

The Highland Council
Skye, Ross and Cromarty Area Committee
28 October 2013

Agenda Item	7
Report No	SRC 03/13

Winter Maintenance Plan for 2013/14

Report by the Director of Transport, Environmental & Community Services

Summary

This report invites Members to approve the Winter Maintenance Plan for the Skye, Ross and Cromarty area for 2013/14.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Council's Scheme of Delegation to Area Committees gives the Skye, Ross and Cromarty Area Committee the power ;

“ to approve the winter maintenance plan within the strategy and budget allocated by TECS Committee”

1.2 Under Section 34 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, 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.

1.3 The Transport, Environmental and Community Service Committee agreed a number of enhancements to the winter maintenance service at its meeting on 16 May 2013 (Report TEC-41-13). These enhancements included:

- a) Engage with communities well before the start of next winter to promote the community self-help scheme.
- b) Provide 3 spare winter maintenance vehicles (one per operational area).
- c) Continue to use local contractors to provide additional resources to assist with snow clearing.
- d) Formalise the arrangements for the treatment of footpaths in sheltered housing schemes.
- e) Continue to ensure that grit bins are kept full.
- f) Reduce the number of Priorities in the Winter Maintenance Policy from 4 to 3, and carry out a comprehensive review of routes to identify those routes which should be re-classified as Priority 1.

Note: While the majority of the existing Priority 2 routes should be considered for re-classification to Priority 1, other difficult routes should also be considered, however

the overall length of route to be reclassified as Priority 1 should not exceed a level which requires additional drivers or vehicles.

- 1.4 The Council's Winter Maintenance Policy (approved on 19 September 2013 TEC-67-13) was updated to take account of the enhancements agreed by Members on the 16 May 2013 (Report TEC-41-13). Also approved on 19 September was the introduction of snow gates on the Bealach na Ba to allow the road to be closed in heavy snow on the grounds of safety. The decision to close the snow gates is taken by the Police, and an alternative coastal route is available.
- 1.5 This policy is in place to ensure a consistent level of service between Areas and to ensure, as much as possible, the safety of drivers/pedestrians. However, the operation of that Policy does not and cannot ensure that every road/footway will be free of ice and/or snow at all times.
- 1.6 The operational management of the Winter Maintenance Policy in Skye, Ross and Cromarty is devolved to the Ross, Skye & Lochaber, and the Caithness, Sutherland & Easter Ross Areas. Each Area has its own Winter Maintenance Plans which set out the operational details required to deliver a service in its area which complies with the Council's policy. These plans take full account of the recent review recommendations and policy revisions.

2. Winter Maintenance Policy

- 2.1 The Council's Winter Maintenance Policy, which sets out the priority system for the winter maintenance service is reproduced at **Appendix A**.
- 2.2 The total lengths of each Priority in Skye, Ross and Cromarty are:

	Skye & Lochalsh		Ross & Cromarty		Easter Ross	
Primary	208 km	27%	440 km	39 %	111 km	18%
Secondary	121 km	16%	405 km	36 %	84 km	14%
Other	431 km	57%	285 km	25 %	202 km	68%

% of the network is classed as Primary or Secondary.

3. Forecast / Decision Making

- 3.1 The Council employs a professional forecast provider (Meteo Group Ltd) who provides daily and 5 day weather forecasts. Separate forecasts are received for the 8 climatic zones across Highland to support local decision making.
- 3.2 The daily forecast is received at noon and covers the following 24 hours. This forecast is used to plan treatment for the evening and following morning. The forecast is updated at 06:00. If there is any adverse deterioration in the forecast during the forecast period, an update is provided directly to the duty officer(s) by telephone.
- 3.3 Real time data is obtained from 30 icelert sites (including 8 located on the trunk road). These sensors provide information on the road surface temperature, surface

condition (wet, dry, ice), and the presence of salt, graded 1, 2 or 3. A Salt 1 level will prevent freezing down to about minus 2 and Salt 3 down to minus 8 degrees Celsius.

- 3.4 Area staff operate a “Duty Officer” rota to ensure that there is always a suitably qualified and experienced person available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to take decisions on the deployment of appropriate resources to deal with the prevailing weather conditions.
- 3.5 Duty officers have all had training from the weather forecast provider. Training is refreshed every three years.

4. Operatives

- 4.1 The numbers of manual workers allocated to road maintenance is determined by the number of routes required to deliver the winter maintenance policy, and the establishment currently stands at 26 for Skye & Lochalsh, 36 for Ross & Cromarty and 11 for Easter Ross. The majority of operatives hold an LGV driving licence.
- 4.2 Operatives normally allocated to grounds maintenance and street sweeping are used to provide resources for treating footpaths. A number have been trained as LGV drivers, however the majority hold ordinary driving licenses, which restricts their involvement to the treatment of footpaths.
- 4.3 Operatives participate in a standby rota to ensure that cover is always available to deliver a service for medical emergencies overnight.

5. Vehicles and Plant

- 5.1 There are 38 front-line gritters available and 17 footpath tractors. There are 3 spare gritters available across Highland.
- 5.2 The number of front line vehicles has reduced over the last number of years; however the combined spreading capacity increased as we now operate larger vehicles which are able to treat longer routes.
- 5.3 Each vehicle treats, on average 50km of Primary and Secondary routes followed by 50km of Other routes. The nature of the network is such that very few routes are circular so there is significant dead mileage in returning to base after a route is completed.
- 5.4 Some footway tractors treat several villages, which involves travel time between routes and reduces the length they can treat in a day.

6. Salt

- 6.1 The average annual usage of salt for Skye, Ross and Cromarty has increased over the past 3 winters and is now around 23,000 tonnes. In the current year there is sufficient salt in stock or on order.

6.2 Salt usage varies with prevailing weather conditions and typical usage levels are shown below:

	Skye & Lochalsh	Ross & Cromarty	Easter Ross
Evening Pre-treatment	19 tonnes	40 tonnes	11 tonnes
Morning treatment for ice	48 tonnes	97 tonnes	53 tonnes
Snow (repeated treatments)	127 tonnes	300 tonnes	100 tonnes

7. Network Hierarchy

7.1 As it is not possible to provide a winter maintenance service to every road at the same time, a network hierarchy has been adopted. This is detailed in the Winter Maintenance Policy, reproduced at **Appendix A**. Primary routes are generally done first, with Other routes treated as resources allow.

7.2 The treatment routes are indicated within the Skye, Ross and Cromarty Winter Maintenance Plans, reproduced at **Appendix B**.

8. Treatments

8.1 Winter maintenance treatments consist of morning routes, evening precautionary treatment routes and, during extreme/poor conditions, continuous or all day treatments. Operations begin at 0600hrs and can continue to 2100hrs. Sunday operations begin at 0700 hrs and treat Primary routes only, unless extreme conditions are being experienced.

8.2 Treatments consist of blading or ploughing the road surface, together with the application of pure salt or salt/sand mix. A spread rate for salt application has been agreed by Council, dependant on weather conditions.

9. Resource Implications

9.1 There are no resource issues arising from this report.

9.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

9.3 There are no equality issues arising from this report.

9.4 There are no issues on Carbon Emissions arising from this report, although the Service is embarking on specialist training for all operatives in respect to fuel efficient driving.

10. Recommendation

10.1 Members are invited to approve Winter Maintenance Plans for the Skye, Ross and Cromarty area as contained in **Appendix B**.

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Date : 30 September 2013

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Background papers: Updated Winter Maintenance Policy – Report no TEC 67/13,
Transport, Environmental & Community Services Committee, 19
September 2013.



Appendix A

The Highland Council

Transport, Environmental & Community Services

Winter Maintenance Policy

August 2013

Winter Maintenance Policy

CONTENTS

- 1.0 BACKGROUND
- 2.0 GENERAL
- 3.0 TREATMENT OF ROADS.
- 4.0 TREATMENT OF FOOTWAYS.

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Transport, Environmental and Community Services

Winter Maintenance Policy

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Under Section 34 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, 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.
- 1.2 This Winter Maintenance Policy relates to the Council's responsibilities as Roads Authority for adopted roads, cycle ways, footways and footpaths.
- 1.3 Cross Service Working arrangements exist between Services to ensure that Council properties receive an appropriate winter maintenance service. The appropriate Service Director will determine the appropriate level of winter maintenance service for footpaths, car parks and other areas that are the responsibility of the Council but are not on the list of public Roads.

2.0 GENERAL

- 2.1 With the operational management devolved to the Areas it is essential that a common Winter Maintenance Policy is in place to ensure a consistent service for drivers passing between local Areas.
- 2.2 It is the aim of Highland Council in respect of its winter maintenance service to:-
 - 2.2.1 Provide a winter gritting and snow clearing service which, as far as is reasonably practical, using the resources available, permits the safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians on the adopted road and footway network and seeks to minimise delays attributable to weather conditions.
 - 2.2.2 Conduct operations having regard to the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and EU and Domestic Driver Hours Regulations.
- 2.3 The Council as Roads Authority is not responsible for Winter Maintenance on unadopted roads and will not provide a Winter Maintenance service for unadopted roads. It will however make every effort to provide assistance for emergency and medical services during severe weather conditions where there is an urgent need for safe access.
- 2.4 The responsibility for Winter Maintenance on Trunk Roads lies with Transport Scotland.
- 2.5 The Council will source Winter Weather Forecasting Services from recognised Meteorological Service Providers during the period 1st October to 30th April.

3.0 TREATMENT OF ROADS

The Council will endeavour to provide the highest level of service possible within the resource available. During winter, especially during severe weather, it may not be possible to keep every road free from ice and snow at all times.

The treatment of roads will be carried out based on a hierarchical system dependant on route priority. The time taken to complete the treatment of routes will vary from day to day depending on actual weather conditions and can be expected to increase significantly during periods of snow due to having to plough both sides of the road.

3.1 NETWORK HIERARCHY

The following prioritised hierarchy will be used to determine the order of treatment of roads.

PRIMARY (Highest)	Strategic, Regional, Sub Regional and Link roads which serve the larger communities and permit the majority of road users to travel across the region. Main & Local distributor roads in the larger urban settlements. High frequency service bus routes operating at least 6 days a week and starting prior to 7am with identified hazards.
SECONDARY	Roads connecting smaller communities to the primary network. Link and Service roads within the larger urban settlements. Service and school* bus routes not covered by the Primary network.
OTHER	Minor rural and local access roads. Residential roads in urban settlements.

Gritting may not be completed on all routes before buses start their journeys.

* Contracted school buses and/or mini buses (9 passenger seats or more)

The priority network will be agreed by Area Committee. Leaflets with maps showing the Primary and Secondary network will be made available to the public at the start of each winter period.

3.2 TREATMENT TIMES - MONDAY TO SATURDAY

The service will be provided between 6am and 9pm. Treatment after 6pm will in general be restricted to Primary routes only.

3.3 TREATMENT TIMES – SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

3.3.1 Sundays, 25th December and 1st January

The service will be provided between 7am and 9pm and will be restricted to the Primary network only. During periods of sustained snow, or where significant snow conditions are forecast, the service may be extended to include difficult Secondary routes.

3.3.2 26th December and 2nd January

The service will be provided between 7am and 9pm and treatment will be restricted to the Primary and Secondary networks only. Where December 26th and January 2nd fall on a Sunday then a Sunday service will be provided.

3.4 PRECAUTIONARY TREATMENT

Precautionary treatment carried out the previous evening, normally before 9pm, in advance of forecasted adverse weather, will in general be restricted to Primary routes only.

3.5 TREATMENT DURING SNOW CONDITIONS

In times of severe weather, resources will be concentrated on keeping the Primary network clear and as a result there may be a delay before it is possible to treat the Secondary and Other road network, including residential streets. In exceptional snow conditions external contractors will be deployed to assist with snow clearance.

3.6 SNOW GATES

For safety reasons Snow Gates are located on routes where drifting snow can make the route impassable very quickly. The closure and subsequent opening of snow gates will only take place with the authority of the Police.

The roads controlled by snow gates within the Highland area are as follows:

- A939 Bridge of Brown
- A939 Grantown to Dava
- A939 Dava to Ferness
- A832 Braemore to Dundonnell
- B9007 Carrbridge to Ferness
- B9176 Struie Hill Road
- Cairngorm Ski Road
- Bealach na Ba

In severe snow conditions the Council may withdraw resources from these roads and allow the storm to abate. In such circumstances resources may be diverted to assist snow clearing operations on other parts of the network. Additional resources may be employed during such snow conditions.

3.7 TARGET TREATMENT TIMES

The following are the target times for completion of routes during conditions of ice and light snow.

3.7.1 Monday to Saturday

PRIMARY ROUTES	8.30am.
SECONDARY ROUTES	9.00am.
OTHER	As resources and conditions permit.

3.7.2 Sundays, 25th / 26th December and 1st / 2nd January

PRIMARY ROUTES	9.30am.
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3.8 TREATMENT OF DIVERSION ROUTES.

Where a road, including a trunk road, is closed to traffic due to either planned works or an emergency situation then the agreed diversion route will be treated as follows.

Trunk Road Closure.

The agreed diversion route will be treated to Primary standard and signs erected at each end of the diversion and any other junctions with trunk roads, stating that there will be no overnight salting.

In an emergency situation and after Transport Scotland or its trunk road management and maintenance agents have notified the Council of the closure, every endeavour will be made to both treat the agreed diversion route appropriately and erect signs before the first overnight period.

Council Road Closure.

Any part of the agreed diversion route that is of a lower priority than the closed road will be treated to the same priority as the closed road.

4.0 TREATMENT OF FOOTWAYS, FOOTPATHS AND CYCLE WAYS.

Treatment for ice and light snow conditions on adopted footways, footpaths and cycle ways will be carried out as set out below. Each gritting route will take a significant length of time to complete. The length of time taken will vary from day to day depending on actual weather conditions.

4.1 NETWORK HIERARCHY

The following prioritised hierarchy will be used in determining the order of treatment of footways.

Priority	Description
PRIMARY	Main urban shopping centres. Primary cycleways.
SECONDARY	Footways serving main urban areas, schools, hospitals and minor shopping areas. Sheltered Housing and locations of special need with known identified hazards.
OTHER	Other footways as resources allow.

4.2 TREATMENT TIMES - MONDAY TO SATURDAY

The winter maintenance service will be provided between 6am and 6pm and routes will be treated on a priority basis as resources permit

4.3 TREATMENT TIMES - SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

A service will be provided between 7am and Noon on Primary routes only.

There will be no service for footways on Christmas Day or New Years Day.

-- End of Policy Statement --

Appendix B - Winter Plans

Skye & Lochalsh Winter Plan

Winter Maintenance Priorities 2013-14

Primary Roads

Road Number / Name	From	To
A850	Borve Junction (A87)	Dunvegan
A863	Sligachan (A87)	Dunvegan Castle
A855	Portree	Uig via Staffin
A851	Broadford (A87)	Armadale Pier
A890	Auchtertyre (A87)	Strathcarron Junction
B8083	Broadford (A87)	Elgol
A850	Skye Bridge Roundabout	Kyleakin Pier
C1223 Glenelg	Shiel Bridge (A87)	Glenelg
U5012 Kyle Prospect	A87 Junction	
U4808 Somerled Square, Portree	Including bus stance	
U5027 Drovers Way, Portree	A87 Junction	Roundabout adj to Dentist Surgery
U4896 Fancy Hill, Portree	A855	Portree Hospital
Private, Broadford	A87	Broadford Hospital

Secondary Roads

Road Number / Name	From	To
B883 Braes	A87 Junction Pienmore	Pienchorran
B884 Waternish	Lonmore (A863)	Milovaig (Loch Pooltiel)
B886 Glendale	Fairy Bridge (A850)	Stein
B8009 Minginish	Drynoch (A863)	Portnalong & Fiskavaig
C1230 Orbost Loop	Lonmore	Roag
C1231 Harlosh Loop	Roskhill	Feorlig
C1234 Ullinish Loop	Struanmore	Eabost
A855 Wentworth Street, Portree		
U4816 Home Farm Road, Portree	Somerled Square	Drovers Way
U5017 Blaven Road, Portree	Home Farm Road	Stormy Hill Road
U4814 Stormy Hill Road, Portree	Blaven Road	A855
U4838 Glasnakille township road	Elgol	Road end
C1244 Aird of Sleat	Ardvasar (A851)	Aird
C1242 Ord - Tarskavaig Loop	Teangue (A851)	Kilbeg (A851)
U4861 Breakish Committee road	Skulamus (A87)	Ashaig (A87)
C1232	Kyle of Lochalsh	Erbusaig
C1221	Erbusaig	Plockton Car Park

C1222	Duirinish	Achmore
U4966 School Road, Kyle	Main Street	Kyle Primary School
C1232 / U4891 Balmacara Loop	A87 Reraig	A87 Gliack
U4888 Auchtertyre Loop		
U4884 Loch Long	Ardelve (A87)	Sallachy
U4936 Dornie	Dornie	Lochside
U5346 Morvich Loop		
U4927 Letterfearn	Ratagan	Letterfearn

Ross & Cromarty Winter Plan

Winter Maintenance Priorities 2013-14

Primary Roads

Road Number / Name	From	To
(B9161)	Munlochy	Artafallie Jct
A9 Kessock Junction		
A832	Muir of Ord	Cromarty
B9160	Newhall Smithy Junction	A832 Albion Works
B9169	Leanaig	Muir of Ord
A862	Beauly Square	Ardullie
Dingwall Main Bus Routes		
A834	Dingwall	Contin
A832	Moy Bridge	Muir of Ord
B9169	Leanaig	Shoreton Junction
U2620	Balmeanach Brae	
B9163	Findon Junction	Cromarty
U2511	Newhall Smithy Junction	Resolis
U2519	Fannys Brae	
Moss Road, Ullapool		
Riverside Terrace, Ullapool		
Quay Street, Ullapool		
A835	Mill Street / Shore Street Junction, Ullapool	Ledmore Junction
A832	Braemore Junction	Gorstan Junction
A896	Kinlochewe	Strathcarron Junction
A890	Strathcarron Junction	Achnasheen

Secondary Roads

Road Number / Name	From	To
Cromarty Streets Main bus and school bus routes		
Bayview Crescent, Cromarty		
Braehead, Cromarty		
George Street, Cromarty		
U2504	Farness	Davidston
B9163	Findon	Conon Bridge
B9162 Old Leanaig Road		

Docharty Road, Tulloch Wood Distributor Road to bus turning area A862 West spur access to Dingwall Academy Dingwall Primary school access & Ross Place Academy Crescent including spur to academy & round Tulloch Castle Drive including Square Sports Centre Car Park		
U3009 (U4/15) Dugary		
U3006 (U4/26) -	Ord Distillery	Marybank
C1043 (C11)	Marybank	Scardroy
U3111 (U4/107)	Balloan loop,	Marybank
U3005 (U4/25)	Marybank	Fairburn loop
U2582 (U3/75)	Munlochry – A832 -	Knockbain Mains
C1027	Munlochry	Easter Suddie
C1031	Belmaduthy via Killen	Blackstand
C1035 (C9)	Avoch via Templands, plus Templands Spur	Fortrose
U2566 (U3/64)	Old Mill Road, Avoch	School (treat Community centre car park). Munlochry
U2584	Knockbain Mains	
U2585 (U3/78)	Belmaduthy	Tore
Academy Street, Fortrose		
Ness Road, Fortrose		
Deans Road, Fortrose		
U2524/5	Fortrose	Raddery Loop
B9162	Tore	Artafallie
U2172	Artafallie	Coldwells
Ardnagrask Mains		
U2596/2598/2599	A9 Drumsmittal-Drynie	Kilmuir
U2607	North Kessock Pier	A9
U3006	Ord Distillery	Marybank
U3060	A835 Junction	Knockfarrel
U3121	Craigdarroch	
U3113	Torview, Contin	
C1071	Docharty	Achterneed
Kinellan Drive, Strathpeffer		
U2638	Drynie Park	
U2642	Newmore	Ferintosh
U2640	Fettes Crossroads	Kilcoy
C1083	Torridon	Diabeg
C1099	Sheildaig Loop Road	

C1087	Toscaig via Bealach na Na	Tornapress
C1096	Lohcarron	Strome Junction
U3720	Strome	Ardneaskan
C1091	Applecross Junction	Kinloch Junction
B8057	Poolewe	Cove
C1079	Aultbea	Mellon Charles
B8021	Gairloch Strath	Melvaig
C1075	Laide	Opinan
B8056	Kerry Bridge	Red Point
	Achiltibuie Depot via Badenscallie Junction	Polglass
C1047	Polglass	Drumrunie Junction
U3366	Reiff Loop Road	
U3387	Reiff	
	Braes, Ullapool	
U5066	Corry Heights, Ullapool	
C1055	Inverbroom Bridge	Loggie

Easter Ross Winter Plan

Winter Maintenance Priorities 2013-14

Primary Roads

Road Number	Name	From	To
A862		Ardullie Roundabout	Tulloch Avenue, Dingwall
B817	Full length	Drummond junction, Evanton	A9(T) junction, Kildary
B9165	Full length	A9(T) junction	Portmahomack
B9166	Full length	B9165 junction	Balintore
B9174	Full length	A9(T) Lidl junction	A9(T) Asda junction
B9175	Full length	Nigg Roundabout	Nigg ferry
B9176	Full length	A9(T) junction, Skiach	A836 junction
C1004	Full length	Tain	Tarrell junction
C1063	Academy Road, Invergordon	Castle Road	A9(T)
C1209	Ankerville Street, Tain		
C1210	High Street, Invergordon		
C1212	Castle Road, Invergordon		
U1425	Ankerville, Shandwick, Hilton	B9175 junction	King Street junction, Hilton
U1426	Shandwick, Balintore main Street		
U2032	Alness Industrial Estate Link Road		

Secondary Roads

Road Number	Name	From	To
C1008		Meddat junction	Hill of Fearn
C1012	Tomich – Hartmount – A9(T)	Tomich Road Junction	A9(T) junction, Scotsburn
C1016		Alness High Street	Achandunie
C1059		A9(T) Hartfield	Logie Hill
C1063		Tomich junction	Badachonacher
C1206	Hill Street, Tain		
C1206	Manse Street, Tain		
C1206	Queen Street, Tain		
C1207	Scotsburn Road, Tain		
C1208	Hartfield Road, Tain		
U1402	Inver Village Road	C1004 junction	Bus turning area

U1427		Cliff Cottage Access junction	B9165 junction
U1428		Balmuchy	Balnagall
U1444		Hill of Fearn	Meikle Rhyndie
U1456	Castlecraig, Nigg		
U1466		Balnabruaich	Chapelhill
U1885	Newfield to Logie Road		
U1890	Lamington Quarry East Road		
U1891		Brenachie	Lamington
U1903	Tullich to Torran Bridge		
U1907	Ardross to Strath Rusdale Road		
U1909	Strathy Road		
U1919	Millcraig	Nonkiln	Achandunie Road Road
U1921	Achnagarron		
U1949	Coulhill		
U1954	Kirkside		
U1963	Caplich Road		
U1971	Milnafua		
U1972	Firhill Perimeter Road		
U1973	Alness Distributor Road		
U2045	Alness Service Point Road		
U3900	Moss Road, Tain		
U3910	Craighill Terrace, Tain		
U3913	St Vincent Road, Tain		
U3922	Upper King Street, Tain		
U3923	King Street, Tain		
U4167	Cromlet Drive, Invergordon		
U4170	Gordon Terrace, Invergordon		
U4190	Golf View Terrace, Invergordon		
U4196	Inverbreakie Drive, Invergordon		
U4202	South Lodge Distributor Road, Invergordon		
U4270	Hospital Access Road, Invergordon		
U5114	Cameron Road, Tain		