

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**CABINET – 12 OCTOBER 2011**

### **NEGOTIATED CONTRACT FOR FOOTWAY GRITTING**

#### **Report By Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1** The purpose of the report is to seek Cabinet's approval to enter into negotiations with Peacock Salt Ltd, North Harbour, Ayr, to treat Priority 1 footways in Kilmarnock with the use of mechanised footway liquid de-icing sprayers with an improved de-icing material.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** During last winter a pilot was undertaken whereby the treatment of Priority 1 footways in Kilmarnock was undertaken using liquid de-icer rather than road salt. The process utilised quad bikes with spray bars to apply a sodium chloride (brine) spray to the footways.
- 2.2** The use of sodium chloride spray within Kilmarnock Town proved to be effective in dealing with icy conditions. There was positive feedback from the shopkeepers via the Kilmarnock Town Centre Liaison Group, in particular the fact that the material is cleaner than rock salt. However when extremely low temperatures were experienced in conjunction with snow fall the brine solution did not prove to be as effective as using rock salt. The vehicles used for the brine spraying were not able to be fitted with snow ploughs.
- 2.3** The treatment was undertaken by Peacock Salt Ltd under a negotiated contract. There was a one off set-up cost for the supply of the equipment, the provision of storage tanks and stand-by costs and the agreed charges per call out.
- 2.4** Last winter the Priority 1 footways were treated on 23 occasions at a cost of £18,945. The low number of treatments was partially due to the contract not commencing until 4 December 2010 due to contractor mobilisation issues and also due to the trigger level for pre-gritting footways set at temperatures below zero after midday. From experience last year it has been determined that it would be more appropriate for the trigger level to be temperatures below zero after 10.00am.

#### **3. WINTER FOOTWAY TREATMENT**

- 3.1** Since last winter there have been ongoing discussions with stakeholders across the UK and Europe to consider alternative materials to aid the rapid removal of ice and snow from carriageways and footways. One of the proposals is to use a Calcium

chloride spray as an alternative to sodium chloride. This material is effective to a much lower temperature and has a longer residual life than the original spray.

**3.4** Peacock Salt is keen to trial the potential of Calcium Chloride to build on trials undertaken already in USA, Canada and Germany. The East Ayrshire Council trial of using brine to pro-actively treat footways has attracted the attention of a number of other Local Authorities.

**3.5** The cost of calcium chloride brine is over ten times the cost of sodium chloride brine. Peacock Salt is offering to absorb half of the additional costs for the Calcium Chloride. In addition snow ploughs will be fitted to the quad bikes to aid the removal of snow clearing operations. The on-call price will remain the same as last year but there is an increase in the call-out rate due to increased labour costs, fuel costs and the additional cost of the de-icer material. The proposed cost for a single treatment of Calcium Chloride will be £571, which compares to £436 for sodium chloride.

**3.6** The cost for engaging in the trial for the period 1<sup>st</sup> November to 29<sup>th</sup> February (121 days) is as follows:

Set up costs and standby	£18,271
40 treatments at £571	£22,840
Total	£41,111

This compares to an equivalent cost for 2010/11 of £33,591. The cost for using Sodium Chloride would be £35,711.

**3.7** This is an estimated cost for an average winter and outturn costs will be dependant on the actual number of treatments instructed. If the Calcium Chloride does indeed exhibit greater residual qualities than the sodium chloride it will mean that fewer treatments are necessary and the cost difference would be reduced further. In the event of the pilot proving to be successful it would be anticipated that a longer term contractual arrangement would be considered in future years.

**3.8** It is proposed to undertake the trial again in Kilmarnock as 70km of the Priority 1 footways are located within the town. This will result in efficient service delivery utilising three quad bikes and minimising delays in travelling between towns. Materials can be stored locally at Western Road and Crookedholm thereby ensuring a quick response in inclement weather. Monitoring of the trial can be effectively undertaken by staff located in the Town Centre. The remaining 70km of the Priority 1 footway gritting network in the other towns and villages in East Ayrshire will be treated by Outdoor Amenities utilising conventional footway gritters and rock salt.

## **4. COMMUNITY PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

**4.1** An effective and efficient footway winter service will contribute to the safe passage of pedestrians addressing the following themes:-

- Improving Community Safety
- Delivering Community Regeneration

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**5.1** East Ayrshire Council as Roads Authority has a statutory duty under Section 34 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 to 'take such step as it considers reasonable to prevent snow and ice endangering the safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles over public roads'.

**5.2** The Council's standing orders in relation to contracts (paragraph 20(1)) require Cabinet approval to be sought before tender negotiations can take place with a single contractor. Peacock Salt is the only local company that can carry out the footway treatment works with the use of mechanised footway liquid de-icing sprayers utilising calcium chloride.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**6.1** The cost of footway gritting will be met from the winter service budget within Roads and Transportation Service.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**7.1** It is recommended that Cabinet :-

- i) Authorises the Head of Roads and Transportation to enter into negotiations with Peacock Salt Ltd, North Harbour, Ayr, to carry out salting treatment of Priority 1 footways within Kilmarnock.
- ii) Otherwise note the content of the report

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Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

JB/KA  
5 October 2011

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

### **Cabinet 4 November 2010 – Negotiated Contract for Footway Gritting**

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