

Report

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Report to:	Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum
Date of Meeting:	13 July 2010
Report by:	Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)

Subject:	Winter Service – Member/Officer Group
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ advise of the establishment of a Member/Officer Group to review the current level of Winter Service.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Forum is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the establishment of a Member/Officer Group to review the current level of Winter Service be endorsed.

3. Background

3.1. It is widely accepted that the recent winter was the worst since the winter of 1962/63. While this was approximately a 1:50 year event our main roads remained open with gritting crews performing exceptionally often in very difficult conditions. Notwithstanding this, there was considerable negative publicity in the local press particularly in relation to a lack of gritting of residential areas and footpaths.

3.2. The level of service provided, however, generated a major overspend. Final costs were some £5.7m relative to a budget of £3m and it is estimated that had gritting operations not been curtailed by national salt shortages the costs could have reached £6.7m-£7.2m.

3.3. In the above circumstances, and taking into account the difficult financial climate ahead, there are clearly issues around this area of service delivery that would benefit from scrutiny by a Member/Officer Group.

4. Terms of Reference

4.1. The attached terms of reference (Refer Appendix 1) are proposed.

5. Membership

5.1. It is proposed that membership is drawn from political groups as follows:--

Labour	-	3
SNP	-	2
Conservative	-	1
Lib Dem/Independents	-	1

5.2. The Group will be chaired by Councillor Thompson, Chair of the Enterprise Resources Committee.

6. Employee Implications

6.1. Resource participants have been identified in Appendix 1.

7. Financial Implications

7.1. There are no financial implications.

8. Other Implications

8.1. The use of such Groups contributes to the Council's commitment to developing and enhancing the role of elected members.

9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

9.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and therefore, no impact assessment is required.

Colin McDowall

Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)

17 June 2010

Link(s) to Council Objectives/Values

- Improve Community Safety
- Effective and Efficient Use of Resources

Previous References

None.

List of Background Papers

None.

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

Gordon Mackay, Head of Roads and Transportation Services

Ext: 4484 (Tel: 01698 454484)

E-mail: gordon.mackay@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

Terms of Reference

Proposed Task project	Winter Service
<p>Please indicate project objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review, at a strategic level, the current gritting priorities, and levels of treatment, for both carriageways and footways. • To consider the level of treatment provided by SLC relative to other authorities. • To consider current cross-resource working arrangements. • To consider the cost of the current winter service relative to the available budget and anticipated future budgets. • Having regard to outcomes from 1,2 3 and 4 above, to consider, and make strategic recommendations in relation to any proposed changes to the current level of service which are considered appropriate. <p><i>The Group is asked to consider this issue against the background of the experiences during the recent extreme winter having regard to outcomes from the Council's post winter debrief, press coverage and public expectation during the extreme weather and substantial cost over-runs.</i></p>
<p>Please highlight potential benefits identifiable at this stage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer advantages • Resource efficiencies and financial savings • Opportunities for cross resource working and sharing of good practice. 	<p>Customer Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity with regard to the level of service which may be expected, particularly during periods of severe weather. • Improved and formalised communication arrangements. • Seek an appropriate balance between the level of winter service provided by the Council, and other services competing for limited financial resources. <p>Resource/...</p>

	<p>Resource Efficiencies and Financial Savings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To address the current mismatch between the cost of the current winter service and the available budget. • To reduce, or manage the risk of large overspends arising from an extended period of severe weather. <p>Opportunities for Cross Resource Working and Sharing of Good Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross Resource working to confirm severe weather response arrangements, maximising use of available manpower. • Development of effective, responsive internal communication arrangements and procedures for handling requests for service. • Development of an effective public relations strategy.
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<p>Group representatives (consider trade union representation)</p>	<p><u>Labour</u> Councillor Thompson (Chair) Councillor Cairney Councillor Carmichael</p> <p><u>SNP</u> Councillor Gray Councillor Anderson</p> <p><u>Conservative</u> Councillor Murray</p> <p><u>Lib Dems/Independents</u> Councillor Filshie</p> <p>Gordon Mackay (Head of Roads & Transportation) Alan Colthart (Head of Support Services) Jim Turner (Operations Manager) George Wells (Operations Advisor) Iain Guild, Land and Fleet Services Manager, Community Resources</p>
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<p>Proposed timescale for completion and key milestones</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report finalised – 25 August 2010. • Executive Committee – 22 September 2010
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