

Severe Weather Review – Interim Report

Policy and Strategy Committee

17 May 2010

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To update members on the review of the city's preparedness for severe weather following the report to committee of 18 January 2011.

2 Summary

- 2.1 This report outlines progress made to date and describes Project Team arrangements including governance, methodology of the review, key highlights and some early conclusions.

3 Main report

- 3.1 Following members' approval of recommendations made in the previous report a project team has been assembled and is working toward the remit as set out in Appendix 1. The official title for the project is 'Winter Weather – Working Together' and this will be used in all further communications, including the final report to committee in August 2011.

Project Team Arrangements

- 3.2 The Project Team is comprised of a Project Manager and around 15 key members of staff who contribute on an ad-hoc or part time basis. From the beginning of April the project has been supported by three full time members of staff. The Project Team meets fortnightly to review progress. These updates are relayed regularly to the Project's Leadership Group which is made up of cross departmental senior managers.

Governance

- 3.3 The Project is overseen by a corporate Leadership Group chaired by the Director of Services for Communities. The Group comprises representatives from all Council Departments. The membership is shown in Appendix 2

Methodology

- 3.4 The project currently has 23 inter-dependent work streams (see appendix 3) each with a 'Stream Leader' responsible for progressing the research, process

mapping and ideas development within that stream. Each stream will address the three categories of outputs set out in the remit.

3.5 The Project remit requires three categories of outputs:

- i) Short term low or no cost solutions which primarily build upon the good practice identified in the severe winters of 2009/10 and 2010/11 and embracing further ideas. For example, the 'strategic' grit dumps that were established in key locations in December 2010 will become part of future standard operating practice. 253 such sites have been identified and mapped across the six Neighbourhoods. The method will be improved in future by the use of 1 tonne capacity builders sacks which will ease the delivery of salt and grit, improve visibility of the sites and speed the clear up at the end of winter. This will link into the work to develop community support and resilience as set out in the paragraph below.
- ii) Enhanced service options such as improved arrangements for procuring and deploying external staff, purchasing additional relatively low cost plant and vehicles (and / or including them in the supply contracts), increasing salt storage, etc. This category will also include proposals for increasing community resilience by encouraging greater self-help by individuals, businesses and community groups.
- iii) A full step change to the way in which the council responds to severe weather, similar to Scandinavian or Canadian levels of response.

3.6 The project has adopted elements of PRINCE II project management methodology including a project plan with clear accountabilities, a risk register and the establishment of key milestones. The Council's preferred change management approach, PROSCI, is also being used in particularly in internal and external communications.

Key highlights.

- 3.7 A structured programme of community engagement is underway including gathering feedback through Neighbourhood Partnerships via either specially convened sessions or agenda slots on pre-arranged meetings. Early indications are that valuable information and ideas have been received at these events and that partners have found them informative and useful.
- 3.8 Through community engagement meetings, local priority locations such as key walking routes to shops, bus stops, health facilities, schools etc are being determined, agreed and mapped. The locations for strategic salt / grit dumps and waste collection points have been recorded and formalised. These arrangements were tested on Friday 11 March when, following a Severe Weather Warning from the Met Office, a decision was taken at directorate level to implement the emergency measures. No major problems were reported.
- 3.9 Neighbourhood Operations, including staff roles and responsibilities developed during the Severe Weather event, have been mapped and documented for incorporation into future plans and control arrangements.

- 3.10 A thorough systematic review of all salt/grit bin locations is also underway in collaboration with the local community groups. Currently there are 1700 grit bin locations across the City but these have evolved over time. Some areas with very active local residents may be well resourced, others less so.
- 3.11 A formal framework agreement is being put in place, through competitive tendering, for the supply of contractors staff and equipment to support the Council's activities. The service will be based on a 12 hour call response time.
- 3.12 Focus groups have been arranged and are underway using an approved market research company. Twelve focus groups are planned, one for each partnership area. These, along with the wider consultation that is taking place, will cover a broad demographic including the elderly, families and black minority and ethnic communities.
- 3.13 Meetings have been held with Lothian Buses to capture their feedback. Lothian Buses will act as a liaison with other bus companies to ensure as wide a range of experience as possible is captured. A specific meeting is also being convened with First Group.
- 3.14 Meetings are scheduled with cross departmental business continuity / emergency planning leads to ensure any plans and process are fully harmonious with other relevant corporate plans.
- 3.15 Demonstrations of new equipment such as removable snow blades, pedestrian and towed salt /grit spreaders are being arranged and will involve all potential key users.
- 3.16 Advice regarding clearing footpaths of snow and ice will be reissued in line with Scottish Government guidance. This guidance states that there is no law to prevent residents from clearing snow and ice on pavements outside or paths to their house, or any other buildings for which they are responsible.
- 3.17 At the time of writing a meeting with representatives of the Business Community is scheduled for 10 May 2011.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 All costs are currently contained within Services for Communities revenue budgets but arrangements have been put in place to enable separate monitoring of project expenditure.

5 Environmental Impact

- 5.1 There are no environmental impacts arising from this report. However a more thorough consideration of the environmental impact of the findings arising from the review will be considered in the final report to this Committee.

6 Conclusions

- 6.1 Whilst it is very early in the project to draw any definitive conclusions, a number of themes are emerging from the work done so far:

- Both the feedback from last winter and the early results of community consultation indicate a significant additional demand for pavement treatment, particularly in responding to local priorities such as shopping areas, clinics, schools and other community facilities
- There are far more priorities (Children and Families facilities, Health and Social Care facilities, etc) than are currently covered by the Category 1 - and probably Category 2 gritting routes.

6.2 In order that salt levels do not become a limiting factor, arrangements are being progressed to significantly increase the city's salt storage capacity.

7 Recommendations

7.1 It is recommended that the Committee

- Notes the content of this report
- Calls for a further report to this Committee on 9 August 2011

Mark Turley
Director of Services for Communities

Appendices	1. Project Remit 2. Membership of Leadership Group 3. Project Stream Matrix
Contact/tel/Email	Tony Lear 0131 529 3436 tony.lear@edinburgh.gov.uk
Wards affected	All
Single Outcome Agreement	National Outcome 15 - Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs
Background Papers	Severe Weather – Interim Report, Policy and Strategy Committee 18 January 2011

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Appendix 1 - Project Remit

To undertake a fundamental review of (the Council's / SfC's) winter emergency preparedness, policies and practices.

Specifically:

- To identify and use national and international research being carried out to assess the probability of future severe winter weather emergency events.
- To carry out research to identify best practice nationally and internationally in preparing for and responding to severe winter weather.
- To engage with stakeholders and partners including emergency services, transport operators, business organisations; neighbourhood partnerships, community councils and the wider community to understand their needs and priorities; to obtain their views and ideas; and to explore the opportunities for collaborative working.
- To identify and propose a comprehensive range of fully developed and costed options for dealing with future events.
- To review the Council's response to the winter emergencies during 2009/10 and 2010/11 in order to build on what went well and to identify areas for improvement.

The Project outputs will fall into three categories:

1. Short Term Improvements at little or no additional cost
2. Recommendations for service enhancements that will require some funding growth for more vehicles and equipment but will also focus on greater community involvement and 'self help'.
3. Options for a 'step change' increase in service preparedness with significant increases in resources – vehicles, plant, staff and sub contractors – to enable the Council to respond comprehensively to regular and prolonged periods of severe winter weather.

Appendix 2 –Winter Weather – Working Together Leadership Group

Name	Title	Department
Mark Turley	Director	Services for Communities
David Lyon	Head of Environment	Services for Communities
Euan Kennedy	Road Services Manager	Services for Communities
Tony Lear	Project Leader Business Performance Manager, Road Services	Services for Communities
Andy Gray	Head of Planning and Performance	Children and Families
Mary-Ellen Lang	Council Business Continuity Officer	City Development
James Pinkerton	Access and Duty Services Manager	Health and Social Care
Emma McNab	Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Manager	Services for Communities
Ian Raven	Performance, Strategy and Policy Manager	Corporate Services
Ian Stirton	Chief Internal Auditor	Finance Department
Kirsty Morrison	Director's Business Manager	Services for Communities

Appendix 3 – List of Winter Weather – Working Together Workstreams

1. Weather Research
2. Road Operations
3. Neighbourhood Operations
4. Communications, Customer Contact & Community Engagement
5. Support for Schools
6. Improved Resilience for Vulnerable People (including liaison with NHS)
7. Public Transport Resilience
8. Waste Services Resilience
9. Cemeteries and Crematoria Resilience (including liaison with Funeral Directors)
10. Parking Services Resilience / Contribution
11. Housing Property Services Resilience
12. Corporate Property Services Resilience
13. Corporate Support – Fleet, Catering, etc.
14. Business Engagement
15. Arrangements for External Support - Contractors
16. Emergency Plan Integration (including Fuel Stocks)
17. Strategic Scottish Government / COSLA
18. Salt Levels and Locations
19. Budgetary Control Arrangements
20. Command and Control
21. Roads Aftermath
22. Human Resources Issues
23. Internal Communications