
Winter Service Plan 2021-22

Committee considering report: Individual Executive Member Decision

Date ID to be signed: 14 October 2021

Portfolio Member: Councillor Richard Somner

Forward Plan Ref: ID4144

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To seek approval of the 2021/22 Highway Winter Service Plan.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Executive Portfolio Member for Transport and Countryside approves the 2021/22 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 (30 no.) and undertaking up to 50 primary precautionary treatments on 511.8km of carriageway, is included in the 2021/22 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 Environment Department 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 Tony Vickers

Local Stakeholders: All Town and Parish Councils

Officers Consulted: Jon Winstanley, Ian Wigginton, 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 2020/21 winter season and the 2021/22 Highway Winter Service Plan is provided below.

Summary of the 2020/21 Winter Season

- 6.2 October 2020 saw temperatures that were seasonally average. However, it was a wet month with a number of locations having around 150-200% of their average rainfall. Storm Alex brought strong winds and heavy rainfall at the beginning of the month. There were no major winter weather events across the district.
- 6.3 November 2020 was generally milder than average, with temperatures around 1.5°C above normal. Rainfall through the month was average. Across the UK as a whole, it was the sixth warmest November on record. The month started mild and wet, before it turned drier and colder.
- 6.4 December 2020 was a relatively mild and wet month. Temperatures were around 0.5°C above average, with approximately 130% of expected rainfall. The start of the month was cold and unsettled, with some heavy rainfall. Several frosts were recorded. It turned milder through the middle of the month, with further spells of rain. Storm Bella brought very strong winds on 26th of the month.
- 6.5 January 2021 was a colder than average month with precipitation near normal. The average temperature was around 1.3°C below normal. Across the UK as a whole, it was the coldest January since that of 2010. The start of the month brought cold

weather with wintry showers and overnight frosts. It turned milder for a short time around the middle of the month. The second half of the month was unsettled and overall cold, bringing spells of rain, strong winds and wintry showers. Storm Christoph brought heavy rain, strong winds and briefly milder temperatures on 19th and 20th of the month.

- 6.6 February 2021 was slightly milder than average. The average temperature was close to 0.5°C above normal with precipitation near normal. The opening days of the month were rather unsettled but on the mild side. However, a change in the large-scale pattern brought bitterly cold easterly winds from around the 7th. Snow showers and longer periods of snow brought accumulations across the district, with some drifting snow too, as winds strengthened. Temperatures remained below zero by day, with some sharp to severe frosts overnight. Mid-month the cold weather moved away and it became more unsettled.
- 6.7 March 2021 was drier than normal, with temperatures close to average. The month started settled with some mild nights before it turned colder with some frosty nights. It became more unsettled through the middle part of the month and very windy for a time. The final third of the month brought mixed conditions, but overall it remained mild. Towards the end of the month it became very warm with daytime temperatures reaching 20.0°C.
- 6.8 April was a cold and very dry month. Mean temperatures were about 2.5°C below normal. Overnight air frosts were common, and in the first half of the month road temperatures also fell below zero more often than normal. With plenty of sunshine through the day the second half of the month saw road temperatures above zero. Overall, there were few noteworthy weather events in the month, but a few locations did see snow on the morning of the 12th.
- 6.9 During the season the Primary Treatment network was treated on 47 occasions and the Snow Clearance Network twice. As a result approximately 2,490 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 2020/21 winter season are provided in Appendix C and D. Of the 423 routes treated during the winter period, 422 were completed within the specified 3 hour period.
- 6.11 For the 2020/21 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 2021/22 – 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 2020/21.

Secondary Treatment Network

- 6.14 The Secondary Treatment Network, which 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 road surface temperatures are continuously experienced through the period for 3 days and nights). No routes have been added or removed from this network for the coming season. Details of these routes are given in Appendix B of the Highway Winter Service Plan 2020/21.

Snow Clearance Treatment Network

- 6.15 The Snow Clearance Treatment Network, 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 2020/21.
- 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. Details of these routes are given in Appendix I of the Highway Winter Service Plan 2020/21.

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 2020/21.

Salt Bins

- 6.18 Currently there are 465 salt bins on the network serving Council Offices and public buildings with daily access and the road network. Of these 30 are owned and maintained by the Council (WBC) and 435 are owned and maintained by the Town or Parish Council.

Operations

- 6.19 The Winter Service period for 2021/22 will operate from Monday 1 November 2021 to Sunday 3 April 2022, 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 2021/22.
- 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 2021/22 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 2,250 tonnes of salt will be available for the Council's use (1,250 tonnes at Chieveley Depot and 1,000 tonnes off site).

Communications

- 6.25 A copy of the Highway Winter Service Plan 2021/22 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 2021/22 will be distributed to all Members and Parish/Town Councils.
- 6.28 The Highway Winter Service Plan 2021/22 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 2021/22 is approved.

10. Conclusion

10.1 That the Executive Portfolio Member for Transport and Countryside approves the 2021/22 Highway Winter Service Plan.

Background Papers:

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: ☒ No: ☐

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months	<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Report is to note only	<input type="checkbox"/>

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:

- ☐ **PC1: Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes**
 - ☐ **PC2: Support everyone to reach their full potential**
 - ☐ **OFB1: Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire**
 - ☒ **GP1: Develop local infrastructure to support and grow the local economy**
 - ☐ **GP2: Maintain a green district**
 - ☐ **SIT1: Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships**
-

Officer details:

Name: Andrew Reynolds
Job Title: Asset Manager
Tel No: 01635 519076 (Ext: 2076)
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 2021/22 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 2020/21 Winter Service
- 13.4 Appendix D – Summary of Winter Operations 2020/21
- 13.5 Appendix E – Changes to the Primary, Secondary, Snow Clearance and Contingency Network 2021/22
- 13.6 Appendix F – Salt Bins to be removed from the Network 2021/22
- 13.7 Appendix G – List of departures from the Code of Practice for Maintenance Management
- 13.8 Appendix H – Highway Winter Service Plan 2021/22
- 13.9 Appendix I – Summary of Consultation Responses

Corporate Board's recommendation (if applicable):

N/A

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:	Place
Service:	Environment Department
Team:	Asset Management Team
Lead Officer:	Andrew Reynolds
Title of Project/System:	Highway Winter Service Plan 2021/22
Date of Assessment:	9 September 2021

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><i>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”</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will you be processing data on a large scale?</p> <p><i>Note – Large scale might apply to the number of individuals affected OR the volume of data you are processing OR both</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will your project or system have a “social media” dimension?</p> <p><i>Note – will it have an interactive element which allows users to communicate directly with one another?</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will any decisions be automated?</p> <p><i>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?</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will your project/system involve CCTV or monitoring of an area accessible to the public?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will you be using the data you collect to match or cross-reference against another existing set of data?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will you be using any novel, or technologically advanced systems or processes?</p> <p><i>Note – this could include biometrics, “internet of things” connectivity or anything that is currently not widely utilised</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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 2021/22
Summary of relevant legislation:	Section 41 (1A) of the Highways Act 1980, which was modified on 31st October 2003, by 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:	9 September 2021

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 (Section 41 (1A) of the Highways Act 1980, which was modified on 31st October 2003, by Section 111 of the 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: 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: See above comment.	
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: See above comment.	

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

Name:



Date: 9 September 2021

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.