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| Report on | Off Street Car Park Winter Maintenance |
| Reporting Officer | Terry Scullion, Head of Property Services |
| Contact Officer | Andrew Cassells, Director of Environment & Property |

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| Is this report restricted for confidential business? | Yes | |
| If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon | No | X |

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| 1.0 | Purpose of Report |
| 1.1 | To consider treatment of Off Street Car Parks in Mid Ulster District following heavy snowfall or prolonged freezing. |
| 2.0 | Background |
| 2.1 | Following the transfer of 23 Off Street Car Parks to Council in April 2015, Council adopted the same position as Transport NI and agreed that the car parks wouldn't be treated following heavy snowfall or prolonged freezing. |
| 2.2 | As members are aware Council did not benefit financially from the transfer as the Council's grant was reduced by the net income from the off street car parks. There was no budget transfer from DRD in April 2015 to the Council in relation to Winter Maintenance of the car parks. The current Council position is that we do not carry any winter maintenance in any of the off street car parks and have no budget or the capacity in house to support any winter maintenance of the off street car parks. |
| 2.3 | Legal advice indicates that whether the Council charges, or not, (in relation to winter maintenance provision) for off street car parking it has no impact on the liability that may fall to the Council in this regard; they are all publically provided facilities. |
| 3.0 | Main Report |
| 3.1 | Following a review of current safety arrangements the main options are summarised below: 1. Do nothing (Status Quo) This would include a continuation of the current risk based approach of control through signage to users to inform that the car park is not treated in ice or snow. 2. Use in house resources to treat the car parks This would incur additional cost of grit, staff time, plant and equipment, fuel. This would take frontline resources from other duties and a potential loss of service away from planned work. With the current working patterns of staff (approx 8am-4pm |

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| | <p>Monday to Friday) there would be a significant limitation to the work pattern required to be effective at gritting as the off street car parks are accessible 24/7.</p> <p>3. Engage with DfI (Transport NI) to grit as per their Schedule route and pay as you go</p> <p>Indications from Transport NI locally advised that their gritting teams, fleet and routes are at capacity and they would limited scope to provide a consistent service in relation to car park treatment. This would only be feasible where the car park was adjacent to a DfI Roads Gritting Route.</p> <p>4. Engage with the a third party contractor to carry out as required, or provide a fully monitored service</p> <p>A third party Contractor could provide a reactive Gritting and Snow Clearing Service, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week during the winter season. The contractor could monitor the temperatures through Daily Met Office Weather Report for each area and react depending on pre agreed trigger conditions being met. This would determine treatment requires for a 24 hour.</p> <p>Alternatively a contractor could be engaged to treat areas on a pay as you go basis when pre-agreed conditions are met and a Council request is received.</p> <p>For either service there is a significant cost to Council the value of which could vary from year to year.</p> <p>5. Include in the DfI Town Centre Footpath Clearance Agreement</p> <p>This would require an extension to the existing agreement with DfI Transport NI to meet the same trigger conditions for treatment. Similar to point 'b' above, significant adjustments to Council capacity would be required that may be cost prohibitive. Third party support would have to be utilised to support Council in fulfilling the agreement and manage the priorities between its own estate and that of others. This approach would only be feasible for the car parks in the five town centres within the District.</p> <p>6. Provide Grit Bins on a self-help basis during the winter season</p> <p>This is a similar approach to the remainder of occupied facilities in the Council estate and topped up by Council operatives for application by facilities.</p> |
| 3.2 | <p>Considering resource available, with the social and economic vitality of the towns, and the important roles the car parks play to provide access to local services, any future winter maintenance programme could prioritise treatment based on population size and footfall into two priority groupings:</p> <p>Priority 1 Town Off Street Car Parks for the removal of snow deposits, and were thick and persistent frost exists between 24 and 48 hours and is expected to continue based on local Daily Met Office Weather Reports.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magherafelt • Cookstown • Dungannon <p>Priority 2 Town Off Street Car Parks for the removal of snow deposits, and were thick and persistent frost exists in excess of 48 hours and is expected to continue based on local Daily Met Office Weather Reports, and only after Priority 1 areas have been satisfactorily attended to.</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maghera • Coalisland |
| 3.3 | While the settlements are the same as the five areas included in Council's Winter Maintenance Agreement 18/19 with Transport NI. It should be noted the off street car parks are outwith of this agreement. |
| 3.4 | This would mean that the remaining Off Street Car Parks in Castledawson (Hillhead), Fivemiletown, and Clogher would remain untreated. |
| 4 | Other Considerations |
| 4.1 | <p>Financial & Human Resources Implications</p> <p>Financial: There is no current budget provision for winter maintenance of off street car parks, and no provision has been made in the 18/19 estimates.</p> <p>The estimated cost, for a single treatment in a 24 hour period for Snow/ice clearance and gritting is averaging approximately £136.25 per carpark (subject to measurement). The service fee to undertake weather monitoring to trigger treatment of the carparks for the period 1st Nov -31st March would be approximately £3,020.00.</p> <p>Human: Maintenance response would have to be carried out by a competent third party due to limited in-house capacity. Officer time in managing winter maintenance arrangements.</p> |
| 4.2 | <p>Equality and Good Relations Implications</p> <p>It should be noted that Council does not provide a winter maintenance service to all of its other car parks or similar assets within its estate. There could, potentially, be issues arising from the Councils obligation to comply with Rural Needs Act.</p> |
| 4.3 | <p>Risk Management Implications</p> <p>Council has responsibility for upkeep and maintenance of car parks, and associated facilities. As the Council car parks are used by public, staff and visitors; arrangements must be in place to mitigate risk. This is currently controlled through fixed warning signage and regular car park inspection and defect repair.</p> <p>The Council currently has no overall Policy in relation to Winter Maintenance of its facilities.</p> |
| 5.0 | Recommendation(s) |
| 5.1 | Members are requested to note the content and agrees that Officers develop a Winter Maintenance Policy to cover the entire Council Estate (including Off Street Car Parks) with a view to reporting back to the Environment Committee prior to the 1 November 2018. |

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| 6.0 | Documents Attached & References |
| 6.1 | None |