

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Chief Officer - Roads and Neighbourhood

Infrastructure, Regeneration and Economic Development on 21 May 2025

Subject: Winter Plan 2025-2030

1 Purpose

- 1.1** This report presents the Winter Plan 2025-2030 to Committee for consideration. The Plan has been reviewed and updated to reflect the Council Budget decisions for 2025/26 set out within RN09 Phase 2 Hire Vehicles Purchase, RN18 Cease Footway Gritting and RN31 Reduce Winter Plan.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1** It is recommended that Committee:
- a) Note the contents of this report; and
 - b) Approves the adoption of the Winter Maintenance Plan 2025-2030 (Appendix 1).

3 Background

- 3.1** The purpose of the Council's Winter Plan is to set out the operational parameters and procedures that will ensure that the statutory obligations are achieved as set out within Section 34 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984. This states that 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.
- 3.2** The aim of the Winter Plan is to ensure the safe movement of pedestrians and vehicles over as much of the public road network based on the forecasted weather conditions and the available resources whilst ensuring the safety of drivers undertaking these activities.
- 3.3** The Winter Plan provides the Council response to winter activities on the public road only. Any other Council owned land would be subject to the winter maintenance practices of the other relevant Council departments.
- 3.4** The maintenance responsibilities for the Trunk Road network lies with Transport Scotland and are currently maintained by Amey Highways on their behalf.

- 3.5** The Roads and Transportation Service have liaised with neighbouring authorities in Glasgow City Council, East Dunbartonshire Council, Stirling Council and Argyll and Bute Council to ensure a consistent treatment method on all cross-border roads.
- 3.6** The Winter Plan has been developed in line with the Well Managed Highways Infrastructure: A Code of Practice which was developed by the UK Road Liaison Group to provide guidance on the management of an effective road maintenance service.
- 3.7** The Winter Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis and updated in response to any issues or improvements that are highlighted over the winter season.

4 Main Issues

- 4.1** The Council has a requirement to set a balanced budget and at the Council meeting on 5th March 2025 a number of saving options were considered by elected members.
- 4.2** The Winter Plan has been reviewed to reflect the implication of the following saving options specific to the operation of the Winter Service and considers the reduction in resource capacity within Roads and Greenspace operatives:

- RN 18 Reduce Footway Gritting
- RN 31 Reduce Winter Plan

In addition, the opportunities presented by the following management adjustment agreed at the December Council has been considered:

- RN 09 Phase 2 Hire Vehicles Purchase

- 4.3** The Winter Plan has been updated in 3 key areas:

- Carriageway Treatment
- Footway Treatment
- Location and Maintenance of Grit Bins

4.4 Carriageway Treatment

The carriageway treatment routes have been reviewed and optimised to reduce the carriageway primary gritting routes from 6 to 5.

Residential streets have been retained where main bus routes operate, provide access to schools and with topographical features such as steep inclines are experienced. All other residential roads have been removed from the primary treatment routes.

4.5 Footway Treatment

Footway gritting operations will no longer be undertaken and this is reflected in the plan.

It is recognised, however, that in certain weather conditions such as snow clearance or prolonged inclement weather some footway gritting activities may be required. As a result, footway gritting operations will only be undertaken in response to severe weather, when services are unable to undertake their normal duties and when resources allow.

4.6 Grit Bin Policy

There are currently over 450 grit bins placed across the authority and these are located to maximise grit bin provision and support residents.

To aid officers in assessing grit bin location requests the Service has reviewed the criteria for where these should be placed. Any grit bin request received over the course of the winter period will be assessed against this criteria to ensure that the grit bin provision provides a benefit to the most number of residents. The Service will assess location specific conditions to determine if a site requires a departure from the criteria set.

Through this approach the Service can ensure a consistent approach and spread of grit bin across the authority minimising the distance that residents would need to travel to reach a grit bin location. The Service will ensure that there is a balance between the number of grit bins provided with the volume that can be reasonably maintained.

4.7 Phase 2 Hire Vehicle Purchase

The purchase of 5 gritters will increase efficiency and reliability as the Service will have more control over accessing vehicles when required. The vehicles will be received in advance of the commencement of the winter season 2025/26.

5 People Implications

5.1 The Winter Plan considers the implications of the reduction in operational resources and reduction in capacity.

This includes a 3FTE reduction in Roads operatives and 4 FTE reduction in Greenspace operatives. It also includes consideration of the wider Greenspace resource reductions.

6 Financial & Procurement Implications

6.1 The Winter Plan has been developed in line with the reduction in revenue funding levels.

7 Risk Analysis

- 7.1** The Winter Plan has been designed in line with the Well Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice which provides guidance on a risk-based approach to the delivery of the winter service.
- 7.2** The aim of the Winter Plan is to set out our approach to addressing the risks to our road network due to the effects of snow and ice with the resources available.
- 7.3** Through the APSE performance benchmarking process the percentage of network treated is regularly monitored and reviewed. West Dunbartonshire Council currently treats 40% of the network as part of our primary gritting routes which places us 7th in our group of 12 similarly sized authorities.

8 Equalities Impact Assessment

- 8.1** An effective Winter Plan will provide an overall benefit to the wider community and health and social/economic areas may also benefit.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached to this report (Appendix 2).

Equalities Impact Assessments have also been completed in relation to RN09, RN18 and RN31:

Assessment 1129 RN09 Phase 2 Hire Vehicle Purchase
Assessment 1190 RN18 Reduce Footway Gritting
Assessment 1209 RN31 Reduce Winter Plan.

9 Consultation

- 9.1** Consultation has been undertaken with internal and external stakeholders to consider communication, operational needs and partnership working.

10 Strategic Assessment

- 10.1** This report reflects the 2022 – 2027 Strategic Plan and in particular the following Strategic Priorities:

- Our neighbourhoods are sustainable and attractive

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Date: 7 May 2025

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Appendices:	The Winter Plan 2025/26 Equality Impact Assessment
Background Papers:	Equality Impact Assessments 1129, 1190 and 1209
Wards Affected:	All