

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	3 NOVEMBER 2016	AGENDA ITEM:	13
TITLE:	WINTER SERVICE PLAN 2016/2017		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	TRANSPORTATION AND STREETCARE	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To inform the Sub-Committee of the outputs delivered by the Winter Service Plan 2015/2016.
- 1.2 To inform the Sub-Committee of the Winter Service Plan 2016/2017.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee note the outputs delivered by the Winter Service Plan 2015/2016.
- 2.2 That the Sub-Committee note and approve the Winter Service Plan 2016/2017.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 To provide a service to reduce, as far as possible, the effects of adverse weather on the public highway during the winter period.
- 3.2 To provide conditions that are as safe as reasonably practical having regards to financial constraints and our statutory duties.
- 3.3 To secure the most effective use of resources in the delivery of high quality, best value public service.

4. THE PROPOSAL

Background

- 4.1 This report outlines the review of the Winter Service Plan 2015/2016 and the changes incorporated within the Winter Service Plan 2016/2017, which the Council produce and agree on an annual basis through the Traffic Management Sub-Committee.
- 4.2 The new Winter Maintenance Service Term Contract 2016-2019 commences on 1st October 2016. This Term Contract has been awarded to J.H. Cresswell & Sons Ltd, the same contractor who delivered the service under the previous Winter Maintenance Term Contract.
- 4.3 The contract with Vaisala for providing the weather forecasting service to the Berkshire Consortium has been extended by a further 2 years.
- 4.4 The joint arrangement/agreement with Wokingham Borough Council, through their Consultants, for providing the decision making service continues. However, there is a change in their Consultants to Balfour Beatty, who will now be providing this service.

Effectiveness of the Winter Service Plan 2015/2016

- 4.5 The 2015/2016 winter period proved to be a relatively mild winter season with only one or two colder spells.
- 4.6 Although the 2015/2016 winter was relatively mild overall, under the Well Maintained Highways - Code of Practice (Appendix H), which requires precautionary salting from a temperature of 1°C and falling, there was a tendency for action rather than no action which resulted in a higher number of salting runs than what would have been expected.
- 4.7 The Winter Service Plan 2015/2016 provided a robust service for the duration of the winter period with minimal disruption to the primary and secondary network.
- 4.8 There were no reported problems with the availability of salt or maintaining salt stock levels during the 2015/2016 winter season.

Review of Winter Service Plan 2015/2016 and Updated Winter Service Plan 2016/2017

- 4.9 A review of the Winter Service Plan 2015/2016 has been undertaken. The main points are summarised below:
 - A review of the existing 47 No. grit bins was carried out confirming their on-going requirement for the 2016/2017 winter season.

- 1 No. grit bin request for a new location was received during the 2015/2016 winter season. This request has been assessed against the criteria but did not achieve a score high enough to warrant a grit bin being installed for the 2016/2017 winter service period.
- The contractual salt stock held by the Council's contractor was increased from 600 tonnes to 1200 tonnes from the start of the 2010/2011 winter service period and this stock level will be maintained for the start of the 2016/2017 winter service period.
- Bus routes continue to be on primary or secondary salting routes with no changes made, at this stage, from the 2015/2016 winter season. If, however, changes are required, these will be included in the Winter Service Plan 2016/2017 during the season, as appropriate.
- Following the completion of Reading Station a defined pedestrian route swathe around the station has been agreed for urea treatment and added to the list of other town centre footways which receive such treatment; as detailed in the Winter Service Plan 2016/2017 (Appendix F refers).
- All cross-boundary primary and secondary salting routes correspond with neighbouring Authorities routes.
- When the Snow Plan is activated (during prolonged adverse weather events) footway snow ploughs continue to be available for use in the Town Centre and on primary pedestrian routes such as the Reading and Caversham Bridges and the pedestrian/cycle route on Christchurch Bridge.

4.10 The Transport and Streetcare Service have completed a full review of its 2015/2016 Winter Service Plan and produced the 2016/2017 Winter Service Plan.

4.11 The updated 2016/2017 Winter Service Plan and map showing the primary/secondary routes and grit bin locations is available as a background paper.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The Winter Service Plan 2016/2017 will contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan 2016 - 2019 objectives of:

- Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active.
- Providing infrastructure to support the economy.
- Remaining financially sustainable to deliver these service priorities.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

6.1 A Winter Service Plan is produced and made available on the Reading Borough Council Website outlining the Council's decision making process. This is subject to review annually taking into account comments from the public, media, Government and Councillors.

6.2 Salting decision/action updates are available on social media via Twitter.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 In addition to the Human Rights Act 1998 the Council is required to comply with the Equalities Act 2010. Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:-

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.2 The Winter Service Plan 2016/2017 includes minor updates/amendments as required in readiness for the coming winter season. There is no overall change to service delivery at this time. Should any future updates/amendments be required, which result in service delivery changes, an equality impact assessment will be carried out.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The Borough Council, as Highway Authority, has a duty under the Highways Act 1980 Section 41 (1A) to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The cost of winter maintenance is met from the Transport and Streetcare Revenue Budget.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Winter Service Plan 2016/2017.

10.2 Winter Salting Routes 2016/2017.

10.3 Grit Bin Evaluation Sheet of new location requests for 2016/2017.

- 10.4 Grit Bin Evaluation Sheet of current approved grit bin locations.
- 10.5 Winter Maintenance Service Term Contract 2016-2019 - Delegated Authority for Contract Award - Policy Committee 13th June 2016
- 10.6 Winter Service Plan 2015/2016 - Traffic Management Sub-Committee Report 3rd November 2015.
- 10.7 Well Maintained Highways - Code of Practice (Appendix H).