

Report on	Town Centre Footpath Snow/Ice Clearance Agreement
Date of Meeting	14 th September 2021
Reporting Officer	Terry Scullion, Head of Property Services
Contact Officer	Eunan Murray, Grounds and Cemeteries Manager

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To inform member's of the rolling annual agreement with DfI/Transport NI in relation to the treatment of footpaths in the main town centres within Mid Ulster District following heavy snowfall or prolonged freezing.
2.0	Background
2.1	In the 2018/19 winter season an agreement was reached between Council and Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Roads to facilitate the treatment of footways within the business centres for the five largest towns within the Mid Ulster District.
2.2	The agreement reached reflected the legal basis and the operational experience in operating such an agreement over previous years. Following Council agreement in 2018 it would be extended annually.
2.3	It should also be noted that the agreement has been in place each year since the formation of Mid Ulster District Council, and was not triggered during the 2020/21 winter season.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>The main issues covered within the Agreement are summarised below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Payment of annual Service Fee. In the 2020/21 winter season it was £2,393.90 to reflect annual consumer price index changes. b) During extreme conditions following heavy snowfall or prolonged freezing Council will assist the Department with works for the footways and pedestrian areas contained in maps included in the appendix for the five main settlements.

<p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p> <p>3.4</p>	<p>c) Works will be carried out by Council only on receipt of a request from the Department and in circumstances when it is practicable for the Council to respond.</p> <p>d) The request will come from Department's Section Engineer to the Council's nominated representative.</p> <p>e) The Department shall provide any salt free of charge.</p> <p>f) The Council shall only provide a response to requests during normal operational hours of the street cleansing workforce, except in the case of an emergency or by mutual agreement.</p> <p>g) The Department shall indemnify and keep indemnified the Council to the extent that the Department enjoys indemnity under Article 9 (3) of the Roads (NI) Order 1993.</p> <p>h) The duration of the agreement will be from 1st November to 31st March each winter season.</p> <p>Retail cores are used to ensure a more consistent application of the agreement across the business centres of each town. Detailed operational maps will be developed for use by staff in the event the agreement is triggered.</p> <p>The annual agreement will be extended into the 2021/22 winter season.</p> <p>It should be noted that is in relation to town centre footways, and does not relate to the ongoing work of identifying the areas of Council Estate, including Outdoor Recreation spaces that would be affected by a more wide-ranging approach in particular with reference to the application of gritting to pathways and footways where the surfaces are suitable for such treatments; that is in relation to tarmac, bitmac and related similar surfaces.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Other Considerations</p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications</p> <p>Financial: Implementation of the agreement should incur little additional cost to the Council as it seeks to utilise street cleansing and grounds maintenance operatives, and other service resources which would otherwise have been engaged in their normal operations save for extreme conditions following heavy snowfalls or prolonged freezing. The annual service fee is agreed linked to the Consumer Price Index as in previous years.</p> <p>Human: Officer time in managing the Agreement, liaising with DfI/Transport NI and in supervising any operational activity on the ground.</p>

	<p>Risk Management:</p> <p>It should be noted that the Council has no statutory duty in relation to the clearance of ice and snow from footways; that responsibility lies with Transport NI. The clearance of footways at times of extreme ice and snow from the main town centre assists in the free movement of people and therefore supports the economic cores in our town centres. This helps reduce the impact of extreme winter weather and reduces the associated economic and social risks.</p>
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	<p>Equality & Good Relations Implications: None.</p>
	<p>Rural Needs Implications: None.</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	Members are requested to note the content of this report for the 2021/22 winter season with regards to the treatment of town centre footways when extreme conditions following heavy snowfalls or prolonged freezing persists.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix 1 – Retail core maps for Snow/Ice Clearance operations included in the Council/TNI agreement