

Individual Executive Member Decision

2019/20 Highway Winter Service Plan

Committee considering report: Individual Executive Member Decision

Date ID to be signed: 10 October 2019

Portfolio Member: Councillor Richard Somner

Forward Plan Ref: ID3793

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To seek approval of the 2019/20 Highway Winter Service Plan.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That the Executive Portfolio Member for Transport and Countryside approves the 2019/20 Highway Winter Service Plan.

3. Implications

3.1 **Financial:** The cost of providing the Winter Service, including the maintenance of West Berkshire Council owned salt bins (31 no.) and undertaking up to 50 primary precautionary treatments on 511.8km of carriageway, is included in the 2019/20 revenue budget. (There is no budget provision for treatment of the secondary network, snow clearance network or footway networks).

3.2 **Policy:** To comply with best practice and the statutory duty to maintain the public highway in a safe condition, the Transport and Countryside Service reviews and produces a Highway Winter Service Plan annually to set out its operational proposals for Members to consider.

3.3 **Personnel:** None arising from this report.

3.4 **Legal:** Following a House of Lords ruling, the Council has had a statutory duty from 10 October 2003 to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable that the safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice.

The Winter Service is to be procured through the Highways, Bridges and Street Lighting Term Maintenance Contract 2016.

3.5 **Risk Management:** None arising from this report.

- 3.6 **Property:** None arising from this report.
- 3.7 **Other:** A Stage 1 Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared.

4. Consultation Responses

Members:

- Leader of Council:** Councillor Lynne Doherty
- Overview & Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman:** Councillor Alan Law
- Ward Members:** All Ward Members
- Opposition Spokesperson:** Councillor Alan Macro
- Local Stakeholders:** All Town and Parish Councils
- Officers Consulted:** Jon Winstanley, Rhona Bellis, Sarah Clark, Carolyn Richardson
- Trade Union:** Not applicable

5. Other options considered

- 5.1 None.

6. Introduction/Background

- 6.1 Government guidance for highway management recommends the provision of an annually reviewed operational plan for winter service. A summary of the 2018/19 winter season and the 2019/20 Highway Winter Service Plan is provided below.

Summary of the 2018/19 Winter Season

- 6.2 October was slightly milder and much sunnier than normal in general. By the middle of the month it became unusually warm with south or south-westerly winds bringing maximum temperatures into the mid-20s Celsius on the 13th of the month. The remainder of the month saw a lot of dry and settled weather, but a few air frosts were seen during the final few days of the month.
- 6.3 Increasingly mild west to south-westerly winds soon developed during November, keeping it mild, wet and breezy. South to south-westerly airflows maintained mild but largely dry weather around the middle of the month. However, a colder easterly airflow developed for a time, before an area of low pressure brought the month to a wet and windy conclusion.
- 6.4 Overall, December was another mild month, although rainfall was around average. The first week saw frequent spells of rain but also rather mild air. High pressure over Scandinavia dominated the weather just before mid-month, giving mostly dry but cold conditions. This changed on the 15th, as Storm Deirdre moved in from the south-west, bringing widespread and persistent rain to the region. During the final

week of the month, it became calmer and drier as high pressure lingered close to the UK.

- 6.5 January was a very dry month and although temperatures were close to average, the first half of the month was relatively mild with only transient cold snaps. The second half of January saw a more general cold spell develop, with wintry showers and bands of wintry precipitation. The final few nights were especially cold, with temperatures widely falling well below zero.
- 6.6 February was a dry, mild and generally very sunny month. After a very cold start to the month, with temperatures falling well below zero on the night of the 2nd, the first half of the month saw frequent incursions of Atlantic fronts from the west and south-west, with Storm Erik bringing strong winds to the region on the 8th. From the middle of the month, high pressure brought dry, settled and mild weather, but cold nights with air frosts at times. Towards the end of the month, largely sunny skies and mild southerly airflows generated a winter heatwave, with temperatures climbing into the high-teens Celsius widely and reaching 21.2C at Kew Gardens on 26th. This was the first time a temperature of over 20C has ever been recorded during a British winter.
- 6.7 March was another mild month (temperatures on average 2C above normal), with the majority of the precipitation during the first half of the month. Storm Freya moved across the country on the 3rd, bringing a period of strong winds to the region overnight. Storm Gareth also brought strong gusts on the 12th. From the middle of the month, high pressure became a semi-persistent feature, maintaining largely dry and settled conditions across southern England.
- 6.8 April began on a cold note, with wintry showers developing on the 2nd and 3rd. Through the middle of the month, high pressure over Scandinavia extended its influence south-east across the country, giving a long spell of dry and settled weather and allowing widespread warm and sunny weather to develop over the Easter weekend. Some heavy showers and thunderstorms broke out on the 24th and 25th, while Storm Hannah brought outbreaks of rain and some gusty winds on the 27th.
- 6.9 During the season the Primary Treatment network was treated on 41 occasions and the Snow Clearance Network 12 times. As a result approximately 2,900 tonnes of salt was used in total through the season. With this in mind the salt stock held at Chieveley Depot will be 1,500 tonnes for the coming season. This stockpile will be replenished throughout the winter season to maintain sufficient supply in accordance with the Winter Service plan. However, should the need arise the Council have access to 1,000 tonnes of additional salt which is stored off site by the Council's Term Contractor (Volker Highways Ltd).
- 6.10 Details of Volker Highways Ltd performance and the number of treatments undertaken during the 2018/19 winter season are provided in Appendix B and C. Of the 369 routes treated during the winter period, 366 were completed within the specified 3 hour period. Through the season only 3 routes were not completed on time.
- 6.11 For the 2018/19 winter period, the Highway Winter service Plan and associated treatment routes were published on the Council's website and incorporated into the Council's online mapping facilities.

- 6.12 The “Safer Driving” leaflet was revised and copies were distributed to relevant stakeholders. It was also made available on the Council’s website.

Highway Winter Service Plan 2019/20 – Treatment Networks

Primary Treatment Network

- 6.13 The Primary treatment Network, which represents 40 % of the highway network, and will be treated when hoar frost and/or ice is forecast, includes all “A” and “B” classified roads and some strategically important “C” class and unclassified roads. No routes have been added or removed from this network for the coming season. Details of these routes are given in Appendix A of the Highway Winter Service Plan 2019/20.

Secondary Treatment Network

- 6.14 For the coming season it is proposed to include Shepherds Mount, Compton on the Secondary Treatment Network. This represents 20% of the highway network and will be treated when hoar frost and/or ice have been experienced for an unbroken period of 72 hours or greater (ie, sub-zero temperatures experienced through a period of 3 continuous days and nights). No routes have been removed from this network for the coming season. Details of these routes are given in Appendix B of the Highway Winter Service Plan 2019/20.

Snow Clearance Treatment Network

- 6.15 The Snow Clearance Treatment Network (Roads), which accounts for 49% of the highway network ensures, that as far as is reasonably practicable all bus routes and access routes to schools and doctors surgeries will be cleared of snow as a priority. No routes have been added or removed from this network for the coming season. Details of these routes are given in Appendix H of the Highway Winter Service Plan 2019/20.
- 6.16 Footways will be cleared of snow using cross-service resources as they become available. The Footway Snow Clearance Network includes major town and village centres as well as footways to NHS hospitals and surgeries, schools and other key public buildings owned by the Council. The only amendments to this network is the extension of treatment on Church Hill, East Ilsley and the prioritisation of the pedestrian ramps to subways. Details of these routes are given in Appendix I of the Highway Winter Service Plan 2019/20.

Contingency Treatment Network

- 6.17 The Contingency Treatment Network which covers 46.8% of the highway network, will be treated when hoar frost and/or ice or snow are forecast but only when there is a national shortage of salt or limited salt suppliers and/or there has been a Government directive to limit salt use. No routes have been added or removed from this network for the coming season. Details of these routes are given in Appendix C of the Highway Winter Service Plan 2019/20.

Salt Bins

- 6.18 Currently there are 464 salt bins on the network serving Council Offices and public buildings with daily access and the road network. Of these 31 are owned and maintained by the Council (WBC) and 433 are owned and maintained by the Town or Parish Council.

Operations

- 6.19 The Winter Service period for 2019/20 will operate from Monday 28 October 2019 to Sunday 29 March 2020, although this period may be extended if weather conditions dictate.
- 6.20 Precautionary salting, snow clearance, salt bin provision and the response to adverse weather will be carried out in accordance with the policy and guidance as detailed within the Council's Highway Winter Service Plan 2019/20.
- 6.21 All decisions and actions will be made/instructed by the Council's Winter Service Duty Officer using forecast information as supplied by the Council's contracted forecaster and local roadside weather stations.
- 6.22 Operationally, the delivery of the Highway Winter Service will be provided by the Council's Highway Maintenance Term Contractor, Volker Highways Ltd.
- 6.23 A copy of the 2019/20 Highway Winter Service Plan will be issued to all Members and all Town/Parish Councils as part of the consultation process. It will also be available on the Council's website.
- 6.24 Salt stocks to be maintained above the minimum requirement of 500 tonnes throughout the winter season. At the start of the winter season a total of 2,500 tonnes of salt will be available for the Council's use (1,500 tonnes at Chieveley Depot and 1,000 tonnes off site).

Communications

- 6.25 A copy of the Highway Winter Service Plan 2019/20 is provided in Appendix G.
- 6.26 Following approval of this report, the "safer Driving" leaflet will be revised to reflect any changes in the Primary Treatment Network and any other recommendations within the report. The leaflet will also be made available on the Council's website.
- 6.27 Following approval of this report, an electronic copy of the Highway Winter Service Plan 2019/20 will be distributed to all Members and Parish/Town Councils.
- 6.28 The Highway Winter Service Plan 2019/20 and associated treatment routes will be published on the Council's website to allow users to make an informed decision whether to make a journey.
- 6.29 A map and list showing salt bin locations and ownership will also be published on the Council's website.

7. Supporting Information

- 7.1 In preparing this report, reference was made to the following supporting information/documentation:

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission's review of the 2010/11 winter season.

UK Roads Group publication "Lessons Learned from Severe Weather, February 2009.

Well-managed Highway Infrastructure – A Code of Practice, October 2016.

The resilience of England's Transport Systems in Winter – Interim report, July 2010.

8. Options for Consideration

- 8.1 None.

9. Proposals

- 9.1 It is proposed that the Highway Winter service Plan 2019/20 is approved.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 That the Executive Portfolio Member for Transport and Countryside approves the 2019/20 Highway Winter Service Plan.

Background Papers: Approved 2018/19 Highway Winter Service Plan.

Wards affected:

All Wards, Town and Parish Councils

Strategic Priorities Supported:

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priority:

X GP1: Develop local infrastructure to support and grow the local economy

Officer details:

Name: Andrew Reynolds

Job Title: Asset Manager

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E-mail Address: andrew.reynolds@westberks.gov.uk

11. Executive Summary

- 11.1 Following a House of Lords ruling, the Council has had a statutory duty from 10 October 2003 to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable that the safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice.

12. Conclusion

- 12.1 That the Executive Portfolio Member for Transport and Countryside approves the 2019/20 Highway Winter Service Plan.

13. Appendices

- 13.1 Appendix A – Data Protection Impact Assessment
- 13.2 Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment
- 13.3 Appendix C – Contractors Performance in delivering the 2018/19 Winter Service
- 13.4 Appendix D – Summary of Winter Operations 2018/19
- 13.5 Appendix E – Changes to the Primary, Secondary, Snow Clearance and Contingency Network 2019/20
- 13.6 Appendix F – Salt Bins to be removed from the Network 2019/20
- 13.7 Appendix G – List of departures from the Code of Practice for Maintenance Management
- 13.8 Appendix H – Highway Winter Service Plan 2019/20
- 13.9 Appendix I – Summary of Consultation Responses

Appendix A

Data Protection Impact Assessment – Stage One

The General Data Protection Regulations require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for certain projects that have a significant impact on the rights of data subjects.

Should you require additional guidance in completing this assessment, please refer to the Information Management Officer via dp@westberks.gov.uk

Directorate:	Economy and Environment
Service:	Transport and Countryside
Team:	Asset Management Team
Lead Officer:	Andrew Reynolds
Title of Project/System:	Highway Winter Service Plan 2019/20
Date of Assessment:	10 September 2019

Do you need to do a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)?

	Yes	No
<p>Will you be processing SENSITIVE or “special category” personal data?</p> <p>Note – sensitive personal data is described as “data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, and the processing of genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person’s sex life or sexual orientation”</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
<p>Will you be processing data on a large scale?</p> <p>Note – Large scale might apply to the number of individuals affected OR the volume of data you are processing OR both</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
<p>Will your project or system have a “social media” dimension?</p> <p>Note – will it have an interactive element which allows users to communicate directly with one another?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
<p>Will any decisions be automated?</p> <p>Note – does your system or process involve circumstances where an individual’s input is “scored” or assessed without intervention/review/checking by a human being? Will there be any “profiling” of data subjects?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
<p>Will your project/system involve CCTV or monitoring of an area accessible to the public?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
<p>Will you be using the data you collect to match or cross-reference against another existing set of data?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
<p>Will you be using any novel, or technologically advanced systems or processes?</p> <p>Note – this could include biometrics, “internet of things” connectivity or anything that is currently not widely utilised</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X

If you answer “Yes” to any of the above, you will probably need to complete [Data Protection Impact Assessment - Stage Two](#). If you are unsure, please consult with the Information Management Officer before proceeding.

Appendix B

Equality Impact Assessment - Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act), which states:

- “(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:**
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;**
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; This includes the need to:**
 - (i) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;**
 - (ii) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;**
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, with due regard, in particular, to the need to be aware that compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.**
- (2) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.**
- (3) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.”**

The following list of questions may help to establish whether the decision is relevant to equality:

- Does the decision affect service users, employees or the wider community?
- (The relevance of a decision to equality depends not just on the number of those affected but on the significance of the impact on them)
- Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?
- Is it a major policy, or a major change to an existing policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?
- Will the decision have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?
- Does the decision relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?
- Does the decision relate to an area with known inequalities?
- Does the decision relate to any equality objectives that have been set by the council?

Please complete the following questions to determine whether a full Stage Two, Equality Impact Assessment is required.

What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Executive to make:	Approve Highway Winter Service Plan 2019/20
Summary of relevant legislation:	Section 111 of the Railways and transport Act 2003
Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the Council's key strategy priorities?	No
Name of assessor:	Andrew Reynolds
Date of assessment:	10 September 2019

Is this a:		Is this:	
Policy	Yes	New or proposed	n/a
Strategy	No	Already exists and is being reviewed	Yes
Function	Yes	Is changing	Yes
Service	Yes		

1 What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	To comply with best practice and the statutory duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice (Railways and Transport Act 2003).
Objectives:	The Council aims to provide as far as reasonably practicable safe travelling conditions on the treated network during the winter season.
Outcomes:	Safe travelling conditions on treated roads.
Benefits:	Reduce the number of road traffic collisions during the winter season.

2 Note which groups may be affected by the proposed decision. Consider how they may be affected, whether it is positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this.

(Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.)

Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age	Older residents may have difficulty using footways during the winter season due to frost, ice or snow.	Customer Services calls. Claim submissions.
Disability	As above.	Customer Services calls. Claim submissions.
Gender Reassignment	n/a	n/a
Marriage and Civil Partnership	n/a	n/a
Pregnancy and Maternity	n/a	n/a
Race	n/a	n/a
Religion or Belief	n/a	n/a
Sex	n/a	n/a
Sexual Orientation	n/a	n/a

Further Comments relating to the item:

Following the severe snow episodes in 2009 and 2010, the Council undertook a full and detailed performance review across all its services. The review was carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission and their findings and recommendations, where applicable, were incorporated within the Winter Service Plan. As a result of this review, a defined snow clearance footway network was established across the district which included major town and village centres as well as footways to NHS surgeries, West Berkshire Community Hospital, schools and other key public buildings. In addition, the Winter Service Plan is sent out to consultation to all Members and Town/Parish Councils each year and the Plan and associated treatment routes are published on the Council's website to allow users to make an informed decision whether to make a journey. As a result of the above, no Stage 2 Audit is required.

3 Result	
Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?	No
Please provide an explanation for your answer:	
Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	No
Please provide an explanation for your answer:	

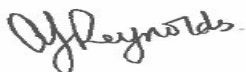
If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered 'yes' to either of the sections at question 3, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.

If a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the [Equality Impact Assessment guidance and Stage Two template](#).

4 Identify next steps as appropriate:	
Stage Two required	No
Owner of Stage Two assessment:	n/a
Timescale for Stage Two assessment:	n/a

Date: 10 September 2019

Name:



Please now forward this completed form to Rachel Craggs, Principal Policy Officer (Equality and Diversity) (rachel.craggs@westberks.gov.uk), for publication on the WBC website.