individuals in the community not currently in receipt of care services who may be placed at risk in the event of adverse weather conditions.

The plan includes arrangements to make contact with such households and with the support of local voluntary and community groups to provide practical help and support including shopping, collecting prescriptions, clearing footpaths etc.

- Develop resilience plans with community councils and local communities so that they are better able to respond to their needs. Bulk bags of a salt/grit mix are made available to local community group when snow is forecast greater than 10cm. However, it should be noted that only half of these bags were used during 2012/13 and these have not been utilised in recent years.
- In relation to Health and Social Care, the Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership continues to jointly plan for managing winter, with a particular focus on admission avoidance, supporting discharge and ensuring that support and care for the most vulnerable members of the community can be delivered throughout the winter period. The key actions to support this work include increased capacity within Homecare, expansion of Midlothian Enhanced Rapid Response and Intervention Team (MERRIT) with particular focus on patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) as well as additional capacity for weekend service delivery and extensive local flu campaign across health and social care staff with emphasis on increased uptake of vaccinations by care at home and care home workers.

### **3 Report Implications**

#### **3.1 Resource**

Road Services take the lead role on winter maintenance across the Council. The co-ordination and management of all operational resources across the Council is undertaken from the Fushiebridge Depot to provide a response in line with the Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan and Service Level Agreement. The Director, Resources on behalf of the Corporate Management Team has also establishes standby arrangements to ensure management cover is in place during holiday periods.

The following table details the budget and spend levels associated with the Winter Maintenance Service in recent years.

Financial Year	Expenditure Type	Amount
2008/09	Actual	£1,162,000
2009/10	Actual	£1,743,000
2010/11	Actual	£2,832,000
2011/12	Actual	£869,000
2012/13	Actual	£1,557,000
2013/14	Actual	£788,000
2014 /15	Actual	£1,159,000
2015 /16	Actual	£921,000

The winter maintenance revenue budget for 2016/17 is £998,000 which is based on the likelihood of 7 days snow clearing and 120 occasions of salt treatment to the roads and footpath network during the mornings and evenings.

The salt usage by the Council over the last five years has been as follows:

Year	Usage
2009/10	7,600 tonnes
2010/11	6,600 tonnes
2011/12	2,900 tonnes
2012/13	6,500 tonnes
2013/14	2,850 tonnes
2014/15	4,808 tonnes
2015/16	4,230 tonnes

Currently the Council has a salt stock holding capacity of 5000 tonnes. 3800tonnes of this salt can be stored in the dome at Fushiebridge with another 1200 tonnes stored under sheeted cover at Butlerfield Industrial Estate or at the road side depot near the main Fushiebridge depot. Salt supplies are available using suppliers through the Scotland Excel contract. It is anticipated that we will hold at least 3000 tonnes of salt in the dome at Fushiebridge prior to 1 November 2016.

The winter code of practice recommends the following 'resilience' levels of salt stocks

PERIOD	STOCK
1 October – 31 October	950 tonnes
1 November (pre season stock)	2500 tonnes
1 November – 1 March (minimum stock at any time)	1400 tonnes
1 March – 30 April	950 tonnes

### 3.2 Risk

There are several risk implications attributed to the delivery of the Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan and The Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 places a duty on local authorities to

*“take such steps as they consider reasonable to prevent snow and ice endangering the safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles over public roads”.*

The Code of Practice for winter recommended and endorsed by the Scottish Government and COSLA states that Councils should adopt

and publicise its winter service operational plan which defines treatments based on a determined hierarchy. This Council's hierarchy is set in accordance with the Code of Practice and is publicised annually in advance of winter.

When comparing the extent of the road and footpath network treated with other local authorities, this Council generally compares well. In that regard and taking into account the actual hierarchy treated, it is reasonable to assume that reasonable steps have been taken to prevent snow and ice endangering the safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles.

Notwithstanding that however, increasing either the length of network treated or the level of treatment would further reduce the risk of potential successful accident claims, to which a lack of treatment can be cited by claimants as a contributory factor.

Additionally there are significant risks to the Council in relation to the continuity of education, the identification of a support for the most vulnerable persons in the community, the financial performance of income generating facilities including Leisure Centres arising from severe weather disruption.

A further risk to the Council is that of reputation. Public expectations have been raised in recent years with the increase in service delivery during the adverse periods of winter. As such there is a risk to the Council's reputation should there be a reduction in the level of service and response provided.

This has been shown where the public have, in some instances been very critical of the Council's performance, particularly in relation to the expectations outlined previously

To that end the Winter Service Policy Operational Plan seeks to mitigate this risk by carrying out those duties in an effective manner.

There is also a financial risk as outlined in the table below. Should the weather be similar to 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2012/13, there is a risk of significant overspend.

Should the weather be similar to 2010/11 and the level of service is maintained then the financial risk to the Council could approach a £2million overspend, thus putting significant strains on already constrained Council budgets.

The cost implications are dependent on the level of service and can be summarised as follows:-

<b>Service Provided</b>	<b>Normal Winter</b>	<b>Winter based on 2012-13</b>	<b>Severe winter (similar to 2010/11)</b>
Routine gritting of the road network	£330,600	£342,000	£398,000
Routine gritting of footway network	£105,000	£140,000	£175,000
Routine gritting of car parks	£40,000	£50,500	£60,000
Snow clearing of the road network	£112,000	£320,000	£560,000
Snow clearing of footway network	£105,000	£375,000	£560,000
Snow clearing of car parks	£6,650	£14,250	£22,800
Removal of snow from the network	--	--	£400,000
Grit bins	£16,000	£24,000	£56,000
Community group bulk bags	--	£2,350	£4,700
Snow clearing around public buildings	--	£12,600	£42,000
Snow clearing for vulnerable persons	--	£12,600	£42,000
Standing charge for dedicated equipment, standby etc	£250,000	£250,000	£250,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£965,250</b>	<b>£1,543,300</b>	<b>£2,570,500</b>

### 3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☒ Community safety
- ☒ Adult health, care and housing
- ☐ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☐ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☐ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

### 3.4 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Community Safety – Death and Injury on Midlothian Roads, Protecting Midlothian's Children.

Sustainable Growth – Support the local economy, Promote and develop active and sustainable travel and transport.

### 3.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The ability of people and goods to move about is vital to ensure that normal business continues within Midlothian during adverse weather periods. Any restriction on the Winter Service would have an impact on that ability to continue to operate as normal as possible.



### **3.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach**

The provision of an acknowledged good Winter Service ensures that the people and goods are able to move around as much as reasonably practicable.

### **3.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders**

Consultation has been undertaken with officers from all divisions to determine the relative priorities and response as detailed in the Service Level Agreement.

NHS Lothian were consulted regarding provision of a co-ordinated level of service.

Subsequent to an initial trial in 2012/13, NHS Lothian have awarded Road Services a contract to continue this service to all NHS facilities within Midlothian on a shared services basis.

### **3.8 Ensuring Equalities**

The Service Level Agreement and consultation in previous winters has identified those persons at greatest risk within Midlothian's communities along with an appropriate response.

### **3.9 Supporting Sustainable Development**

There is a potential issue relating to the financial sustainability of delivering the current Winter Service Policy Operational Plan and Service Level Agreement.

### **3.10 IT Issues**

There are no IT implications associated with the proposals outlined in this report.

## **4 Summary**

The recent winters have provided a variety of challenges for the Council. This resulted in many issues and services requests that have been considered and incorporated into the Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan and Service Level Agreement.

## **5 Recommendations**

Council is requested to adopt and publish the Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan for the 2016/17 winter season.

**31 August 2016**

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**Background Papers:**

Council report Tuesday 4 November 2014, Severe Weather – 2014/15 Pre-Winter Update

Appendices

Appendix A   Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan 2016- 2017

Appendix B   Winter Service Level Agreement 2016 – 2017





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**Appendix A**

# **Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan**

## **2016 – 2017**

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**Introduction**



The purpose of this Winter Service Policy and Plan (This Plan) is to demonstrate that Midlothian Council has taken such steps as it considers reasonable to prevent snow and ice endangering the safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles over public roads, to fulfil its' Statutory responsibilities as defined in Section 34 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.

Furthermore this plan takes into consideration the recommendations set out in the Code of Practice (July 2005), 'Well Maintained Highways' (Code of Practice), Appendix H. Given that the Code of Practice is only making recommendations, it should be noted that Midlothian Council may deviate in certain ways to meet local conditions. It should be noted that a new code of practice is due to be published during 2016 with relevant guidance and no longer making recommendations. Midlothian Council will take cognisance of this guidance and adapt or amend their Winter Policy accordingly.

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- 2. Purpose, Objectives and Statutory Basis**
- 3. Winter Service Policy**
- 4. Winter Service Operational Plan**
- 5. Network Hierarchy and Route Planning**
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- 7. Resources and Operational Issues**
- 8. Winter Service Training and Development**
- 9. Plant, Vehicles, Materials and Resilience**
- 10. Information and Publicity**
- 11. Post Snow Inspection and Maintenance**
- 12. Other Weather Emergencies – Climate Change / Contingency**

### **Winter Service and Weather Emergencies**



Winter service is not deemed an emergency service as it deals with regular, frequent and reasonably predictable occurrences of low temperatures, ice and snow.

Whilst the effects of climate change are likely to result in an increased frequency and intensity of severe weather events, these have been taken into account in winter service planning.

This Plan is likely to have relevance in emergency planning for dealing with extreme weather conditions, as such this plan should be read in conjunction with Midlothian Council's Severe Weather Plan.

The resources available during the winter period can also be utilised during a severe weather event such as floods and storms.

### **Purpose, Objectives and Statutory Basis**

Section 34 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 states 'a road authority shall take such steps as it considers reasonable to prevent snow and ice endangering the safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles over public roads'.

The Purpose of this Plan is to discharge those duties however it should be noted that the Code of Practice states;

'Given the scale of financial and other resources involved in delivering the winter service it is not reasonable either to:

- Provide the same service on all parts of the network

- Ensure running surfaces are kept free of ice and snow at all times, even on treated parts of the network

This Plan can contribute significantly to the core objectives set out in the code. The Plan also contributes to the delivery of some outcomes for the Authority, to comply with the requirements of the Roads Scotland Act and comply with the recommendations as laid out in the Code of Practice

Appendix H, H1.5 states, 'It is suggested that authorities and other winter service providers review their policies and practices against content in this document with a view to identifying and explaining any significant variance and where appropriate, develop time tabled implementation plans for the adoption of detailed national best practice and guidance.

To that end the winter policy will be subjected to annual review to take account of the code of practice, current available financial resources and to ensure a consistent approach with other partner authorities in the ELBF shadow joint committee.



### Winter Service Policy

Midlothian Council recognises its duties under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 and the recommendations made in the Code of Practice.

The purpose of this policy seeks to discharge those duties and provide transparent and consistent guidance for staff and stakeholders during winter or any other severe weather period within the Midlothian Council Area.

Midlothian Council has undertaken consultation with stakeholders to take account of their views.

Furthermore Midlothian Council has taken steps in the winter service operational plan to ensure the corporate objectives of the authority are supported by this Policy.

#### Policy Service Standards

1. Keep agreed priority routes and main bus routes free from snow and ice as far as reasonably practicable.
2. Clear agreed road and footway 'Access Routes' to all schools and education establishments within Midlothian during periods of snow.
3. Support facilities management staff within school grounds during periods of prolonged snow conditions, as required and as resources are available.
4. Support social / care centres in clearing pedestrian access routes in and around facilities.
5. Maintain waste collection services as far as possible, set up local collection points when and if conditions allow.
6. Treat NHS facilities within Midlothian as part of the priority route hierarchy and provide hand crews to clear footways and pedestrian access areas.\*\*
7. Support local community groups by providing bulk bags of salt / grit at pre agreed locations during periods of prolonged snow conditions.

\*\* This service is carried out on a collaborative working agreement in place for all NHS Lothian facilities within the Midlothian Area, however, this does not include the Bonnyrigg Community Hospital where only assistance with snow clearing is required.



### Winter Service Operational Plan

This Winter Service Operational Plan has been developed to take account of the requirements of Appendix H of the Code of Practice to provide a dynamic and interactive plan that can meet changing circumstances.

Midlothian Council has an agreed and defined route priority hierarchy to ensure that maximum use is made of the available resources as follows:

#### Carriageway Priorities

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| 1 Priority Routes:  | Important principal roads and bus routes – to hospitals, ambulance depots, fire stations and local danger spots (e.g. very steep hill.) |
| 2 Secondary Routes: | Cross routes, connecting routes and accesses into industrial areas.   |
| 3 Tertiary Routes:  | Residential areas, other unclassified roads.  |

#### Footway Priorities

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| 1 Priority Routes:  | Agreed 'access routes' to schools, health clinics / medical centres, and town centres. |
| 2 Secondary Routes: | Footways on hills and connecting footways.   |
| 3 Tertiary Routes:  | Flat lying and residential areas   |

These routes will be treated in accordance with the treatment matrix.

Midlothian Council's defined treatment route plans for carriageways and footways for pre-treatment and snow conditions are based upon the general maintenance hierarchy but adapted to take account of the factors identified in the Code of Practice and local conditions and priorities.

The Code of Practice recognises that during periods of severe weather it is reasonable that Midlothian Council may only treat a minimum network (priority routes only) to allow passage on these routes. Secondary and tertiary routes may not be treated until all Priority routes are clear.

Midlothian Council carriageway and footway treatment routes can be found on Midlothian Council's website





### Network Hierarchy and Route Planning

Midlothian Council has allocated a network hierarchy rating to all roads within the area based on the Code of Practice. This hierarchy rating has been utilised along with the available resources to determine the route planning for treatment during winter to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable Midlothian Council discharges its duties under the Road (Scotland) Act 1984.

### Decisions and Management Information

Midlothian Council takes full advantage of decision support systems and services from the 'Met office' and 'Vaisala' to enable timely, efficient and accurate decision making.

The decision making process and recording Management Information of Winter Service operations is carried out in accordance with the Winter Service Manual and Procedures document.

Midlothian Council continually monitors performance during service delivery and responds to changing conditions or network incidents by analysing the treatment reports and feedback from stakeholders to ascertain where any improvements can be made as part of the annual review process of this document.

### Resources and Operational Issues

Midlothian Council has available resources from the in house Roads Operations service based at Fushiebridge depot. Roads Operations manage and provide the winter / weather service throughout the year.

Roads Operations have agreements with Land and Countryside Services, Building Maintenance Services, Facilities Management and Waste Services to utilise available additional resources during periods of snowfall and other severe weather events.

In addition to the above, through a framework contract, Roads Operations have a number of companies and equipment at their disposal during the winter to assist with winter and other duties on an as required basis.

A full list of the available resources is held by the Roads Operations and Asset Manager. This also shows where all resources are deployed and to what end.



The Roads Operations and Asset Manager has undertaken consultation with colleagues in Education, Social Services, Travel Team, Leisure Services, Customer Services and local community groups to establish agreed service levels to deal with the many conflicting priorities of each service, matched to the available resources.

This co-ordination and collaboration Service Level agreement is held by the Roads Operations and Asset Manager.

### Winter Service Training and Development

Midlothian Council ensures that all HGV personnel involved in the winter service plan, are trained and experienced to demonstrate competence in delivery of their duties. Other winter service staff will have or are being trained by the Roads Operations Supervisor based at Fushiebridge depot.

In general all Roads Operations staff are trained to SVQ level 2 as a minimum.

An annual evaluation and review of training requirements is undertaken by the Roads Operations Supervisor to ensure all staff have the appropriate vocational and health and safety training / qualifications. Any identified training will be completed prior to the start of the winter season. Although some evidence based training and assessment can only take place during winter operations. A record of all training is held by the Roads Operations Supervisor at Fushiebridge Depot.

Midlothian Council carries out periodic exercises to test plans for responding to severe weather events, these exercises are usually carried out in early October, to ensure all equipment is operational and all staff are aware of their duties.

### Plant, Vehicles, Materials and Resilience

#### Plant

- 9 number Mini tractors c/w snow scraper and gritter – Fushiebridge
- number JCB 3CX shovels and 2 number JCB 2CX shovels – Fushiebridge
- 2 number Renault tractors c/w scraper and gritter – Stobhill
- Other plant will be made available from framework contract partners.

#### Vehicles

- number, 17t HGV gritters c/w snow scraper
- number, 26t HGV gritters c/w snow scraper and 2 Hi Capacity 'V' ploughs
- number, 3.5t gritter
- number, 6t pick-up trucks, 2 with a gritter
- 2 number, 4x4 pick-up trucks with gritters and snow scrapers



All of the above are based at Fushiebridge Depot

- number 3.5t pick-up truck with gritter based at Stobhill depot

All other pick-up's and vans based at Stobhill depot will be utilised along with the available framework contract partners vehicles listed.

### Materials

Midlothian Council obtains salt supplies for de-icing through the Scotland Excel (SE) contract, using Cleveland Potash as the main supplier, with other suppliers available through the SE framework. Regular contact is maintained between the supplier and the Council to ensure that the supply is treated as a service rather than a simple commodity purchase.

In periods of extreme or prolonged conditions it may be necessary to obtain supplies from out-with the existing contracts and Midlothian Council will use this option as required and in collaboration with the Edinburgh, Lothian's and Borders Forum (ELBF) collaborative working arrangements.

Stocks of road salt and grit are controlled by the Roads Operations and Asset Manager. A minimum stock of 3000t of 6mm low moisture salt is held prior to 1<sup>st</sup> November at Fushiebridge in the Salt dome, further deliveries will be utilised as required throughout the winter period. This stockholding will be used for the road and footway network as well as the NHS facilities.

This stock of salt is subject to routine reporting on use and current levels to the Scottish Government and may be sequestered to provide mutual aid to other authorities. As such it is prudent to instigate conservation measures during periods of prolonged snowfall or low temperatures (i.e. mixing salt with grit, using grit only on footways and grit bins). This will be carried out in accordance with Appendix H of the Code of Practice.

This includes a stock of salt to be used in School grounds. This will also be managed by the Roads Operations and Asset Manager to monitor use.

A stock of 0/4mm grit will be available through the framework contract covering aggregates and this material is available from a number of local suppliers..

A supply of salt / grit mix from the main stock holding, for use by footway clearing crews is held at the following locations.

- Tillicoultry Quarries, Newtongrange Plant – Framework Contract Partner
- Crummock's Yard, Butlerfield Industrial Estate - Framework Contract Partner



- Weesweep's Yard, Butlerfield Industrial Estate - Framework Contract Partner
- Stobhill depot, Newtongrange

These stocks ensure that footway clearing crews are able to go direct to their designated routes from their place of work, thus speeding up operational response times.

In addition to salt and grit, there is a stock of 4000 litres of a de-icing solution held. This solution is suitable for treatment down to minus 18 degrees Celsius and will be utilised using a vehicle mounted spray bar to treat known problem areas at these very low temperatures.

The weighbridge installed at Fushiebridge depot ensures the accurate recording of salt stock and usage, to allow accurate reporting to the Scottish Government.

### **Resilience**

Resilience of salt stock is monitored by Transport Scotland based on Appendix H of the Code of Practice. The level of resilience in the past has been used to determine delivery priorities of top up salt supplies to Local Authorities and Trunk Road Operators.

Midlothian Council did not require any additional supplies during 2010 /11, 2011/12 or 2012 /13 and will again reduce this risk in 2016 – 2017 by having a pre season stock holding of at least 3000t and the instigation of salt conservation measures. These measures proved very effective in maintaining a 24 hour service at all times during the severe weather of 2010 -2011 and 2012 - 2013.

### **Information and Publicity**

Prior to the start of winter Midlothian Council will publish information regarding the winter service provision. A self help leaflet will also be available in public buildings to assist members of the public.

The Communications and Marketing Unit will advise the Emergency Management Team on both public and general stakeholder response to any incident and on the public messages to be broadcast across the communications channels at the Council's disposal. This role includes liaising closely with public communications leads at the Scottish Government and other category one responders as part of the public communications subgroup of the Strategic Co-ordinating Group.



If the incident is sufficiently serious and far-reaching, members of the Communications and Marketing Unit will be seconded to the lead agency, normally the Police, for an unspecified time as part of the mutual aid arrangements.

The communications channels include: the Council's Contact Centre, media relations, stakeholder relations in terms of voluntary organisations, Mid TV, [www.midlothian.gov.uk](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk), Facebook and Twitter.

The Communications and Marketing Unit will ensure regular and appropriate communications at least daily and more frequently depending on the incident and the Council's continuing response. Staff are available to be called out 24 -7.

In addition to the above the Service Level Agreement states that the Midlothian Council Contact Centre may be required to operate on a 24 hour basis during any severe weather period. This will be agreed between the Head of Commercial Operations and the Head of Customer and Housing Services.

### **Post Snow Inspection and Maintenance**

Once the snow has been removed from the road and footway network, the Roads Inspectors will inspect the network to ascertain defects in need of repair.

These inspections will be carried out generally in accordance with the Code of Practice and the Council's Inspection and Recording Procedures.

It should be noted that due to the potential volume of defects caused by the conditions, it may not be possible to adhere to the timescales for inspection and subsequent repairs of Category 1(CAT1) defects as laid out in the Code of Practice.

Midlothian Council will however, allocate additional resources at their disposal to the repair of identified defects to mitigate as far as is reasonably practicable any delays in repairing CAT 1 defects.

Midlothian Council will also check and replenish all public grit bins as soon as resources allow during and following the completion of snow clearance operations.

Furthermore all vehicles and plant will be cleaned, lubricated, checked / inspected and repaired as required following the completion of snow clearing operations

A debriefing session will be held at an appropriate time and place, involving representatives from all personnel and stakeholders to review the winter service operational plan.



### Other Weather Emergencies – Climate Change

Midlothian Council recognises that Climate change and in particular the previous periods of prolonged cold weather in 2009/10 and again in 2010/11 have an impact on the ability to deliver services. It should be noted that December 2015 was the wettest December on record.

As such this operational plan can be implemented at any time of year to deliver a service during any period of severe weather, including floods and storms.

Additional supplementary resources are available to this end such as;

- 1 no Gully Motor
- no pumps, various sizes
- 1 no towing jetter
- Various Emergency response equipment, generators, lighting and the like.

This can be augmented with additional pumps and tankers from external parties on the framework contract, should conditions dictate.

### Contingency Planning

Contingency planning for severe weather or any other major event is covered by the Emergency Plan and / or the Severe Weather plan, which should be read in conjunction with this plan.

Although as previously stated the resources and response available for winter can be readily utilised for other severe weather events.

**Mark Rankine**

**Roads Operations and Asset Manager**

**August 2016**



# Winter Service Level Agreement

Roads Operations and Asset Manager  
Midlothian Council  
2016 -2017

Road Services based at Fushiebridge depot will manage and carry out all gritting / snow clearing requirements to discharge Midlothian Council's duties under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, as laid out in the Winter Service Policy and Operational plan.

## **Routine Gritting**

**Roads:** All priority and secondary routes will be treated as per the decision and treatment matrix to suit forecast conditions. 8 HGV gritters are allocated to these routes to carry out treatment as required by the conditions. Tertiary and residential roads will only be treated during prolonged cold conditions.

**Car Parks:** Most public car parks are gritted between 5am and 7am using 2 number mini gritters mounted on pick-up trucks.

**Footways:** Mini tractors with rear mounted gritters are allocated to Penicuik, Loanhead, Dalkieth, Bonnyrigg, Mayfield, and Gorebridge to treat town centre areas of footways and some routes to schools. These treatments will be carried out generally from 5am. Land and Countryside Services staff may assist.

**PPP2 Schools:** Land Services provide a routine gritting service to these properties as part of the facilities management contract. They are treated using mini gritters mounted on pick-up trucks, normally from 5am. Land Services have access to salt through the central stockholding. Road Services will deliver this to Stobhill in 10t loads as requested by the Land and Countryside Manager.

Road Services have provided Land and Countryside Services staff with snow shovels and long handled steel shovels to allow them to carry out their duties.

**Dalkeith Campus:** As per PPP2 schools

**Snow Sports Centre:** The centre is responsible for routine gritting within the facility.

**Grit Bins:** All public grit bins will be filled by a dedicated grit bin crew with a salt / grit mix prior to the end of October and will be replenished as required. It should be noted that there will be 1 crew allocated to grit bins during the winter period to top up grit bins as requested by the public.

**NHS Facilities:** All access roads, car parks and pedestrian access paths will be gritted prior to 8am as per the road priority routes. This excludes the Community Hospital in Bonnyrigg which is gritted by their in house facilities management company.



## **Snow Conditions (up to 10cm)**

**Roads:** All priority routes will be cleared of snow and treated with salt/grit before any treatment takes place on secondary or tertiary routes. This service using HGV snow plough / gritters will be in operation 24 hours a day until conditions are sufficiently clear along with improving weather conditions. The HGV's based at Fushiebridge may be supplemented by framework contractor vehicles as required by the Roads Operations and Asset Manager.

**Car Parks:** The mini gritters will treat car parks after they have been ploughed by either a shovel or framework contractor snow plough, as required.

**Footways:** Mini tractors will be out from 5am on the first day of snow, clearing town centre footways and routes to schools in Penicuik, Dalkeith, Bonnyrigg, Mayfield, Gorebridge and Loanhead. These tractors will remain working on footways throughout the days as conditions dictate. Land and Countryside Services staff may assist.

In addition there will be 48 no, 3 man hand clearing crews removing snow and gritting footways throughout Midlothian. These crews will come from Land and Countryside Services staff and the framework contract partners.

These crews will start outside School entrances and work through defined agreed priority, secondary and then tertiary routes.

**PPP2 Schools:** As per gritting, with the addition of 2 no 90hp tractors with scraper and gritter attachments to clear snow from access roads and car park areas.

**Dalkeith Campus:** As per PPP2 schools.

**Schools:** Facilities Management (FM) staff will clear snow and grit agreed routes within the school boundary.

Road Services have provided grit bins to all school properties and will maintain these bins throughout the winter using a salt stockpile obtained for Education.

**Grit Bins:** As per routine gritting.

**Snow Sports Centre:** Road Services will assist with an HGV gritter / plough as part of the priority routeing when available. One of the 90hp tractors from Land and Countryside Services will also attend to clearing snow from the centre.

**Stobhill Depot:** Waste Services staff will use the large shovel based at Stobhill depot to clear snow from the roads and parking areas around the facility. Land and Countryside Services will grit / salt the depot with their mini gritter as required.



**NHS Facilities:** As per routine gritting but includes snow clearing at the Bonnyrigg Community Hospital

### **Severe Weather / Snow (greater than 10cm lying)**

**Roads:** As per snow conditions, although there will be additional resources brought in to assist the Roads Service HGV's on priority routes using framework partners.

Focus will remain on priority routes only until these routes are clear and weather conditions improve. Thereafter secondary routes will be treated until clear and only then will tertiary routes receive treatment.

Depending upon the prevailing road conditions - shovels and haulage vehicles from framework partners may be brought in to remove snow to ease the passage of vehicles. This snow will be taken to designated stockpile sites.

**Car Parks:** The mini gritters will treat these car parks after they have been ploughed, as required.

Mechanical shovels from framework partners will be used to clear car parks.

**Footways:** As per snow conditions, with the addition of a mini excavator to assist each 3 man crew.

**Grit Bins:** As per snow conditions.

**Community Groups:** In addition to the public grit bins there is list of agreed locations with local community group where a bulk bag of grit will be placed for their use in the local area. Building Maintenance Services hi-ab will assist in the delivery of these bulk bags.

**PPP2 Schools:** As snow conditions.

**Dalkeith Campus:** As per snow conditions.

**Schools:** As per snow conditions however, HGV snow ploughs or mechanical shovels will clear the access into the school grounds and a car parking area. Playgrounds will NOT be cleared as a priority. Where possible, snow will be removed to stockpile locations, as resources become available.



**Snow Sports Centre:** Land and Countryside Services will provide a 90hp tractor with scraper and gritter attachments to assist in keeping the centre open.

**Leisure Centres:** All Leisure centre grit bins will be filled by Road Services prior to the end of October. Any requests for re-filling must be made at least 24 hours before this becomes necessary.

Leisure centre staff will be responsible for keeping access points clear and gritted.

Road Services have provided snow shovels, long handled steel shovels and wheel barrows to each leisure centre to assist them in their duties

### **Severe Weather / Snow (greater than 10cm lying) cont'd**

A Land and Countryside Services Tractor with scraper and gritter attachments will assist in clearing Loanhead and Penicuik Leisure centres after clearing the snow sports centre.

**NHS Facilities:** As per snow conditions, if conditions dictate then Building Maintenance Services (BMS) staff will assist in clearing and gritting access points and footways within medical facilities. – As per the list of facilities issued to BMS

Road Services have provided BMS with snow shovels and long handled steel shovels to assist in their duties

**Social / Care Facilities:** BMS crews will clear around all social / care facilities as per list provided to Building Services Manager, crews are to liaise with facility manager to ensure all access points and fire escapes are clear.

Aaron House will be assisted with snow clearance when the HGV plough is available.

**Public Buildings:** BMS crews will clear around all Public buildings as per supplied list, after completion of clearing around social / care facilities

When and if waste collection services are suspended, Waste Service staff will assist BMS to carry out snow clearing and gritting around Public Buildings as listed – (list provided to the Waste Services Manager).

Road Services have provided snow shovels and long handled steel shovels to Waste Services staff to assist in their duties.



The Waste Services Manager will be responsible for the provision of suitable vehicles to provide 3 man crews to clear the snow. Upon completion of clearing listed facilities the Waste Services manager will liaise with the Roads Operations and Asset Manager to obtain additional workload.

**Waste Services:** Should waste collections be suspended and central location collection points instigated, Roads Services will provide a mechanical shovel or plough to clear the designated areas to assist in this service. Liaison will be between the Waste Services Manager and the Roads Operations and Asset Manager.

**Stobhill Depot:** Waste services staff will use the large shovel based at Stobhill to clear snow from the roads and parking areas around the facility. Land Services will grit / salt the depot with their mini gritter as required.

**Public / School Transport:** The majority of bus routes are on main priority treatments routes and will be cleared as a priority.

Identified locations where there are issues with pinch points / abandoned vehicles restricting bus routes, will see parking restrictions invoked as required. The Police will assist Travel Team staff in removing vehicles causing an obstruction. Roads Services will place out 'no waiting' cones at these identified locations prior to any snowfall, this decision when to implement this arrangement will be forecast based.

Road Services will provide the Travel Team with a dedicated shovel / plough to assist in clearing any identified problem areas to improve the movement of public transport.

The Travel Team Manager will appoint a member of his staff to co-ordinate communication with the bus operators and the Roads Service teams to ensure problems are identified early and current information is available to the bus operators.

The School transport co-ordinator will identify to the Roads Duty Officer any problems with school transport and where available, resources will be allocated to assist.

### **Communications:**

All winter communications between services should be through the Roads Operations and Asset Manager or the email [winterroadsdutyofficer@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:winterroadsdutyofficer@midlothian.gov.uk)



During periods of severe weather the Road Services depot telephone 0131 270 5730 will be diverted to the Contact Centre (CC) by agreement with the Head of Customer and Housing Services. The Roads Operations and Asset Manager will update the CC on current operations so that this message can be relayed to the public.

The Roads Operations and Asset Manager will update via email the 'Weather group' when forecasts of severe weather are issued. This group consists of the Emergency Management Team (EMT), the contact centre, Emergency Planning staff and operational managers.

The contact centre will be issued with a 2 way radio to allow direct contact with the night shift operative as required.

### **SALT Stocks:**

The Roads Operations and Asset Manager will procure sufficient salt supplies for Road Services to discharge their duties under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.

These stocks will ONLY be used for the road and footway network with reports on usage being submitted to the Scottish Government.

ALL other services will be responsible for ordering and storing their own supplies of salt / grit.

In this regard, if services provide their annual requirements, to the Roads Operations and Asset Manager by April of each year, supplies will be ordered in on their behalf. You will need to provide a total amount of salt required, a storage location and a cost code for recharge. This will be recharged at the current contract rate in force. Any transport costs will be similarly charged at the current contract rate.

If there are specific supply arrangements to be made these must be advised to the Roads Operations and Asset Manager by April each year.

Any requests for salt made after April of each year may NOT be dealt with due to supplier requirements and it will be up to each service to procure their own supplies.

**ICICLES:** BMS will inspect and monitor public buildings and council housing during severe weather and will make arrangements for dealing with any ICICLES that may cause a danger to the public.