

STORM EOWYN – ESTIMATE OF COST UPDATE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A report was presented to the Council on 26 June 2025 which provided detail on the initial cost estimates for the response and repair works undertaken by the Council in relation to Storm Eowyn.
- 12 This report provides an update on the cost information provided in June with costs updated based on the latest information available. The report also provides an update on the value of the final claim submitted to the Scottish Government under the Bellwin Scheme in relation to costs incurred as a consequence of Storm Eowyn.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Committee is recommended to:
- a) Note the updated cost estimates in respect of Storm Eowyn.
 - b) Note that some cost estimates remain unknown and are subject to ongoing assessment by the relevant Council officers.
 - c) Note the change in the estimated cost of support for Live Argyll in relation to the potential delay in the reopening of the Helensburgh Leisure Centre.
 - d) Note that the updated cost estimates are currently within the funding previously identified and agreed by the Council.
 - e) Note that a final report will be brought back to committee in due course.

3. DETAIL**3.1 Background**

- 3.1.1 Storm Eowyn struck Argyll and Bute on 24 January 2025, bringing wind speeds of up to 100 mph and causing significant damage to the Council's infrastructure, particularly to roads, sea walls and harbour facilities. In addition, a number of other Council properties were also damaged and required repair the most significant of which was Helensburgh Leisure Centre which suffered extensive damage to its roof and water damage to the interior of the building and fixtures and fittings.
- 3.1.2 Since the storm, a number of works projects have been undertaken to repair the damage caused by the storm to the Council's infrastructure and property and work remains ongoing on some sites.

3.2 Bellwin Claim

- 3.2.1 As noted in the report to Council on 26 June 2025, the Council activated the Bellwin Scheme in respect of Storm Eowyn and an initial claim for financial support was submitted to the Scottish Executive on 24 May 2025 for the sum of £352,898. The final claim for funding support under the Bellwin Scheme was submitted to the Scottish Government on 24 September 2025 for the value of £337,138. The final claim amount reduced by £15,760 following additional scrutiny by Financial Services staff to ensure that the costs claimed met the scheme's criteria.
- 3.2.2 To date, a payment of £303,424, equivalent to 90% of the final claim amount, has been received. The final balance of the claim will be paid following the conclusion of the Scottish Government's scrutiny of the claim which has yet to be completed.

3.3 Live Argyll

- 3.3.1 The Council agreed on 26 June 2025 to provide financial assistance to Live Argyll whose financial position has been significantly impacted due to the closure of the Helensburgh Leisure Centre. The financial assistance extended to Live Argyll included £65k per month for seven months, at an estimated cost of £0.455m. It should be noted that the time period agreed for this support was not fixed by members but was based on an assumption on the likely timescale for repairs to be completed and the centre to reopen based on the information available at the time. The assistance agreed also provided Live Argyll with to access the Council's redundancy earmarked reserve up to a maximum of £0.100m.
- 3.3.2 Due to a combination of complexities during the initial phases of the repair work and the need for further surveys to be completed, a review of the programme of works at the Helensburgh Leisure Centre is currently being completed. The outcome of the review will be known in the coming weeks however it is likely that the reopening will be delayed. Subsequently, it is recommended that the £65k per month financial assistance provided to Live Argyll in lieu of lost income is extended by a further 6 months to reflect the anticipated delay in reopening, increasing the estimated cost of the support by £0.390m to £0.845m
- 3.3.3 Redundancy costs for Live Argyll employees made redundant as part of the cost saving programme undertaken to limit the company's financial deficit as much as possible have yet to be finalised but will not exceed the £0.100m agreed previously by the Council.

3.4 Updated Cost Estimates

- 3.4.1 Financial Services staff have conducted a review of the cost of the repairs and other remedial works in respect of the damage caused by Storm Eowyn. It should be noted that all costs in relation to Storm Eowyn are not fully known or confirmed yet and therefore the figures presented in this report are a snapshot at this time and may be subject to change when the final costs are known.
- 3.4.2 The table below provides details of the updated costs and a comparison to the costs presented to Council in June 2025:

	Estimated Cost at June 2025 £000	Estimated Cost at January 2026 £000	Increase / (Decrease) in Cost £000
Roads and Infrastructure Assets	2,000	2,000	0
Miscellaneous Property	146	79	(67)
Major Property	720	620	(100)
Helensburgh Waterfront	TBC	TBC	TBC
Live Argyll	455	845	390
Bellwin Claim (Storm Eowyn & Storm Darragh)	397	337	(60)
Other Expenditure associated with storm	234	304	70
Total Estimated Expenditure*	3,952	4,185	233

*These are still **estimated costs** and do not include any shortfall in relation to Helensburgh Leisure Centre in respect of the difference between insured works and required works.

3.5 Funding

3.5.1 In addition to the Bellwin Scheme claim mentioned above in paragraph 3.2.1, funding totalling £4.092m has been identified by the Council and EDI Committee to be used to meet the cost of the impact the storm on the Council. The table below provides a breakdown of the funding identified and the latest comparison between the estimated cost and funding allocated:

	£000
Total Estimated Expenditure at January 2026 as noted in para 3.4.2	4,185
Roads Reconstruction Budget	(2,000)
Bellwin Claim Submitted	(337)
Absorbed within 2024-25 revenue reported outturn	(792)
Earmarked Reserve Agreed on 26 June 2025	(1,300)
Estimated Surplus / (Deficit) on Funding at January 2026*	244

*Does not include shortfall in relation to Helensburgh Leisure Centre in respect of the difference between insured works and required works.

3.5.2 Overall, £0.244m of the funding provided to meet the costs of the storm have still to be allocated. It is expected however that there will be additional costs incurred in relation to the repairs at the Helensburgh Leisure Centre and that the surplus will reduce. Once all of the costs are finalised, it is recommended that any remaining surplus is returned to the Unallocated General Fund.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 This report provides an updated estimate of the costs associated with Storm Eowyn.
- 4.2 Based on the estimates within this report, there is currently a surplus on the funding allocated to the impact of the storm of £0.244m however this subject to further adjustment when the remaining estimated costs are known.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Policy: Policies in place for climate change, coast protection etc where applicable these policies are being worked to.
- 5.2 Financial: As outlined within the report, a surplus of £0.244m is currently estimated however further costs are likely, particularly in relation to the works at Helensburgh Leisure Centre.
- 5.3 Legal: Any projects with legal implications are progressing as expected.
- 5.4 HR: None for Council, however, Live Argyll's cost reduction plan has had staffing implications.
- 5.5 Customer Service: Officers quickly reacted to the storm damage which limited the impact on customers. The most affected property was Helensburgh Leisure Centre.
- 5.6 Risk: There remains a significant risk of future weather events affecting the Council's property and infrastructure, there is also a risk that the estimated costs as outlined in this report could increase.
- 5.7 Climate Change: The impact of the storm is likely to be linked to climate change and has highlighted the need for further adaptation to be made to infrastructure to increase resilience to future weather events. The level of investment required to improve resilience is expected to be significant.
- 5.8 Fairer Scotland Duty: None known.
- 5.9 Equalities protected characteristics: None known.
- 5.10 Consumer Duty: None known.
- 5.11 Islands Communities: None known.
- 5.12 Children's Rights and Wellbeing: None known.

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12 January 2026

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