

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL**Enterprise and Infrastructure Committee****28 August 2013****POLICY AND LEVEL OF SERVICE FOR WINTER SERVICE 2013 / 2014****Report by the Executive Director (Environment)****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report recommends the level of service to be provided by the Council for the gritting and snow clearing of roads and footways in Perth and Kinross during the winter of 2013 / 2014 using the plant and labour resources of Tayside Contracts and other Council Services.

1. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 Within Perth and Kinross there are a variety of arrangements for the Winter Service on Public Roads. Almost 900km of the Council's 2,500km road network is designated as having a high priority for winter service. These priority routes receive precautionary treatment that aims to keep them generally ice-free, although this can never be guaranteed. This report is intended to reflect policy decisions and the content of other winter related reports.
- 1.2 The Council also provides a high level of service on priority footways in busy urban areas. Lower levels of treatment are provided on the remainder of the carriageway and footway network, as and when required during normal working hours.
- 1.3 Some very low priority carriageways and footways are normally not treated unless hard packed snow or ice threatens to prevent access for essential services.
- 1.4 In periods of prolonged severe weather, resources are targeted towards keeping a strategic network open. As a result, it can be a considerable time, in some cases several days, before low priority routes are reached. The availability of operatives also impacts on the level of cover that can be provided for footway treatment.
- 1.5 The Scottish Government is responsible for the winter service on the 250 km of trunk road network within Perth and Kinross covering the M90, A90, A9 and A85. This service is provided by the Operating Company - BEAR (Scotland) Ltd.

- 1.6 Experience of the recent winters has shown that the level of service is generally satisfactory, although severe snow and ice events do fully stretch the available resources.
- 1.7 Four out of the last five winters have seen severe winter weather affect the Perth and Kinross Council roads and footway network. Although the 2012 / 2013 winter did not have severe weather events it was a very long winter season as detailed in the statistics in paragraph 1.10. It is therefore appropriate to examine the arrangements for dealing with severe winter weather in the context of the likelihood of there being another severe winter and other demands on the Council budget
- 1.8 At the end of each winter season, a review of operations is carried out with stakeholder consultation. Changing weather patterns, resources and personnel constraints mean that the winter service is an evolving service. These reviews seek to provide an acceptable level of service whilst containing costs, improving the work/life balance for personnel and complying with EU working time directives.
- 1.9 The winter of 2012/13 was a long one and although temperatures had not been significantly low, road surface temperatures were recorded as being below zero for prolonged periods of time. The number of days that snow was recorded as lying on at least 50% of the roads and footway network was 51.

1.10 Winter statistics for the previous six winters

Winter	2012 / 2013	2011 / 2012	2010 / 2011	2009 / 2010	2008 / 2009	2007 / 2008
Number of treatments						
Pre grits (cat 1) Number of times all of the PKC carriageway priority route network was pregritted	50	41	53	60	55	33
Part pre grits Number of times that only part of the PKC carriageway priority route network Was pregritted in addition to the above figures	29	17	15	29	32	19
De-ice or snow clearing on Cat 1	103	85	92	99	77	53
De-ice or snow clearing on Cat 2 roads	62	43	63	59	52	29
De-ice or snow clearing on Cat 3 roads	20	13	42	29	17	11
De-ice or snow clearing on footways North and South combined	68	42	53	47	38	17
Number of snow days Snow clearing operations carried out on at least 50% of the PKC network of roads	51	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
All crews stood down (number of times)	22	32	33	31	42	39
Some crews stood down (number of times) Crews stood down in North and South on same counted as one event.	40	58	41	56	54	36
Crews called out from home Number of times. North and South combined Both areas called on same day counts as one.	15	21	24	7	5	14

Winter	2012 / 2013	2011 / 2012	2010 / 2011	2009 / 2010	2008 / 2009	2007 / 2008
<u>Alerts called</u>						
Blue	16	13	4	7	7	0
Orange	16	12	16	10	9	32
Red	0	0	24	30	0	0
<u>Salt usage (Tonnes)</u>						
Carriageway	23,716	16,005	25,195	24,005	23,680	17,234
Footway	inc	inc	inc	inc	inc	inc
Grit sand	6368	604	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<u>Failure to meet level of service</u>						
Vehicle breakdown	7	2	0	5	1	1
Other	6	4	0	5	0	0

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 All roads and footways in Perth and Kinross are categorised according to their relative importance. The resources available are allocated to ensure that the safety of the public is maximised and that accessibility is maintained on the most heavily used roads and footways. However severe snow events may prevent access at times.
- 2.2 The policy in place is designed to deal with a typical winter and resources will always be tested in severe events. During such times the most important routes within the Category 1 network now designated Category 1a will be prioritised as listed in Appendix 3.
- 2.3 For winter 2012 / 2013, a nightshift gritting and snow clearing service operated from the Ruthvenfield depot and provided cover in the Perth area during the main standby period. Whilst this was a cost neutral option any additional cost of operating this nightshift was offset by savings made as a result of reductions in the amount of early morning crews reporting and early morning de-ice treatments. This nightshift enhanced the service available and allowed officers the flexibility to react to specific issues as requested by the Police / public. Unplanned callout between the hours of 21:00 and 05:00 when calling out drivers from home would have a knock on effect to the morning service levels.
- 2.4 The normal hours of operation were from Sunday to Friday. However, in severe snow conditions it did operate seven nights per week. It continues to assist in limiting driver hour's commitments and work / life balance issues.
- 2.5 For winter 2013 / 2014, it is proposed that two nightshift gritting and snow clearing routes will operate providing cover in the Perth and Blairgowrie areas during the main standby period. By utilising these two night shift routes this will allow a reduction in the number of early morning reporting crews and will also allow the start time of other early morning category one routes to be deferred by up to an hour. The front line gritting fleet can be reduced by one vehicle as a result of running two night shift gritting and snow clearing routes and this will give a cost saving of around £20,000. More details on the routes

are contained in paragraph 2.3 in the conclusions and recommendations section of the report.

- 2.6 The use of quad bikes was trialled on footway routes in the Luncarty / Almondbank and Blackford / Dunning area during the winter of 2012 / 2013. The quad bikes were quicker in covering these village footway priority routes than the pavement tractors and provided a good gritting and snow clearing service. The use of quad bikes to treat footways has been well received by the various stakeholders. It is recommended that the Council will continue to use quad bikes on these village footway routes for the winter of 2013 / 2014, and consider developing this facility in future years.
- 2.7 The level of service complies with the recommendations laid down in “Well Maintained Highways” the UK Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management, and is summarised in Appendices 2a and 2b.
- 2.8 Alterations to staff winter working patterns were made in 2012 / 2013 to address work / life balance issues and it is intended to review this further in 2013 / 2014. Standby and early start working commitments could be split between weeks to reduce the weekly commitment and spread the work commitment over more weeks. In addition, it is proposed that the Duty Officer role will be removed during weekday evenings as any overnight calls and winter actions can be monitored by the duty supervisor who currently covers any overnight emergency call outs.
- 2.9 In line with normal practice cover will be provided between 14 October 2013 and 14 April 2014. Appendix 1 details the cover available over this period. The control room facility with officers working from home outwith normal hours will operate over this full period.
- 2.10 Appendix 2 details the times of the day during which the agreed level of service will be provided if actual or predicted weather conditions dictate that treatment is required. However, in periods of prolonged severe weather, this level of service is often not achievable given the need to ensure that the pool of operatives are not overstretched and are given (statutory) rest breaks. This is particularly evident during weekends or public holidays when a reduced number of relief drivers are available.
- 2.11 It is inevitable that choices have to be made about where finite resources should be directed first. Decisions are based upon the targeting of resources at areas regarded as having the highest priority, with the lower priorities following in turn. The higher priority routes are defined by their importance in strategic and local terms.

Carriageway response times

- 2.12 In severe weather conditions the higher priority routes may have to be treated several times before resources can be diverted to lower priority routes. There is little point in clearing less important routes if the more important roads to which they give access have not been cleared.

- 2.13 Response Time: 1 Hour - the maximum time between the decision to begin treatment and vehicles leaving the depot. (For un-planned activities this includes calling operatives from home).
- 2.14 Cat 1 Treatment Time: 2.5 Hours – this is the maximum de-ice treatment time for a priority route in the main cover period (see Appendix 2a).
- 2.15 Target Completion Time – during the main cover period the target completion time for routine morning de-icing of Category 1 carriageways is 07:30 (09:00 on Sundays and nationally recognised public holidays). The treatment time in severe weather conditions will be longer.
- 2.16 As soon as snow falls it could take at least twice as long to complete treatment, as vehicles need to travel more slowly and ploughing must be done in both directions. No treatment will routinely extend beyond 21:00 (see Appendix 2a).

Footway response times

- 2.17 Footways receive treatment according to their usage and importance in the public road network (see Appendix 2a). Based on this assessment: -
- Category 1 priority footways will be treated on seven days per week, with extended hours on weekdays. However no footway treatment will be carried out on Christmas Day and New Year's Day as in general shops are not open on those days.
 - Category 2 routes will be treated on five days per week (Monday to Friday).
 - Category 3 routes comprise footways which are not normally treated, except in prolonged ice or snow conditions and only when resources become available. Each footway treatment route will be arranged so that the most important parts are treated first, whilst taking account of operational efficiency.
- 2.18 In most areas, the footway on one side of the road only may be treated. This releases resources to provide earlier treatment in other areas.
- 2.19 Press articles and a feature in the Council newspaper will publicise the Council's Winter Service policy. The information will also be posted on the Winter Service pages on the Council's web-site.
- 2.20 The Council continues to develop the use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter as well as the Council web site. This is to provide real time information on the local roads and footways network to the public for winter 2013 / 2014.
- 2.21 Given that in severe weather conditions all of the Council's resources may be stretched, the publicity will continue to recommend that members of the

community should look out for vulnerable community members to see if they can provide any assistance to them.

- 2.22 Stakeholder feedback from the last three winters has highlighted the positive community spirit already in place and community resilience throughout the Perth & Kinross area. Communities have intimated a desire to help themselves and officers have consulted with various stakeholders, including Community Councils and other interested community groups. It is hoped to continue to build on support from interested/able local people willing to treat sections of footway that the Council cannot ordinarily treat through initiatives such as:
- the Snow Warden scheme, where local individuals or Community Councils are provided with a push along barrow to grit sections of footway
 - Housing Associations in the Perth area have provided resources for treating footways during snow conditions
 - The Criminal Justice Service has assisted with labour resources during snow conditions and it is hoped to develop this further over the coming winter.
 - Contact was made with all local golf courses prior to the start of winter 2012 / 2013 to enquire if they were interested in making resources available to work with the Council during snow conditions. The Council will seek to progress this engagement for winter 2013 / 2014.
- 2.23 Salt conservation measures including the use of a salt: grit sand mix was implemented by the Council in December 2012 on rural non priority carriageway routes. It is proposed that this practice be adopted as the norm for winter 2013 / 2014 in order to conserve salt stocks. There is a UK-wide agreement managed in Scotland by the Scottish Government to monitor and report on salt use and stock levels at a national level which the Council fully complies with.
- 2.24 For 2012/13 the salt order was 24,000 tonnes which is similar to the total amount of salt used during the winter of 2009 / 2010. (See the statistics table in paragraph 1.10). For winter 2013 / 2014 it is intended to pre-order and hold stock at the same level.
- 2.25 The Council currently provides in excess of 1100 grit bins. This large number reflects the Council's desire to encourage self-help and in line with the policy not to treat some minor roads routinely.
- 2.26 With the available resources for filling grit bins in severe snow conditions there is a limit on the number of bins that can be serviced. In order to provide a sustainable service, the criteria used to assess the provision of grit bins requires to be applied consistently. Grit bins are generally provided on steep gradients, tight bends, and steps or in some special cases where there is a specific community need. They are normally not provided on routes which are treated routinely. Grit bins will generally be filled with a salt/sand mixture, but when salt conservation measures are required, will be filled with grit sand only.

- 2.27 Grit bins are provided for use on public roads and not on private areas. Private occupiers should purchase salt from DIY stores and builders merchants for use on their own properties.
- 2.28 There are currently voluntary arrangements with around 70 farmers to whom the Council supplies snow ploughs in return for which they undertake to fit them on their own vehicles to clear snow on specified lengths of public road as well as to clear their own private roads. These arrangements cover about 300km of road, which is just under 12% of the overall Council road network in areas where the local roads network presently has little coverage and this initiative will be promoted locally for winter 2013 / 2014.
- 2.29 Some of the farmers participating in the scheme have indicated that they are available to be employed in severe conditions to undertake snow clearing of additional lengths of road. These farmers are called on for Orange Alerts as the earlier these additional resources are utilised the greater the visible benefits are.
- 2.30 Local quad bike owners have also indicated that they are available to be employed in severe conditions to undertake snow clearing of additional lengths of footways. These quad owners would be called on for Orange Alerts as the earlier these additional resources are utilised the greater the visible benefits are.
- 2.31 Operators taking part in the Farmer and Quad Bike Schemes are subject to rigorous health and safety checks and are required to undergo appropriate training and carry their own insurances.
- 2.32 The Executive Director (Environment) is responsible for co-ordinating winter maintenance activities on all roads and footways. These arrangements are considered to have worked well again last year, providing a consistent and effective level of service throughout Perth and Kinross.
- 2.33 The convening of the Incident Management Team during severe snow conditions to determine Council-wide priorities will be actioned as required. This involves all Council Services, as well as Tayside Contracts through the Road Maintenance Partnership.
- 2.34 Two front line carriageway gritters and two footway tractors will be replaced by newer plant for the winter of 2013 – 2014. It is proposed to reduce the spare vehicle numbers which is possible by working two night shift gritting and snow clearing routes by one carriageway gritter for the winter of 2013 – 2014. The number of snow blowers will also be reduced by one in order to reduce costs by £20,000 and £7,500 respectively.
- 2.35 The weather forecast contract for the winter of 2013 – 2014 will be provided by the Met Office who provided the weather forecasting service in collaboration between Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Moray Council, Fife Council, Angus Council, Dundee City Council and Perth and Kinross Council for the winter of 2012 – 2013.

- 2.36 Two additional ice early warning system sites have been installed during the 2012 – 2013 winter at A827 Craggantoul and B846 Kinloch Rannoch along with an additional camera on the A93 Glenshee at the ski centre snow gate – as approved in the 2011/12 Committee Report. As well as providing improved data, the reduced demand on staff will give the opportunity to implement standby arrangements that avoid the need to work the long hours as detailed in paragraph 2.7.
- 2.37 The Committee agreed in September 1997, that in special circumstances such as exceptional snow emergencies, the Executive Director may authorise working arrangements outwith the policy and level of service.
- 2.38 In Winter conditions situations occur which require that restrictions on hours, routes, employment of contractors etc. should be relaxed, in order to deal more effectively with the emergency. This is allowed and controlled by a system of 'Alerts'. In serious situations, either an Orange or Red Alert can be authorised, to allow working arrangements outwith the 'normal' policy. A Blue Alert is called operationally to mitigate a potentially short term hazardous situation.
- 2.39 In severe conditions, the Farmers Assistance Scheme offers an effective snowploughing capability which can be of great benefit if deployed at an early stage. Discretion to deploy farmer's snowploughs is included within the terms of an Orange Alert and Red Alert.

Alert status	Authorised by	Level of winter service	Example
Normal	Duty officer / controller	As current winter policy resources	Normal de-ice and pre grits plus light snow cover
Blue	Duty officer	Increase Tayside Contracts working hours to cope with a short term (less than 24 hours) hazardous situation	Change to action plan due to fluctuations in forecast weather conditions and temperatures. Decision made to treat category 3 carriageways. Requests for assistance from emergency services in a blue light emergency
Orange	Road Maintenance Partnership Manager or Deputy Manager	Increase Tayside Contracts working hours to extend normal level of service for various categories of roads and footways to help mitigate the effects of shorter periods of moderate to heavy snow	Snow lying on roads and footway network deeper than 50mm. Forecast indicating that road surface temperatures will rise above freezing

Alert status	Authorised by	Level of winter service	Example
		and ice (forecast for road surface temperatures to rise above freezing within 48 hours) Farmers to be employed to assist in clearing snow from local network of roads	overnight within 48 hours. Widespread sheet ice formation on roads and footway network.
Red	Depute Director (Environment)	Increase Tayside Contracts working hours to extend normal level of service for all categories of roads and footways in response to severe snow and ice conditions which are forecast to last for more than 48 hours. Assistance from other Council services in carrying out winter maintenance treatment. Farmers to be employed to assist in clearing snow from local network of roads. Outside contractors to be employed to assist in clearing snow and ice from local roads and footways network	Snow and ice building up on local roads and footway network deeper than 100mm. Forecast indicating that road surface temperatures will not rise above freezing overnight for at least 48 hours

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Committee are requested to approve:

- 3.1 That the winter maintenance service for 2013/14 should be delivered as outlined in this report.
- 3.2 That the Executive Director (Environment) is authorised to make arrangements outwith the policy and level of service in exceptional conditions such as snow emergencies.
- 3.3 That the single nightshift gritting and snow clearing services be extended to operate two routes within the Perth and Blairgowrie areas during the main standby period. The two nightshift gritting and snow clearing routes will now cover the network of A class roads and early morning bus routes in the Perth area and the A93, A94 and the A923 in the Blairgowrie / Tullybaccart area as detailed in paragraph 2.4.
- 3.4 That quad bikes fitted with gritting and snow clearing equipment continue to be used to treat footways in the Auchterarder, Braco, Greenloaning, Dunning, Luncarty, Almondbank, Methven and the Perth area in order to ensure that

the level of service stated in the winter policy can be delivered. As discussed in paragraph 2.5 it is proposed that additional quad bike owners, who have indicated that they are available to be employed in severe conditions, be called on for Orange Alerts as the earlier these additional resources are utilised the greater the visible benefits will be.

- 3.5 The Committee is requested to note the 2013/14 Revenue budget of £3.317 million approved by the Council for the delivery of severe weather services including reactive works for flooding; wind damage and other weather related emergencies. This amount includes £133,000 of efficiency savings approved by the Council in setting the 2013/14 severe weather budget as detailed in Section 2 of the annex to this report.

Author(s)

Name	Designation	Contact Details
Andy Brown	Support Engineer - RMP	01738 477241

Approved

Name	Designation	Signature
Barbara Renton	Depute Director (Environment)	<i>Barbara Renton</i>
Date 25 July 2013		

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (On occasion only, a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting the Customer Service Centre
on
01738 475000

1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	Yes
Workforce	Yes
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Strategic Environmental Assessment	Yes
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	Yes
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	Yes
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 The winter maintenance service is provided to ensure that transport links essential to economic and social activity can continue to be used safely throughout most of the winter. However, it is not the intention and is not possible to keep all roads free from ice and snow at all times.
- 1.2 The objective of this policy is to enable the Council to comply with its statutory duty as set out in Section 34 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 which states: "A roads authority shall take such steps as they consider reasonable to prevent snow and ice endangering the safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles over public roads."
- 1.3 The policy allows the Council to meet its statutory obligations by providing the most effective winter maintenance service it can within the constraints of its finite resources. During severe weather, the Council will endeavour to keep delays to a reasonable minimum.

Corporate Plan

- 1.4 The Council's Corporate Plan for Securing the Future 2018 and Beyond lays out five Objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at

a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation. This report impacts on the following:-

- i) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy
- ii) Supporting people to lead an independent, healthy and active life
- iii) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 The actual expenditure on the Winter Service will be dependent upon the severity of the weather throughout the winter and other emergencies throughout the year and will be closely monitored and reported regularly to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee.
- 2.2 The costs of providing a winter service is split into two distinct areas:
- 2.3 Standing Charges – these are the costs involved in having specialised plant, depots, hired plant and standby personnel etc to provide the service and are effectively “up front” costs incurred irrespective of weather conditions.
- Operating costs – cover the cost of fuel, routine repairs, salt, grit sand and the actual cost of paying staff and operatives to provide the service.
- 2.4 The Council has this year set a budget for £3.317m for winter 2013 / 2014 which allows for £133k of efficiency savings. The Council will continue to implement operational and efficiencies savings to contain costs but as winter is unpredictable the cost will vary.

Service Reduction	Potential Saving £000s	How will saving be made?	Impact of saving
1 no gritter removed from fleet - spare nightshift gritter	20	Removal of gritter	No spare plant to accommodate breakdowns in Perth City
Change material used for treatment on Category 2 and 3 routes.	68	Use 50/50 salt sand mix on except in Perth City (sweeping issue) and in grit bins (a reduction of 2500T of salt would be used and replaced with grit sand which is considerably cheaper.)	Potential for slower de icing action of the salt solution. Potential for increased costs in sweeping streets, and gully cleaning.

Service Reduction	Potential Saving £000s	How will saving be made?	Impact of saving
Reduce numbers of staff involved in Out of hours (OOH) management of winter service.	10	Remove duty officer	Increased burden on remaining staff working. Less resilience for dealing with other issues outwith Winter Service provision i.e.RTC's, Flooding, High Winds
Reduce snow blowers	7.4	Reduce by 1 as a result of down grading of Blairgowrie Workshop with blower efforts primarily being used to clear A93 Glenshee	Other snowbound Glens will be cut off for longer periods (e.g. Dunning Glen, Blair Atholl Glens, A822 Sma Glen and many low level roads which suffer from severe drifting of snow). 1 Backup blower will be available for cover for breakdowns and give some service to the glens.
Change salt supplier	18		No impact 1800t at £10/tonne = £18000
Reduce salt handling costs	9.6	1600ton at £6/ton less haulage from Dalcrue	No impact resilience same as last year with more at the actual Blair Atholl and Ruthvenfield depots
	133		

Workforce

- 2.4 The staff and the operatives of the Council Services and Tayside Contracts, who provide the service, have demonstrated over the life of the Council, and in particular the last few winter seasons, that they have the experience and expertise to tackle the worst of winter weather.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 An equality impact assessment has been completed with the following outcomes for functions, policies, procedures or strategies in relation to race, gender and disability and other relevant protected characteristics. This supports the Council's legal requirement to comply with the duty to assess and consult on relevant new and existing policies.
- 3.2 The function, policy, procedure or strategy presented in this report was considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:
- (i) Assessed as relevant and actions taken to reduce or remove the following negative impacts:
 - There are finite resources which limit the amount of treatment which can be carried out.
 - (ii) Assessed as relevant and the following positive outcomes expected following implementation:
 - (iii) The Winter Manual will have a list of priorities for snow clearing. It will also include giving priority to clearing bus stops disabled parking bays and pedestrian crossing points (both designated pedestrian facilities, and at road junctions) to assist pedestrians, to complete the link between cleared footways and carriageways.
 - (iv) Publicity information on the Winter Service distributed to all households via the Council Newspaper, local media and www.pkc.gov.uk will recommend that members of the community should look out for vulnerable community members and see if they can provide any assistance to them. It will also emphasise that the Council needs the assistance and support of as many members of the community as possible in order to restore the roads and footways to a safe condition.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.3 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a legal requirement under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 that applies to all qualifying plans, programmes and strategies, including policies (PPS).
- 3.4 The matters presented in this report were considered under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and pre-screening has identified that the PPS will have no or minimal environmental effects. It is therefore exempt and the SEA Gateway has been notified.
- 3.5 The reasons for concluding that the PPS will have no or minimal environmental effects is that over the years the roadside verges have already

been impacted and have adapted, resulting in vegetation, particularly grass, which is tolerant to the salt. It is not anticipated that there will be any long-term, frequent, permanent or cumulative environmental effects, or impacts on areas of high biodiversity or cultural heritage value, as a result of the policy.

Sustainability

- 3.6 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. In terms of the Climate Change Act, the Council has a general duty to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and the community, environmental and economic impacts of its actions.
- 3.7 Perth and Kinross Council also has the following mitigation measures in place to ensure there is minimal environmental effect as a result of the Winter Service Policy including:
- Salt Management – gritters are calibrated and data from IEWS system and the specialist weather forecast enables treatment to be targeted at the areas that require it.
 - The majority of the salt storage is in buildings or covered in tarpaulins in locations which have been approved by SEPA, thus helping to prevent leaching into the ground.
 - Discharge of surface water from new developments addresses the potential environmental effects to prevent pollution.
 - The Winter Service is reviewed on an annual basis to take account of changing climatic factors and planning for extreme weather events.

Risk

- 3.8 The Council as Roads Authority have a statutory duty as set out in Section 34 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 which states: "A roads authority shall take such steps as they consider reasonable to prevent snow and ice endangering the safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles over public roads."
- 3.9 This policy allows the Council to meet its statutory obligations and minimise exposure to risk by providing the most effective winter maintenance service it can within the constraints of its finite resources. During severe weather, the Council will endeavour to keep delays to a reasonable minimum.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The only major change proposed to the winter maintenance level of service is the extension of nightshift gritting routes network during the full standby period to include one covering the A93, A94 and A923 between Blairgowrie and Perth. However Elected Members have again been given the opportunity to become involved in agreeing the categories with the Roads Maintenance Partnership Manager. The policy also allows unadopted roads with an important community

use to be included within the categorisation and is not restricted to adopted roads.

- 4.2 As local circumstances, and travel patterns change, winter maintenance categories are subject to change and Elected Members have a role in identifying and agreeing such changes. However the resources available to carry out winter maintenance are finite, so if the relative priority of a road or footway is to be raised then that of another road or footway within a particular Ward, must be reduced.
- 4.3 The Council will always receive complaints about the winter maintenance service due to high public expectations, available resources and the vagaries of the weather. A distinction has to be made between complaints related to proven failures to meet the approved level of service and complaints regarding the policy.
- 4.4 Responses were received from individuals or groups throughout the winter and the table below lists the principal issues raised with appropriate responses alongside. Within available resources, it was possible to address some but not all of these issues.

Comment	Response
Concerns raised by elected members that streets in Alyth were not being gritted or cleared of snow quickly enough leading to problems for traffic travelling on these relatively narrow roads.	Smaller demountable gritter to be utilised to treat these streets as part of an early morning start route now that nightshift gritter is treating the A93, A94 and A923 which frees up a driver for this route.
Concerns were raised that roads in the Madderty and Auchterarder area were not being gritted in time for school transport providers to access rural schools with their pupils.	Perth nightshift gritter gave cover to these rural areas after the nightshift routes had been treated and no further action was required on the category one route network in the area.
Requests from Police for assistance on A class roads overnight during a localised sheet ice event.	Perth nightshift gritter was called in early to carry out gritting to the affected areas.

- 4.5 The Chief Executive, the Head of Legal Services, the Head of Democratic Services, The Head of Finance, the Executive Director (Housing & Community Care), the Chief Constable, the Managing Director of Tayside Contracts and Elected Members have been consulted in the preparation of this report.
- 4.6 Consultation was also sought from elected members and Community Council groups on the level of winter maintenance treatment service and their views

have been considered and incorporated in the operational manual where appropriate.

- 4.7 A number of constructive comments have been received from elected members and community councils on the policy and level of service provided. In considering the 2013/14 Policy, suggested alterations have been investigated and implemented where possible utilising the existing plant and labour resource. However, it is not proved possible to incorporate all of the proposals within the existing resource constraints.
- 4.8 A summary of the feedback received from Elected Members and Community Councils along with any resultant actions and decisions is contained in the following table.

5. Communication

- 5.1 Press articles and a feature in the Council newspaper will publicise the Council's Winter Service policy. The information will also be posted on the Winter Service pages on the Council's web-site.
- 5.2 Given that in severe weather conditions all of the Council's resources can be stretched, the publicity will recommend that members of the community should look out for vulnerable community members and see if they can provide any assistance to them.
- 5.3 Stakeholder feedback from the last three winters has highlighted this excellent community spirit already in place which was applauded. Communities intimated a desire to help themselves and officers have consulted with various stakeholders, including Community Councils and other interested community groups. It is hoped to continue to build on support for interested/able local people willing to treat sections of footway that the Council cannot ordinarily treat through
- the Snow Warden scheme, where local individuals or Community Councils are provided with a push along barrow to grit sections of footway
 - Housing Associations in the Perth area have provided resources for treating footways during snow conditions
 - Criminal Justice has also assisted with labour resources during snow conditions and it is hoped to develop this further over the coming winter.
 - Contact was made with all local golf courses prior to the start of winter 2012 / 2013 to enquire if they were interested in making resources available to work with the Council during snow conditions however it was not possible to develop this idea further due to the lack of positive response.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers.

3. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 - Period of Cover 2013 / 2014
- Appendix 2a – Winter Maintenance : Level of Service & Priority Systems 2013/14 (Carriageways)
- Appendix 2b - Winter Maintenance : Level of Service & Priority Systems 2013/14 (Footways)
- Appendix 3 - Category 1a Carriageway Routes

PERIODS OF COVER 2013 / 2014

Instructions on reporting times for Nightshift crews Sunday to Friday, early start crews Monday to Friday and standby crews 7 days per week , will be issued by Roads Maintenance Partnership Staff during the previous day

Period	Standby routes operated							
(All changes take place at 12 noon)	South			North			Total	
	Perth	Kinross	Crieff	Blairgowrie	Aberfeldy	Blair Atholl		
14 October – 21 October	1	0	1	1	0	1	4	Control Centre in operation (operated from home) plus basic cover by Tayside Contracts Summer Standby
21 October – 18 November	3	1	1	3	2	1	11	Lead in period limited system – reduced cover
18 November – 17 March	5 Plus 1 nightshift	2	3	5 Plus 1 nightshift	2	3	22	Main standby system – full cover
17 March -31 March	3	1	1	3	2	1	11	Lead out period limited system – reduced cover
31 March – 14 April	0	1	1	1	0	1	4	Control Centre in operation (operated from home) plus basic cover by Tayside Contracts Summer Standby

WINTER MAINTENANCE- LEVEL OF SERVICE & PRIORITY SYSTEMS 2013 / 2014 (CARRIAGEWAYS)

Category	Definition	Routes (examples)	Length (km) Indicative Only	Hours of Cover	Service Provided
Nightshift routes	The most important strategic routes. City routes plus early morning bus service routes in the Perth area. The A93 South of Blairgowrie, the A94 between Meigle and Perth and the A923 between Blairgowrie and Tullybachart.	A class roads network and early morning bus routes in the Perth area	165	Sunday to Friday 00:00 – 08:00 During the full cover period As per category 1a route cover times during lead in and lead out periods	In ice and snow conditions or <u>pre-salted</u> when ice or snow is forecast and roads are not dry.
1a	Priority routes. Other strategic routes carrying large volumes of traffic and connecting main centres of population outwith the Perth area	A977, A91, A913, A926, A827 Aberfeldy – Ballinluig A822 Crieff – Greenloaning A924 through Pitlochry	110	Until 21:00 all days. In the full cover period, complete morning de-icing by 07:30 (09:00 on Sundays and nationally recognised public holidays)	In ice and snow conditions or <u>pre-salted</u> when ice or snow is forecast and roads are not dry.
1b	Priority routes. Other strategic routes connecting larger communities and other main rural roads. Roads leading to important or sensitive locations such as hospitals or fire stations.*	A93 Blairgowrie – Glenshee A923 Blairgowrie - Dunkeld A827 Aberfeldy - Killin A822 Crieff - Dunkeld A823 (part), A824 (part), A912 B996, B9097, B9099, B996 etc.	645	Until 21:00 all days. In the full cover period, complete morning de-icing by 07:30 (09:00 on Sundays and nationally recognised public holidays) **	In ice and snow conditions or <u>pre-salted</u> when ice or snow is forecast and roads are not dry. In severe snow conditions, Category 1b routes will be treated after Category 1a
2	Non priority routes. Minor rural roads serving small settlements or a significant number of rural properties. Secondary distributor/local roads in settlements. Other urban or rural roads with special difficulties such as steep gradients.*		1310	08:00-15:00 Monday –Friday Excluding public holidays	In ice and snow conditions only, no <u>pre-salting</u>
3	Rural roads serving no or small numbers of isolated properties. Local access roads in settlements within easy reach of local distributor roads.	This will include most residential streets with only local traffic	210	Not applicable	<u>Not normally treated</u> unless there is hard, packed rutted snow on these roads with road surface temperatures below zero and treatment of all other categories has been completed
4	Rural public roads serving no habitation which because of their altitude, alignment and width cannot reasonably and safely be treated using normal winter maintenance plant. Private (unadopted) roads which is not the responsibility of a Council service and which are not considered to have a wider community use.	U159 Kenmore – Garrows (Kenmore Hill). U161 Bridge of Balgae – A827 at Loch Tay.	8 14	Not treated	Not treated.

* Service Bus routes have been included in categories 1a, 1b & 2 to ensure their comprehensive coverage.

** Light snow to 20mm - 4 hours is the likely minimum treatment time in snow conditions and cannot be regarded as a definitive target.

APPENDIX 2b

WINTER MAINTENANCE - LEVEL OF SERVICE & PRIORITY SYSTEMS 2013 / 2014 (FOOTWAYS)

Category	Descriptions	Examples	Length (km)	Hours of Cover	Service Provided	Response Time	Target Treatment Times (Priority Routes)	Target Post Gritting / Snow Clearance Time
1	Priority routes. Main shopping areas, main arterial footways, busy feeder footways and footways leading to community centres and centres of employment.	Perth, Aberfeldy, Auchterarder, Blairgowrie, Crieff, Kinross, Pitlochry, Alyth, Bridge of Earn, Coupar Angus, Dunkeld, Luncarty, Milnathort and Scone.	N/A	0630-1800 Mon-Sat 0800-1600 Sun and nationally recognised public holidays	In snow and ice conditions	1 hour	N/A	6 hours
2	Priority routes. As above plus Other footways with significant usage.	As above plus Abernethy, Aberuthven, Almondbank, Balbeggie, Bankfoot, Blackford, Braco, Burrelton Caputh, Comrie, Glencarse, Glenfarg, Inchtute, Longforgan, Methven, Muthill, Powmill, Meikle, Stanley	N/A	08:00-15:00 Monday - Friday	In snow and ice conditions	As soon as possible after Cat 1 routes have been completed	N/A	N/A
3	Non priority routes. Less well used footways and footways where a feasible alternative route exists		N/A	08:00-15:00 Monday - Friday	Not normally treated. Only treated in prolonged snow and ice conditions if time and resources permit, and after successful treatment of higher priorities	N/A	N/A	N/A
4	Footways which are not the responsibility of a Council Service and which are not considered to be important in the footway network		N/A	N/A	Not treated	N/A	N/A	N/A

Lower priority routes will only be treated once the higher priority routes have been treated unless operational factors such as efficient route planning dictate otherwise.
No footway treatment on either 25th December 2013 or 1st January 2014

Category 1a Carriageway Routes

Route	Description
A822	Crieff to Greenloaning
A823	Auchterarder to Junction with A822
A824	Auchterarder to Aberuthven
A827	Aberfeldy to Ballinluig
A91	Yetts o' Muckart to Strathmiglo (through Kinross)
A911	Kinross to Fife Boundary at Auchmuirbridge
A912	Edinburgh Road, Perth to Fife Boundary
A913	Aberargie to Newburgh
A923	Blairgowrie to Angus Boundary near Lundie
A924	Through centre of Pitlochry
A926	Blairgowrie to Angus Boundary near Craigton
A93	A94 junction in Perth to Blairgowrie
A94	Perth Bridge to Angus Boundary near Meigle
A977	Kinross to Blairingone
B954	Alyth to Angus Boundary near Newtyle
B996	Kinross to Fife Boundary
	The following roads in Perth City
A93	Glasgow Road - Broxden to Caledonian Road York Place, County Place, South Street, Queens Bridge
A85	Dundee Road - from Toll House, Dundee Road, Gowrie Street, Perth Bridge to Charlotte Street
A85	Barrack St and Dunkeld Road to Crieff Road
A85	Crieff Road - Dunkeld Road to Newhouse Road Roundabout
A912	Dunkeld Road - Crieff Road to Inveralmond Roundabout
A989	Tay Street, Marshall Place, Kings Place, Leonard Street, Caledonian Road, Atholl Street, Charlotte Street Newhouse Road, Burghmuir Road, Jeanfield Road, Long Causeway Manse Road, Hatton Road, Corsie Hill Road, Muirhall Road, Lochie Brae

