

Appendix 2 – Overview of winter season 19/20

Financial overview

- 7.1 The approval of a winter service policy and operational plan is crucial in providing a coherent service that can operate within its statutory requirement and its allocated resources. Clear and approved arrangements are crucial in an environment of claims, litigation, and statutory responsibilities whilst balancing service requests being received. These clear approved arrangements allow officers of the service and the wider council to support and justify its decisions.
- 7.2 Ignoring the least and most costly winters in the last 10 years, the average cost of winter maintenance is £2,093,326 against an average budget of £1,801,038. The cost for the winter season 19/20 was £1,808,644.
- 7.3 As a reminder, there have been a number of recent service reviews and budget savings taken in the last 3 years. Table 3 below identifies the level of savings incurred.

Table 3: Overview of recent per annum financial savings

Year	Saving (£)	Impact
17/18	58,000	5no roads removed from P1d routes
18/19	31,000	Reduce from 18 to 17 P1 routes Route optimisation
19/20	231,000	Reduce from 17 to 13 P1 routes All P1d roads removed from priority one routes Reduce priority one routes by 55km
Total	320,000	

- 7.4 It is clear to see there have been a number of operational efficiencies that have been identified during the period identified above. To summarise, Moray Council previously delivered its winter maintenance provision with 18 primary one gritting routes. As part of the most recent 19/20 saving options, Full Council agreed on the 27 February 2019, to reduce this to 13 primary one gritting routes with a number of identified roads being removed.
- 7.5 Prior to the budget saving changes, the Priority one routes covered a network length of 658km. The total network length now treated is 581km, a reduction of 77km.

Weather summary & treatments carried out

7.6 A summary of the 2019/20 winter and treatment is reported below in Table 4

Table 4: Summary of winter actions

	2018-19	2019-20
No. of Days with Road Surface Temperature below 0°C	127	123
No. of Days with winter action	114	128
No. of Route Treatments	2,092	2,018
Total road length treated (km)	76,426	87,849
Total amount of salt used (tonnes)	12,315	11,870

Delivering the Service with 13no Priority one routes

7.7 The impact of operating 13 Priority one routes as opposed to 17 has invariably reduced our total operating costs as a result of requiring less vehicles and staff resource to drive them.

7.8 The time taken to drive and treat the routes has been monitored throughout the winter season and we now report being at full capacity with some routes just under our policy's 2.5 hours optimum treatment time for completion.

Public Communications Campaign 19/20

7.9 Officers embarked on delivering a positive communications campaign for the 19/20 season and to move away from more traditional methods of communicating with our local communities to highlight what the Council is doing to protect the safety of road users and pedestrians.

7.10 It was clear the campaign had to address the key messages and changes to service provision which were agreed between the Councils communications and roads maintenance teams and these to be delivered across multiple online and offline channels.

7.11 Key messages of the campaign included;

We're prepared for winter

- We're set to treat more than 580km of P1 routes daily as required
- Public can see where we're treating and when (gritting maps)
- Just because public don't see a gritter, doesn't mean we're not out there

Tough job

- Out in all weathers, in sometimes treacherous conditions
- Skilled drivers undertaking gritting and snow clearance to keep public safe and moving

Cuts to service

- Acknowledge there have been cuts, however we're doing the best job we can with the available resources
- Still gritting more than 580km of priority one routes
- Drivers are committed to doing a good job

Public perception and actions

- If you see us gritting during mild, wet or windy conditions, it's because road surface temperatures are forecast to drop soon after.
- We appreciate motorists parking sensibly to allow large vehicles to get through; if we can't get through it affects the quality of the service we can deliver – impacting on ability of residents to travel across Moray, and emergency services vehicles
- Grit isn't a magic cure, it's only effective to road surface temperatures above -10

7.12 Officers delivered a briefing session to elected members highlighting the potential impacts that changes to our priority routes may have on our local communities, which was well received by members in attendance.

Improvement to the Councils on line interactive maps

7.13 In an effort improve the customer experience on the winter maintenance pages of our website (www.moray.gov.uk/winter), changes were made to the content to further improve the information available online for local residents and communities.

7.14 For our carriageway treatments pages we introduced new maps showing Priority 1 and Priority 2 roads. This new map serves to show the residents and communities of Moray how we treat our network to allow them to make educated choices on their travel plans. The new maps complement the existing interactive Priority 1 planned treatment maps, which were introduced in 2016/17.

7.15 An improved grit bin map was also produced which shows the location of all existing grit bins in Moray. The map also allows users to report a damaged grit bin, or request that a bin is restocked.