

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**

**INVERNESS CITY COMMITTEE – 8 FEBRUARY 2010**

Agenda Item	<b>3</b>
Report No	<b>ICC 02/10</b>

**City Service Delivery – R&CW Progress Report**

**Report by Area Roads & Community Works Manager**

**SUMMARY**

This report highlights progress and plans for Roads & Community Works activities.

The Area Roads and Community Works Manager will make a presentation about the extreme weather conditions experienced across the Highlands beginning on the weekend before Christmas. The presentation is based on that made by the Director of Transport, Environmental and Community Services (TECS) to the TECS Committee on 21 January 2010.

The measures put in place to curb expenditure on street cleaning have reduced the spend profile, and it is expected that the overall budget for Roads & Community Works, apart from winter maintenance, will come in on target.

Members are invited to note the reported progress and to comment on a proposed format for future Progress reports.

**1. Introduction**

1.1 On the 20 April 2009 members agreed the submission of quarterly progress reports to the Inverness City Committee. Recent progress reports have covered specific or single issues. This report is the first prepared by the new Area RCW Manager and provides a template for future reports containing information on all main RCW activities.

1.2 Information is provided about :

- Continuous Improvement – service delivery reviews;
- Winter Maintenance Service;
- Street Cleaning Service;
- Partnership Working; and
- Future Report Format

**2. Continuous Improvement**

2.1 As part of a culture of continuous improvement the Area RCW Manager and his team will be assessing and reviewing all operational practices. These reviews will be seeking opportunities for making operational efficiencies, especially in the context of the Council's projected future budgets.

- 2.2 The outcome of reviews that affect service delivery standards will be discussed with Ward Members, and will also be reported to this Committee.
- 2.3 Members are asked to note that specific issues relating to individual Wards should continue to be raised through the Ward Managers and at Ward Business Meetings and that officers from TECS will be happy to attend those meetings.

### **3. Progress and Plans**

This section of the report highlights current issues for the consideration of Members and presents.

- Progress during the last quarter;
- Plans for future service delivery

Reports to the Committee over the last year have provided much detail for Members and as reviews are completed this section will include discussion about improvement plans.

#### **3.1 *Winter Maintenance Service***

- 3.1.1 The Area RCW Manager will make a presentation about the extreme weather conditions experienced across the Highlands beginning on the weekend before Christmas. The presentation is based on that made by the Director of Transport, Environmental and Community Services (TECS) to the TECS Committee on 21 January 2010.
- 3.1.2 Members will be aware that the weather affected roads and pavements across the whole of the UK and affected the Highlands for a 4 week period.
- 3.1.3 Council employees worked extended hours to remove snow and ice as we experienced the coldest December since 1976, with prolonged freezing temperatures and heavy and repeated snow falls.
- 3.1.4 Additional plant and labour resources were provided by contractors and additional labour was provided by Housing and Property Services, the Criminal Justice Service, Prison Service and local volunteers.
- 3.1.5 The Council has supplied salt to a number of other Councils across Scotland, through mutual aid arrangements, as their salt stocks became critical. These actions were requested, and co-ordinated, by the Scottish Government Operations Resilience Room (SGoRR) Salt Cell and were based on pre-existing local mutual aid arrangements. In common with all other roads authorities the Council has been forced to implement measures to conserve stocks of salt to mitigate the risk that we might run out.
- 3.1.6 At the TECS Committee meeting on 21 January it was agreed that a review of the operational services delivered by TECS during that period will be undertaken. The outcome of the review will be reported to the TEC Services Committee in March 2010.

3.1.7 Ongoing issues arising from this period are:

- Replenishing salt supplies;
- Damage to the road and footway network;
- Thaw – flooding and drainage; and
- Cost pressures

## 3.2 ***Street Cleaning Service***

3.2.1 The actions taken to curb a predicted over-expenditure on Street Cleaning were reported to the Committee in November 2009.

In summary these actions were:

1. Reduce the number of agency workers to 2 over the winter period covering 2 retirements within the establishment;
2. Reduce the level of overtime utilised; and
3. Utilise a new gum removing machine that can be safely operated during normal working hours.

3.2.2 Based on expenditure profiles from previous years the measures put in place have reduced the spend profile, and it is expected that the overall budget for Roads & Community Works, apart from winter maintenance, will come in on target.

## 3.3 ***Partnership Working***

3.3.1 A feature of maintaining the public environment in the City is the important relationship between the BID team and the Roads and Community Works Service.

The new BID Manager and the new Area Roads & Community Works Manager have met briefly and are committed to a developing cooperation, particularly in relation to the Service Level Agreement already in operation between Inverness BID and The Highland Council.

## 4. **Progress Report Format**

4.1 The need to improve the format and content of progress reports was commented on by Members in June 2009. Members listed a number of elements they would like to see included in order to ensure proper scrutiny by the City Committee. These included:

- frequency of the tasks;
- a forward schedule;
- completion date records;
- inclusion of grass cutting, water course clearing, pavement maintenance, etc; and
- a standard format to be adopted for future reports.

4.2 This is the first progress report since then and the first prepared by the new Area RCW Manager. While it does not yet reflect all the comments made, these have been taken on board and it is proposed that the revised format described below will be used in future.

4.3 The report will include the following sections:

- Introduction
- **Progress and Plans** – presenting current issues and improvement plans for Members' information and scrutiny

and the standard sections on:

- Resource Implications
- Recommendations

4.4 Appendix A to this report presents a sample of the style and content that would be provided in future reports. Members will note that this is not a complete statement of activity, however it is intended that the next report will provide more detail, and is likely to include additional appendices containing schedules of work for specific activities such as gully cleaning.

## 5. Resource Implications

5.1 There are no resource implications arising from this report.

## 6. RECOMMENDATION

6.1 The Committee is invited to note:

- i. the ongoing operational reviews described in section 2;
  - ii. the information provided about the four week extreme weather event just experienced;
  - iii. that the measures implemented to curb over-expenditure on Street Cleaning have been effective;
  - iv. that the overall Roads & Community Works expenditure for INBS is expected to be as budgeted; and
- comment
- v. on the proposed format for future Roads and Community Works Progress Reports.

Signature:

Designation: Area Roads & Community Works Manager

Date: 27 January 2010

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Debbie Maguire & John Taylor, Community Works Manager

Background Papers

## ROADS & COMMUNITY WORKS PROGRESS & PLANS

## APPENDIX A

Item	Progress (including completion dates as appropriate)	Plans (including target completion dates as appropriate)
<b>1.</b>	<b>Street Cleaning</b>	
1.1	New gum buster purchased and in use	Sharing the old gumbuster with other areas
1.2		Employment of 'Future Jobs' employees from March – September
1.3		Review service delivery
<b>2.</b>	<b>Enforcement and Education</b>	
2.1	'Don't Litter' competition completed, prize giving event on 3 <sup>rd</sup> February	Dog health check week planned for summer period
2.2	Rewarding responsible dog owners providing vouchers for free worming treatment, donated by Crown Vets	Attendance at Black Isle Show planned (August)
2.3	Jan – Dec 09 Highland Wide; 70 dog fouling fpn's, 12 fly tipping fpn's and in excess of 120 schools visited (re; littering, fly tipping and good citizenship)	Attendance at Regional dog agility trials planned
2.4		Event for National poop scoop week to be held
<b>3.</b>	<b>Grounds Maintenance</b>	
3.1	Delay to winter works programme due to winter gritting	Complete winter works programme
3.2		Riverside trees work to be scheduled.
3.3		Review service delivery
<b>4.</b>	<b>Bught Nursery</b>	
4.1	Tender for floral displays in City centre submitted to BID result to be known February	
4.2	Tender for watering of floral displays in City centre submitted to BID result to be known February	Remedial works to flower beds to be completed in the Spring
4.3	Roundabout sponsorship agreements in place for 6 roundabouts	Continued efforts to attract sponsorship for 6 other roundabouts
4.4	Tender to provide floral displays in Aviemore successful	

<b>Item</b>	<b>Progress</b> (including completion dates as appropriate)	<b>Plans</b> (including target completion dates as appropriate)
<b>5.</b>	<b>Public Conveniences</b>	
5.1	Tender for cleaning of toilets submitted result to be known February	Implement the outcome of the tender.
5.2		Fort Augustus - New toilet facilities scheduled for completion Spring 2010
5.3		Review service delivery
<b>6.</b>	<b>Burials and Cremations</b>	
6.1	Tomnahurich Cemetery – scheme of works agreed for £88k from the Commutation Fund	Undertake works with substantial completion April 2010
6.2		Work with Ward Managers and Members to identify cemetery improvement schemes amounting to £112k from the Commutation Fund
6.3	Ongoing negotiations to acquire additional land for extension to Daviot Cemetery	Ongoing negotiations to acquire additional land for extension to Daviot Cemetery
6.4		Review of service delivery
6.5	A Contract to demolish Kilvean House to extent the area available for burials has been awarded.	The contract should start early in February and take 6 weeks. Much of the materials will be recycled by the contractor.
<b>7.</b>	<b>Play Areas</b>	
7.1	Four play areas in Inverness West having some upgraded equipment and surfacing installed; funded through Ward discretionary budgets. To be completed by end March.	Complete work by the end of March 2010.
7.2		Review of inspections and repairs
<b>8.</b>	<b>Road Gully Cleaning</b>	
8.1	Rolling programme ongoing	Rolling programme ongoing
8.2		Review options for recording of defects and task completion

Item	Progress (including completion dates as appropriate)	Plans (including target completion dates as appropriate)
<b>9.</b>	<b>Road Maintenance</b>	
9.1	A survey started of emergency pothole filling, permanent patching, overlay and reconstruction to estimate the total damage resulting from the extreme weather event over December and January.	Complete the survey at the end of February. Ongoing emergency patching and drainage as necessary. Planning for permanent repairs.
9.2	Reviewed preparedness for potential flooding incidents and purchased additional sandbags.	Prepared to empty gullies ahead of schedule as a result of blockage resulting from the use of sand during gritting operations.
<b>10.</b>	<b>Road Surface Dressing</b>	
10.1		Prepare and prioritise programmes of work based on need and allocated budgets for 2010/2011.
10.2		Strategic resource planning with other areas.
<b>11.</b>	<b>Road Structural Maintenance</b>	
11.1		Prepare and prioritise programmes of work based on need and allocated budgets for 2010/2011
11.2		Strategic resource planning with other areas.
<b>12.</b>	<b>Minor Capital Works Programme</b>	
12.1		Prepare and prioritise programmes of work based on need and allocated budgets for 2010/2011
<b>13.</b>	<b>Road Winter Maintenance</b>	
13.1	Operations ongoing as per current winter maintenance policy	Operations ongoing as per current winter maintenance policy
13.2		Review of service delivery during the recent extreme weather during December and January

Item	Progress (including completion dates as appropriate)	Plans (including target completion dates as appropriate)
<b>14.</b>	<b>Bridge Maintenance</b>	
14.1	<p>A862, Lentrans Bridge Deck Refurbishment.</p> <p>The contract to renew the deck waterproofing, was awarded to MacGregor Construction (Highlands) Ltd. The actual contract start on 18th January 2010 was delayed by one week due to bad weather. The contract completion date is 12th March 2010.</p> <p>The traffic management plan comprises a temporary speed reduction to 30mph over the extent of the Works. Within this and only during working hours there is a manually controlled 10mph section. This is our first trial of a new chicane arrangement permitted by the latest version of Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual. As a consequence, the traffic management is being carefully and continually assessed, and a Stage 3 Safety Audit was carried out by the Council's Safety Team during the first week of the contract.</p>	<p>The contract is expected to be substantially complete within the 8 week contract period.</p>