

The Highland Council
Lochaber Area Committee
25 August 2015

Agenda Item	10
Report No	LA 24/15

Winter Maintenance Priority Network – 2015/16

Report by the Director of Community Services

Summary

This report provides Members with information on winter maintenance service provision and invites the Committee to agree the network of Primary and Secondary Priority routes within Lochaber.

1. Background

1.1 Section 34 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 outlines the responsibilities that Roads Authorities have in relation to Winter Maintenance.

“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 The Transport, Environmental and Community Services Committee approved the current Winter Maintenance Policy at its meeting of the 19th September 2013. A copy is attached as **Appendix A**.

1.3 The Policy is in place to ensure that a consistent level of service is applied across all areas of the Highland Council and to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable the safety of road users. However the Policy cannot ensure and does not commit that all roads and footways will be free of ice and snow at all times.

1.4 Each area will put in place a Winter Maintenance Plan, to cover the operational details required to deliver the service within the current policy.

2. Winter Maintenance Policy

2.1 The Council's Winter Maintenance Policy sets out the hierarchy of priorities and their corresponding target treatment times and periods of operation.

2.2 Primary roads are treated first followed by Secondary roads. All other roads are classed as Other and treated as conditions require and as resources permit.

2.3 The Council publishes Winter Services leaflets for each operational area which provides the public with a map depicting which roads are Primary and Secondary and offers information as to the level of service provided.

3. Priority Network

3.1 The network hierarchy of Primary, Secondary and Other is described in full in 3.1 of the appended Winter Maintenance Policy, as are the target treatment times.

3.2 The target treatment times are based on frost, ice and light snow. During extensive snow, freezing rain or sheet ice conditions treatment will take longer and may be limited initially to the Primary network.

3.3 The lengths of each priority within the Lochaber area are as follows:

Primary	235 km	35 %
Secondary	51 km	7 %
Other	395 km	58 %

Note: There is a change to priority lengths from those presented to the November 2014 Lochaber Area Committee. The movement from 'Secondary' to 'Other' is due to routes no longer qualifying as 'School Bus Routes' serviced by a vehicle with 9 seats or more (including the driver).

3.4 Maps showing the Primary and Secondary roads across Lochaber are attached as **Appendix B**.

4. Budget Savings

4.1 As part of a wider savings review the Highland Council agreed on 18th December 2014 to reduce the £5.494m Winter Maintenance budget by £0.24m in each of the years 2015/16 and 2016/17; a total reduction of £0.48m.

4.2 The savings proposal specifically being "provision of a more focused delivery of the Winter Maintenance Policy. Targeting Primary and Secondary routes first and only moving to the lowest category "Other" when the first two priorities have been completed".

4.3 Operational route plans are under review by Officers to deliver the "more focussed" aspect of the saving agreed by the Council. The saving agreed is 12 gritting vehicles and 12 FTE posts over the 2015/16 and 2016/17 financial year across Highland.

5. Implications

5.1 The resource implications relating to the savings agreed by Highland Council are highlighted in paragraph 4.3.

5.2 There are no known legal implications arising from this report.

- 5.3 There are no specific equality implications arising from this report.
- 5.4 There are no known climate change implications arising from this report.
- 5.5 There are presently no risk implications highlighted by this report and risk shall be managed by regular review and reporting to allow corrective action to be taken where necessary
- 5.6 There are no Gaelic implications arising from this policy.
- 5.7 The re-focussing of the Winter Maintenance provision within the existing policy may mean that some roads within the “Other” category receive a lesser treatment than has been custom in previous years. Whilst this is not specifically a rural issue, it may have Rural implications in some areas of Lochaber, where the policy had not previously been fully applied.

Recommendation

The Area Committee is invited to agree the Winter Maintenance priority network of Primary and Secondary roads presented in **Appendix B** for the 2015/16 winter service period.

Designation: Director of Community Services

Date: 7th August 2015

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Lochaber, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey

Background Papers: Winter Maintenance Policy – Report TEC 67/13; Transport
Environmental and Community Services Committee 19th
September 2013.

Revenue Budget 2015/16 – 18/19; Details of Budget Savings
(Booklet B, Part 1); Budget Saving CS/24b



The Highland Council

Transport, Environmental and Community
Services

Winter Maintenance Policy

August 2013

Winter Maintenance Policy

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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 and 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

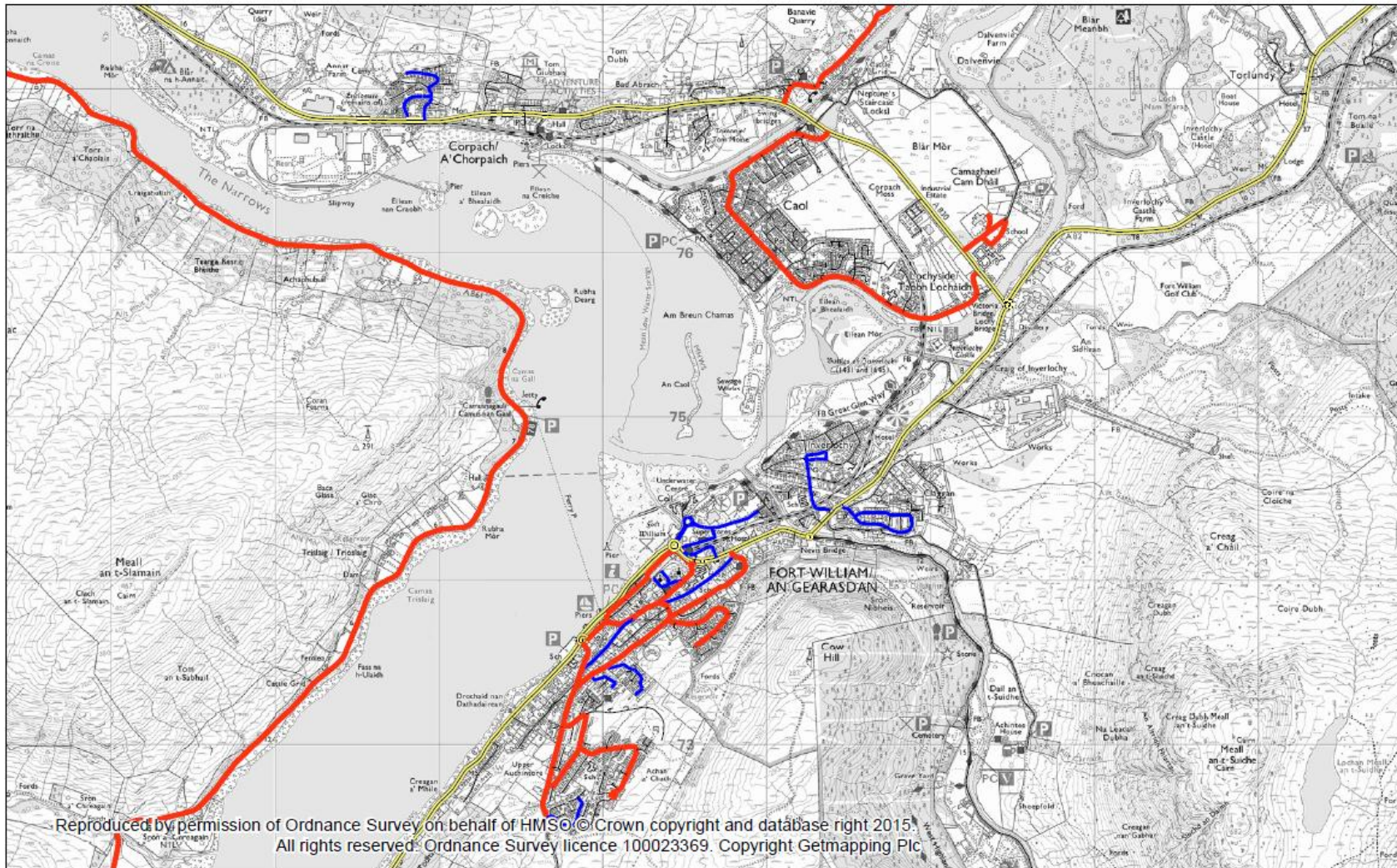
The winter maintenance service will be provided between 6am and 6pm and routes will be treated on a priority basis as resources permit

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 --



Winter Service Route Priorities

Lochaber Area (Inset)

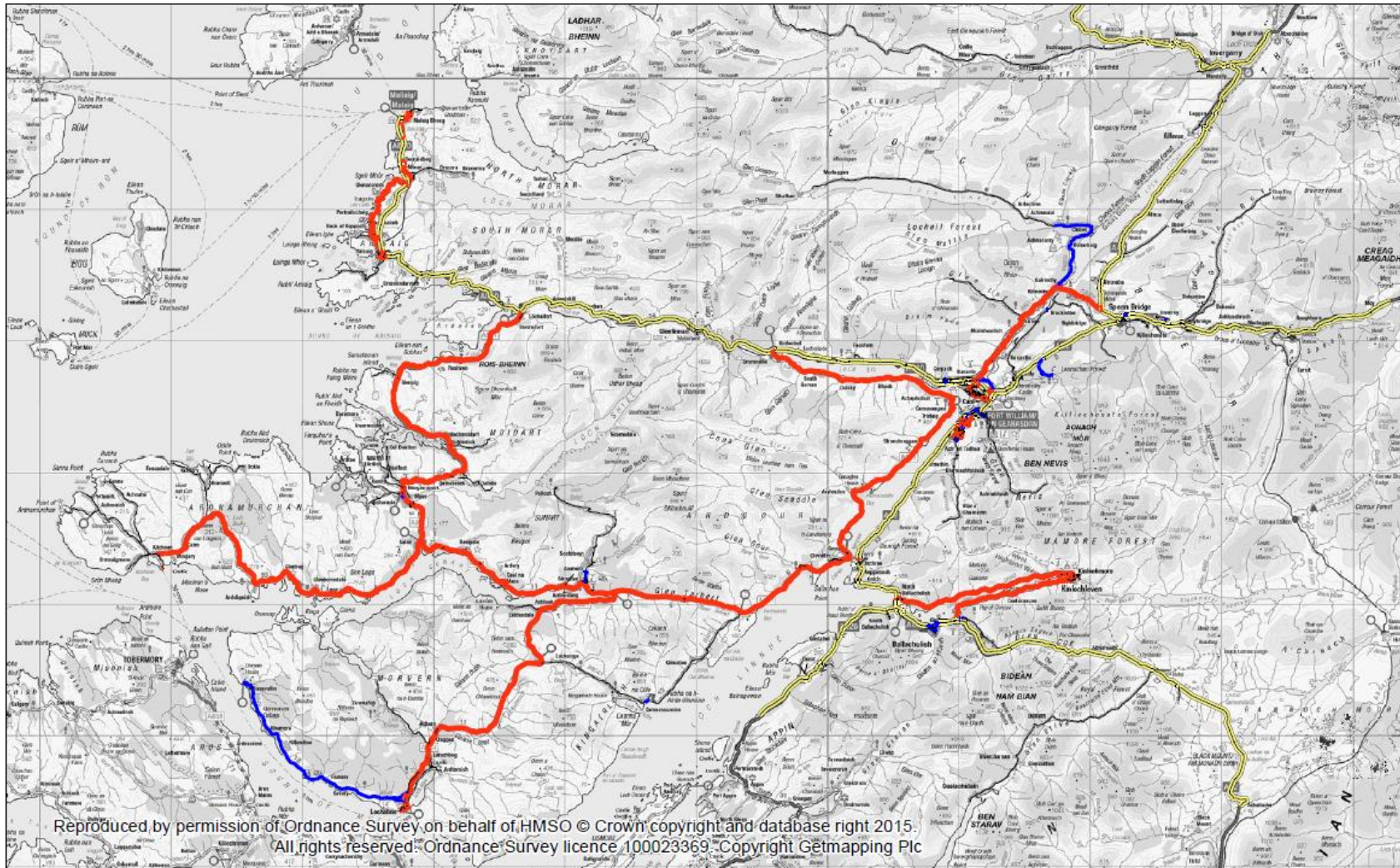
Issue 1.0 Rev 1.0 Date 11th August 2015

Ref:
 Date: July 2015



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Winter Service Route Priorities

Lochaber Area

Issue 1.0 Rev 1.0 Date 29th July 2015

Ref:
Date: June 2015

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