

# Individual Decisions

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The attached report will be taken as an  
Individual Portfolio Member Decision on:

4 October 2007

Ref:	Title	Portfolio Member	Page No.
ID1270	Highway Winter Service and Adverse Weather Plan 2007/08	Graham Jones	1

## Individual Decision

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Highway Winter Service and Adverse Weather Plan 2007/2008</b>		
<b>Report to be considered by:</b>	Councillor Keith Chopping	<b>on:</b>	4 October 2007
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	ID1270		

### Purpose of Report:

To seek approval of the 2007/2008 Winter Service and Adverse Weather Plan.

### Recommended Action:

That the Executive Member for Planning and Transport approves the Highway Winter Service and Adverse Weather Plan 2007/2008.

### **Reason for decision to be taken:**

Government guidance for highway management recommends the provision of an annually reviewed operational plan for winter service.

### **List of other options considered:**

None.

### **Key background documentation:**

- **Draft** Winter Service and Adverse Weather Plan 2007/08.
- **Draft** Precautionary Salting Route Plan 2007/2008.
- **Draft** Safer Driving Leaflet.

<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Keith Chopping
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### **Contact Officer Details**

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## Supporting Information

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### 1. Background

- 1.1 To comply with best practice in respect of maintenance of the West Berkshire road network during the winter, the Highway and Transport Service produces a Winter Service Plan each year setting out its operational proposals for Members to consider.
- 1.2 For 2007/08 the scope of the plan has been extended to include adverse weather events such as flooding.

### 2. Winter Service Plan

- 2.1 Several requests for roads to be added to the primary salting network were received over the course of the last winter from Members, various Parish Councils and members of the public. However, none of the requests for salting achieved the criteria for inclusion in the primary salting network. Therefore no changes are proposed to the primary salting network this year.
- 2.2 No new secondary salting routes have been proposed by Members, Parish Councils or members of the public.
- 2.3 Officers recommend that for the winter season of 2007/2008 the primary network should not be increased. The total primary salted network remains 37.7% of the total road network in West Berkshire.
- 2.4 A draft copy of the Council's revised leaflet "Safer Driving this Winter on West Berkshire Roads" can be found in Appendix 6. This leaflet will be available in all Council buildings with public access as well as on the Council's website. Copies will also be distributed to all Town and Parish Council's.
- 2.5 The salting of the secondary network will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Winter Service Plan although there is no specific budget for this operation.
- 2.6 A report highlighting the recommendations detailed in the Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management – 'Well Maintained Highways' (July 2005) is given in Appendix 4.
- 2.7 The footway snow clearance routes have been revised this summer in line with the recommendations of the Well Maintained Highways – Code of Good Practice for Highway Maintenance Management.
- 2.8 The sand bag policy is currently being reviewed following widespread flooding across the district on 20 July 2007 and will be updated once approved.

### 3. Operational Arrangements for 2007/2008

- 3.1 The winter service period for 2007/2008 will operate from Monday 29 October 2007 (week 44) to Sunday 6 April 2008 (week 14) although this period will be extended if weather conditions dictate.

The decision to salt will be made by the West Berkshire Duty Officer, based on forecast information supplied by the Met Office and local roadside weather stations. Once a decision is made, the Duty Officer will inform the Council's Term Maintenance Contractor Fitzpatrick and if instructed, the defined primary network will be treated with an application of rock salt to prevent the formation of hoarfrost and/or ice.

- 3.2 During prolonged hazardous conditions (defined as sub-zero conditions that have been experienced for at least 72 hours), a decision whether to salt the secondary road and town centre footway networks will be made by the Council's Winter Service Manager. This role is normally performed by the Principal Engineer (Highways Maintenance) or in his absence by a Project Engineer.
- 3.3 As detailed in the Council's information leaflet 'Safer Driving this Winter on West Berkshire Roads', the Council does not recommend the use of bicycles during periods of prolonged hazardous conditions. With the exception of shared carriageway/cycleway routes on a primary or secondary salting route, shared footway/cycleway and remote cycleway networks are not salted when hoar frost, ice or prolonged hazardous conditions are forecast. Being part of the carriageway, shared carriageway/cycleway routes on the primary and secondary salting route networks will be salted.
- 3.4 There is no provision within the current winter service budget for farmers or other contractors to formally assist the Council in the removal of snow deposits from the rural road network. Snow clearance of the Primary and Secondary routes will continue to be carried out in accordance with the Winter Service Plan by the Council's Contractor Fitzpatrick using their own equipment.

## Appendices

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Appendix 1 - Performance Indicator review for Winter 2006/2007.

Appendix 2 - Summary of Winter Operations for 2006/2007.

Appendix 3 - Proposed revisions to Salting Network.

Appendix 4 - List of Exceptions to Winter Service Policy and Plan.

Appendix 5 - Winter Service Policy and Plan 2007/2008 (Draft) – *due to its size this document is not included within this report but a copy is located in the Members room.*

Appendix 6 - Revised "Safer Driving this Winter on West Berkshire's Roads" leaflet (draft) – *A copy of the leaflet is in the Members room.*

## Implications

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<b>Policy:</b>	The proposed Winter Service Policy will ensure as far as is reasonably practicable that the road network in West Berkshire is maintained to a safe standard during the winter months for all highway users including residents as well as those travelling through the District.
<b>Financial:</b>	The cost of providing the call out service, providing salt bins and undertaking up to 50 primary precautionary salting bins, is included in the 2007/2008 revenue budget. (The costs of salting the secondary network and snow clearance operations and footway treatment are <b>not</b> included). The Winter Service budget for this provision of salt bins is currently fully committed. No additional salt bins can be added until an identical number is removed.
<b>Personnel:</b>	None arising from this report.
<b>Legal:</b>	Following a House of Lords ruling, the Council has a statutory duty since 10 October 2003 to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice.
<b>Environmental:</b>	There are issues surrounding the impact of rock salt on the environment and these are addressed in the current Highway Term Contract.
<b>Equalities:</b>	None arising from this report.

**Partnering:** None arising from this report.  
**Property:** None arising from this report  
**Risk Management:** None arising from this report  
**Community Safety:** None arising from this report

**Consultation Responses**

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**Members:**

**Leader of Council:** Councillor Graham Jones

**Overview & Scrutiny  
Commission Chairman:** Councillor Brian Bedwell

**Policy Development  
Commission Chairman:** Councillor Quentin Webb

**Ward Members:** N/A

**Opposition Spokesperson:** Councillor Keith Woodhams

**Local Stakeholders:** The Winter Plan is widely circulated, every year, to stakeholders including adjoining authorities, emergency services, Parish and Town Councils and their views are incorporated into the report for the subsequent winter.

**Officers Consulted:** Mark Edwards, Gabrielle Esplin, David Holling, Jenny Noble.

**Trade Union:** Not applicable.

<b>Is this item subject to call-in.</b>	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
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 type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by OSC or associated Task Groups within preceding 6 months		<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>

## APPENDIX 1

**Term Maintenance Contract for Highways and Bridges 2006 to 2011 – Performance for Winter 2006/07**

1 October 2006 saw the start of a new term maintenance contract with a new contractor Fitzpatrick Contractors Ltd. As part of the new contract a number of performance indicators were included and the results of these and other local indicators are listed below:

**Contract Performance Indicator** – percentage of gritting routes completed within the specified time and returns provided by the contractor.

Month	Percentage of routes completed within time	Contract minimum requirement
April 2006	100.0 %	100.0 %
November 2006	96.7 %	100.0 %
December 2006	91.1 %	100.0 %
January 2007	98.8 %	100.0 %
February 2007	92.9 %	100.0 %
March 2007	98.0 %	100.0 %
Annual average	96.25 %	100.0 %

**Local Performance Indicator** – number of Public Liability claims relating to accidents/crashes attributed to ice/snow conditions (quarterly).

Quarter	Number of claims received	Number of claims refuted	Number of claims still to be settled
Quarter 3 – 1 October 2006 to 31 December 2006	Nil	Nil	Nil
Quarter 4 – 1 January 2007 to 31 March 2007	2	2	2

**Local Performance Indicator** – efficiency review of Primary salting routes and proposed changes.

Due to the severe flooding experienced during July 2007 (and the subsequent on going clean up operations) staff from both West Berkshire Council and Fitzpatrick Contractors Ltd. have not been able to review the efficiency of the Primary salting network this summer.

It has been agreed that this will be completed next summer when Fitzpatrick Contractors Ltd. have used their fleet of new gritting vehicles (due for delivery in October 2007) and have a complete years data from their global positioning recording system available to analyse.

## APPENDIX 2

## Summary of Winter Operations 2006/2007

Month	Precautionary Salting runs on Primary Network	Part/Wet Patches/spot treatment	Precautionary Salting runs on Secondary Network
April 2006	1	0	0
November 2006	3	0	0
December 2006	8	3	1
January 2007	8	3	1
February 2007	10	1	2
March 2007	5	0	0
<b>Total for financial year 1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>
Number of days with multiple salting runs	4	2	0
Operation days for year 1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007.	33	4	4

## APPENDIX 3

### **-Proposed Additions/Deductions to Salting Network & Salt Bin Schedule**

**1. Roads to be added to the Primary Salting Network 2007/2008**

None this financial year.

**2. Roads to be deleted from the Primary Salting network**

None this financial year

**3. Roads to be added to Secondary Salting Network:**

None this financial year.

**4. Roads to be deleted from Secondary Salting Network:**

None this financial year.

**5. Previously approved salt bins to be added to schedule:**

None this financial year.

**6. Salt bins to be deleted from schedule:**

None this financial year.



## APPENDIX 4

## Code of Practice for Maintenance Management Recommendations for the Winter Service Policy and Plan 2007/2008

Recommendation	Description	Adopted by WBC	Comments	Reason for not adopting recommendation
1	Authority to formally approve and adopt a policy for it's Winter Service.	Yes	To be approved by Individual Decision 24 September 2007	
2	Authority to formally approve, adopt and publish in consultation with others a Winter Service Operational Plan.	Yes	Distributed to : Council and Parish Members Adjoining Councils Highway Agency and Agents Emergency Services Media Organisations Motoring Organisations Network Rail	
3	Authority to define Primary and Secondary treatment routes for carriageways based upon the road hierarchy and other local factors.	Yes	Precautionary Salting Route Plan	
4	Authority to define treatment routes for footways based upon footway hierarchy and other local factors.	Yes	Winter Service Plan Appendix I	
5	Authority to define treatment routes for promoted schemes such as 'Safe Routes to School' and 'School Bus Routes' based upon the general maintenance hierarchy but adapted to take in to account local factors identified.	No		The Winter Service should be co-ordinated to ensure that route planning and treatment regimes meet the road users reasonable expectations for consistency. The Council only salts specified sections of the footway network during prolonged hazardous conditions. Precautionary salting of isolated lengths of footway on a 'safe route to school' would be inconsistent with this policy and would present a greater hazard.

## Code of Practice for Maintenance Management Recommendations for the Winter Service Policy and Plan 2007/2008

Recommendation	Description	Adopted by WBC	Comments	Reason for not adopting recommendation
6	Authority to co-ordinate and co-operate with adjoining local and strategic authorities to ensure that route planning and treatment regimes meet road users' reasonable. Expectations for consistency and value for money	Yes	Consultation exercise undertaken summer 2003. Winter Service Plan issued to all adjoining Councils.	
7	Authority to produce and publish a non-technical summary of its proposed Winter Service Operational Plan including plans of treated network together with guidance on safe use of network.	Yes	'Safer Driving this Winter on West Berkshire Roads' leaflet published and circulated through public offices and libraries.	
8	Authority to establish arrangements for information to be made available to local radio, police etc.	Yes	Winter Service Plan Appendix N	
9	Authority to have an annual review of its Winter Service Operational Plan in consultation with users and key stakeholders to take in to account changing local circumstances.	Yes	Winter Service Plan issued to all Members, Parish Councils, adjoining local authorities & emergency services. All requests for salting received over season are reviewed for possible changes to routes and salt bin schedule.	
10	Authority to take full advantage of weather forecasting information services.	Yes	West Berkshire Council makes use of information from roadside sensors and detailed site specific forecasts issued by the Met Office in its decisions making process.	

## Code of Practice for Maintenance Management Recommendations for the Winter Service Policy and Plan 2007/2008

Recommendation	Description	Adopted by WBC	Comments	Reason for not adopting recommendation
11	Authority to annually review arrangements for delivering its Winter Service in consultation with all service partners, consultants and contractors to ensure clear terms of reference for the provision and management of all resources, Health and Safety and insurances.	Yes	Contractual requirement with Term Contractor Fitzpatrick.	
12	Authority to undertake annual technical review (including calibration) of all equipment, vehicles and plant prior to the start of the Winter Service season.	Yes	Contractual requirement with Term Contractor Fitzpatrick. Roadside weather stations annually serviced by Sensing Systems and Vaisala	
13	Authority to annually review training and development needs for all personnel who deal directly with implementing Winter Service, in order that any necessary training can be provided prior to the start of the Winter Service season.	Yes	Formal training of WBC staff undertaken with Vaisala in November 2005.  Fitzpatrick operatives all accredited to City & Guilds 6157 now superseded by 6159.	
14	Authority should manage the purchase, storage and use of de-icing materials within the principles of Best Value, sustainability and consortia purchasing.	Yes	Contractual requirement with Term Contractor Fitzpatrick.	
15	Authority to hold comprehensive and accurate records of all Winter Service activities. The use of data loggers should be considered for this process.	Yes	All records held with the Highways Manager	

## APPENDIX 5

**Draft Winter Service Policy and Plan 2007/2008** - *due to its size this document is not included within this report but a copy may be obtained upon request from David Cook – Tel: 01635 519475.*

## APPENDIX 6

**Draft Revised 'Safer Driving this Winter on West Berkshire Roads' leaflet** – *A copy of the leaflet may be obtained upon request from David Cook – Tel: 01635 519475.*