

# EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

## DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE – 6 JUNE 2000

### 1999/2000 WINTER MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS

#### Report By Director of Development Services

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the performance of the 1999/2000 Winter Maintenance operations.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The winter maintenance general procedures and treatment priorities were approved by the Committee on 5 September 1996.
- 2.2 At the end of each winter a full review of the effectiveness of the service is carried out and any issues taken into account in the pre-season planning for the next winter.

#### 3. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

- 3.1 Total number of days with snow or ice conditions = 93 days
- Total number of occasions when gritting crews were called out = 212
- Tonnage of salt used = 12,800 tonnes
- Total costs (including labour, plant and salt) = £1,166,797
- Number of written complaints received (1 Jan – 31 March) = 5
- Number of insurance claims received = 12

Generally the operations went well, with only a few days on which major problems were encountered.

The most difficult period was 16 February 2000 when heavy snow fell across the area during the morning rush hour. The crews were at full stretch but were ably assisted by the Cleansing Department and a number of private contractors, and had most roads and priority footways passable by the afternoon.

In such situations ploughs are hampered by the traffic congestion, or can be committed to areas when problems arise first, making it difficult to respond quickly to developing problems elsewhere.

Whilst detailed procedures are in place such emergencies can only be dealt with as they develop. However, the procedures will be reviewed in detail prior to next winter, particularly the communication systems and priorities for action when roads in an area are being rendered impassable due to the conditions.

The high number of gritting operations and salt usage was due to the generally milder winter and more frequent freeze/rain/freeze conditions. This meant that repeated passes had to be made over the same routes as previously applied salt was washed off and the roads re-froze. A number of complaints – particularly on the morning of 17 February were due to this, unavoidable, situation.

#### **4. ACTIONS FOR NEXT WINTER**

**4.1** As a result of the review, a number of actions were identified to improve the service for next winter.

- New plant – 4 gritters, 2 loaders and a snowblower attachment for a digger. Already received and will be ready for use.
- Improved liaison arrangements with private contractors.
- Further training for staff and operators.
- Review communications systems and procedures.
- Consider new vehicle communication and tracking system.
- Improved records of treatment operations (linked to tracking system).
- Review response to heavy snowfall, including priority routes for action.
- Review policies for treatment of footways and discuss procedures for next winter with the Director of Community Services.
- Consider covered salt storage and weighing facilities at Gauchalland Depot.

#### **4.2 Drivers Hours Regulations**

The new drivers hours regulations could have a major impact on winter maintenance operations. To provide for this a complete review of the standby system, work patterns, and level of out-of-hours operations will be carried out.

#### **5. LEGAL**

**5.1** Nil

**6. FINANCIAL**

**6.1** Separate reports will be presented to the Committee regarding the procurement of covered salt storage, weighing facilities and a new vehicle communication and tracking system.

**6.2** Any additional costs arising from the actions detailed in paragraph 4 (above) would have to be met from the Department's Revenue budget.

**7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**7.1** The Committee is requested to note the contents of the report.

**Stephen Chorley**  
**Director of Development Services**

**SG/NP**  
**22 May 2000**

**List of Background Papers**

**Nil**

**For further information please contact Sandy Gillatt on 01563 576310**

**AGENDA**