

**CLEANING AND DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS IN RESPONSE TO CLIMATE
CHANGE**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the additional funding allocated from the 2020/21 budget process to mitigate the impacts of weather related damage and climate change with specific emphasis on gully cleaning and drainage improvements.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Members consider the update provided in this report and that;
- 2.2 Members note the delivery of this project has slipped due to the Covid pandemic and that budget will be rolled forward into 2021/22 and 2022/23 to provide funding over two financial years.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 As part of the 2020/21 budget process additional funds were allocated to be spent across 20/21 and 21/22 to mitigate the impacts of weather related damage and climate change with specific emphasis on gully cleaning and drainage improvements. The additional funding was £0.500m and is planned to be used for a new gully machine, operative(s) and investment in an inventory enhancement /programme. The delivery of this project has slipped due to the Covid pandemic and that budget will be rolled forward into 2021/22 and 2022/23 to provide funding over two financial years.
- 3.2 Within the council's existing vehicle fleet there are currently two chassis units with interchangeable gully and winter maintenance units. These machines are used across the whole of the council area for gully cleansing and provide additional back up for winter maintenance covering for breakdowns and/or heavy localised winter weather events. Utilising multi-body vehicles provides value for money enabling one chassis unit to be used for multiple purposes.

- 3.3 In line with the February budget motion, officers are progressing the procurement of two additional multi-purpose vehicles which will be similar to the existing gully/winter machines mentioned above. This will enable one unit to be based in each of the four area committee locations. In addition to the vehicles, two additional drivers/operators will be recruited on time limited contracts of up to two years to focus on gully cleansing and drainage work.
- 3.4 During lockdown, gully cleansing was classed as non-essential work with only known hot spots having been dealt with. Pre-Covid and lockdown, the gully cleansing units worked across the council area to provide a gully cleansing facility. With the additional resource, a revised programme is being compiled which will enable our operations team to deliver a focused programme of gully cleansing through the majority of the year. There is likely to be periods during the depths of winter where the winter maintenance units will be required to be deployed and the drivers/operators will be utilised accordingly. As part of the additional gully programme there will be a focus on inventory data collection and update to further enhance our ongoing digital delivery approach.
- 3.5 During lockdown the majority of vehicle suppliers had effectively closed and furloughed staff which meant progressing new and replacement vehicles was not always possible. This was the case for the gully/multi-body vehicles. Whilst many suppliers are not back up to full operation following the Covid- pandemic, there is now a supply chain market available and our Fleet and Procurement teams are engaging the procurement process of these new units. The lead time for delivery will be somewhere between 4 and 6 months and once delivery times have been confirmed the recruitment of the additional two staff will be aligned to this.
- 3.6 Due to the Covid pandemic delays detailed above, the delivery of this project has slipped and budget will be rolled forward into 2021/22 and 2022/23 to provide funding over two financial years.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The additional resource outlined in this report, in terms of both vehicles and drivers/operators, will help to mitigate the impacts of weather related damage and climate change with specific emphasis on gully cleansing and drainage improvements. Due to the Covid pandemic the procurement and progress of this particular project has slipped with budget rolled forward into 2021/22 and 2022/23.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Policy – in line with budget motion from February 2020
- 5.2 Financial – budget in place as detailed in report
- 5.3 Legal - none
- 5.4 HR - none
- 5.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: 5.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics - none
- 5.5.2 Socio-economic Duty - none
- 5.5.3 Islands - none

- 5.6. Risk – this additional resource will reduce the risk of flooding and blocked drains
- 5.7 Customer Service - none

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