

Individual Executive Member Decision

Highways Winter Service Plan 2022/23

Committee considering report:	Individual Executive Member Decision
Date ID to be signed:	6 October 2022
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Richard Somner
Forward Plan Ref:	ID4283

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To seek approval of the 2022/23 Highway Winter Service Plan.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That the Executive Portfolio Member for Transport and Countryside approves the 2022/23 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 524.4km of carriageway, is included in the 2022/23 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 Councillor Alan Law

Commission Chairman:

Ward Members: All Ward Members.

Opposition Councillor Tony Vickers

Spokesperson:

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 2021/22 winter season and the 2022/23 Highway Winter Service Plan is provided below.

Summary of the 2021/22 Winter Season

- 6.2 October 2021 was a wet month, with around 150% of the average rainfall recorded. It was also a mild month, with temperatures around 1.0°C above average for this time of the year. The few days around the start 1-4th, middle 18-20th and end 29-31st saw unseasonable amounts of rainfall, but it stayed largely dry for the rest of the month. Road Surface Temperatures (RST's) remained above zero throughout October.
- 6.3 November 2021 was a very dry month, with less than 20% of the average rainfall recorded. Temperatures were around 0.5°C below the average for the time of year. An active cold front moved through the region at the start of the month, bringing RST's close to or just below zero. However, the rest of the first half of the month saw dry and mild conditions. The second half of the month saw much colder conditions. The 26-27th saw the arrival of Storm Arwen and also brought wet and windy conditions, followed by some chilly nights. The 28th also saw a spell of sleet and snow, though this didn't settle.

- 6.4 December 2021 saw rainfall amounts close to the average for the time of year. It was also a mild month, with temperatures around 1.5 - 2.0°C above the average for the time of year. It was a chilly start to the month, with regular air frosts developing overnight and RST's regularly fell close to or below 0°C. Storm Barra then brought wet and windy conditions across the region. The rest of the month was very mild, resulting in RST's remaining mostly above zero. The end of the month brought unseasonably mild conditions.
- 6.5 January 2022 was another very dry month seeing less than 30% of the average rainfall. Temperatures were close to the average for the time of year. Across England, it was the sunniest January on record. It was a very mild start to the month. The next few weeks saw a return to chilly but dry conditions. The end of the month saw Storm Malik and Storm Corrie arrive, but central South England didn't see any severe impacts from either of these events.
- 6.6 February 2022 saw rainfall amounts close to the average for the time of year and it was a rather warm month, with temperatures close to 2°C above the monthly average. The first half of the month saw changeable conditions, but the month was dominated by the 3 storms (Dudley, Eunice and Franklin) affecting the UK between 16-21st. This was the first time 3 storms have been named by the UK Met Office in the same week since the new storm naming system was introduced. Storm Eunice brought the largest impacts to Southern England. A "danger to life" red weather warning for wind was issued by the UK Met Office during the storm.
- 6.7 March 2022 saw rainfall amounts close to the average for the time of year. It was also a mild month, with temperatures around 1.0°C above the March average. The end of the month was cold, with RST's falling close to or below zero at times.
- 6.8 April 2022 saw another very dry month, with less than 30% of the average rainfall recorded. Temperatures were around 0 – 0.5°C above the average for the time of year. April saw a changeable start to the month. The first two nights were rather chilly, with RST's falling below zero in places. The rest of the month saw mostly dry and mild conditions. RST's remained above zero during the second half of the month.
- 6.9 During the season the Primary Treatment network was treated on 49 occasions and the Snow Clearance Network on three occasions. As a result approximately 3,038 tonnes of salt was used in total through the season. With this in mind the salt stock held at Chieveley Depot will be 1,200 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 2021/22 winter season are provided in Appendix C and D. Of the 441 routes treated during the winter period, 438 were completed within the specified 3 hour period.
- 6.11 For the 2021/22 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 2022/23 – 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 2022/23.

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 2022/23.

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 2022/23.
- 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 2022/23.

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 2022/23.

Salt Bins

- 6.18 Currently there are 441 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 441 are owned and maintained by the Town or Parish Council.

Operations

- 6.19 The Winter Service period for 2022/23 will operate from Monday 31 October 2022 to Sunday 2 April 2023, 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 2022/23.
- 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 2022/23 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 2,200 tonnes of salt will be available for the Council's use (1,200 tonnes at Chieveley Depot and 1,000 tonnes off site).

Communications

- 6.25 A copy of the Highway Winter Service Plan 2022/23 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 2022/23 will be distributed to all Members and Parish/Town Councils.
- 6.28 The Highway Winter Service Plan 2022/23 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 2022/23 is approved.

10. Conclusion

10.1 That the Executive Portfolio Member for Transport and Countryside approves the 2022/23 Highway Winter Service Plan.

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval

Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council

Delays in implementation could compromise the Council’s position

Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months

Item is Urgent Key Decision

Report is to note only

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(ies):

- 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**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Strategy priorities by *(add text)

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 2022/23 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 2021/22 Winter Service

13.4 Appendix D – Summary of Winter Operations 2021/22

13.5 Appendix E – Changes to the Primary, Secondary, Snow Clearance and Contingency Network 2022/23

13.6 Appendix F – Salt Bins to be removed from the Network 2022/23

13.7 Appendix G – List of departures from the Code of Practice for Maintenance Management

13.8 Appendix H – Highway Winter Service Plan 2022/23

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:	Place
Service:	Environment Department
Team:	Asset Management Team
Lead Officer:	Andrew Reynolds
Title of Project/System:	Highway Winter Service Plan 2022/23
Date of Assessment:	13 September 2022

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 “<i>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>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"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<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"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<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"/>	<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>Note – this could include biometrics, “internet of things” connectivity or anything that is currently not widely utilised</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 2022/23
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:	13 September 2022

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.

<p>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.</p> <p>(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.)</p>		
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
<p>Further Comments relating to the item:</p> <p>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.</p>		

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: 13 September 2022

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.