

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

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The report provides the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee with 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.
- 1.2. At the February 2022 Council budget meeting, £0.500m of funding was allocated for two new multi-purpose vehicles, which would be used for road side gully cleansing as well as for winter maintenance. Due to a number of external factors, the procurement of these vehicles have been delayed.
- 1.3. Members of the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee were provided with an update on 10th September 2020, which outlined the delay in progress, as a result of the Covid pandemic. This report confirms that the vehicles are currently being built and are expected to be delivered to the council at the turn of the year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members note the update provided in this report

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

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 At the Council's budget meeting in February 2020, additional funding of £0.500m was agreed for the procurement of two multi-purpose vehicles to help mitigate the impacts of weather related damage and climate change. This report provides members of the Environment, Development and Infrastructure with an update on the procurement of the vehicles.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that Members note the update provided in this report

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 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 the delay in procuring vehicles and the funding remains in the earmarked reserves.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 In line with the February 2020 budget decision, 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. The delivery of these vehicles was originally anticipated much earlier.

- 4.4 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 and due to back orders, availability etc, build was significantly delayed with delivery anticipated towards the end of this year/beginning of next. The two vehicles due to be added in to the fleet are quick change body units with Plough Conversions to enable a gritter body with a 6 cubic metre capacity spread. The gritter body being demountable can be added or removed as required to support the winter programme and to offer resilience to the current Fleet. Currently the two ECON chassis' and gritter bodies are complete with the gully cleansing bodies currently being built.
- 4.5 Due to the Covid pandemic and delays detailed above, the delivery of this project has slipped and budget will be drawn down from earmarked reserves when required.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 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 2022/23.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Policy – in line with budget decision from February 2020.
- 6.2 Financial – budget agreed in February 2020 and currently in earmarked reserves for drawdown.
- 6.3 Legal – none known.
- 6.4 HR – none known.
- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty:
- 6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – none known.
- 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – none known.
- 6.5.3 Islands – none known.
- 6.6. Risk – this additional resource will reduce the risk of flooding and blocked drains.
- 6.7 Climate Change - mitigate the impacts of weather related damage and climate change with specific emphasis on gully cleaning and drainage improvements.
- 6.8 Customer Service – none known.

Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services
Kirsty Flanagan

Policy Lead for Roads and Transport, Councillor Andrew Kain

For further information contact:

Jim Smith, Head of Roads and Infrastructure Services

Jim.Smith@argyll-bute.gov.uk