

Overview and Scrutiny Committee 15th February 2010
Q 'N' A: Item 7, Cabinet Member for Environment and Conservation

No	Page/Point	Question/Observation	Answer (Where applicable)
Questions from Councillor Winskill			
1	Grit Bins	How many there are kept in reserve. Are bins available anywhere else (housing estates, schools etc)?	<p>Each year we review the winter maintenance service and, as part of this, we review our network of grit bins and consider whether this needs to be amended or added to.</p> <p>Where new grit bin locations have been identified either through our own observations or through justified requests from residents, we purchase new grit bins and install them in good time ready for the following winter, at the latest by 31st October each year. We also check all existing grit bins and if these are dilapidated or damaged we replace them to the same timetable.</p> <p>When requested, we will provide a service for installing and filling grit bins for schools or other Council services. To help with this we have recently circulated details of different types of grit bins that we can install and maintain for schools and other services, along with associated costs. Arrangements can then be made where required for next winter.</p> <p>We do not tend to carry reserve grit bins any available bins are utilised on street where needed. However, we have provided loose grit to many locations</p>
2	Snow fall and traffic management	What discussions were had with the police about assisting with traffic management?	We spoke to the Police several times on traffic management issues during the severe snow fall. Police resources were very stretched during this time and they were not able to offer assistance with any local traffic management issues e.g. local road closures/diversions.
3	Potholes	As at 8 th February, how many pothole repairs are outstanding and how many inspections are yet to be arranged?	From 2 January 2010 to 8 February 2010 a total of 720 pothole locations have been logged as orders for our contractor to repair. Of those 352 have been repaired and checked by inspectors. The remaining 367 have yet to be checked by inspectors to confirm if they have been repaired. However, we have also instructed our contractor to 'Inspect and repair' any pothole locations they identify separately and advise the council of these so that appropriate orders can be issued for the works carried out. To date the contractor has repaired approximately 150 pothole locations under the Inspect and repair instruction. Our



Haringey Council

			contractor currently has 6 gangs working in the borough on all pothole repairs. Given that this has been the worst winter that the borough has experienced in many years, good progress has been made.
4	Biking Borough	How will the consultant be engaging with residents and local amenity groups?	As the timeframes for this project are very tight (the consultants report must be completed by the end of March) it will not be possible to engage in full consultation with residents. We will however use information obtained from previous surveys related to cycling and also seek the views of other stakeholders including London Cycling Campaign, Sustrans, CTC, the health sector and the police. Specific detailed cycling projects that may be identified through this study will be the subject of consultation with residents and businesses.
5	Christmas Parking initiative – MH and CE	How much did the initiative cost in terms of lost revenue and other costs?	Total cost was £37k comprising of £30k lost revenues, £4.5k for printing and £2.5k for staff time. These costs relate to the free parking voucher scheme in Muswell Hill and Crouch End.
6	Recycling for flats above shops	How were residents engaged in the roll out of these schemes?	The introduction of the service was carried out by the Environmental Resources Participation Team, with doorknocking undertaken at the same time as the rolls of clear sacks, leaflets and letters were delivered. The doorknocking provided an opportunity for residents to discuss the new service, ask questions about how to use it, and gain an understanding of the wide range of materials that can be collected. The leaflets that were delivered to all households on the service were designed to be clear and understandable, with the key information communicated using pictures, whilst the clear sacks were printed with instructions for their use.
		Questions from Councillor Mallett	
7	Grit Bins	Pavement gritting – given the advice sent out to residents to ‘leave the car at home’ could we look at prioritising some way of gritting the pavements of residential streets so that residents can walk to public transport. I understand that one area has got funding from the NHS to do this, and it has repaid in a	Our most significant pavement gritting activity is in our 15 Town Centres and details of gritting schedules are on the Council’s web-site. These include routes leading to transport hubs. In addition to this we grit at Police stations, Ambulance stations and around hospitals and, during term time, we target pavement gritting around special schools and some other schools where there may be enhanced risk due to gradients. Through this we aim to cover a good proportion of people’s routes to local transport. However, as part of this year’s winter service review we will consider whether the Town



Haringey Council

		reduction in fractures and visits to A & E.	Centre gritting schedules can be modified to include additional gritting to improve routes to transport hubs and welcome feedback on suggested locations.
8	Street Car	Would it be possible to have vehicles that are more friendly to disabled people?	<p>Streetcar aim to make their service as accessible as possible both in terms of age eligibility as well as to those with mobility impairments. They have sought advice from a number of 3rd party suppliers (Motability, Lynx Hand Controls, JDHC) as to how best provide for mobility impaired drivers and as a result they offer the following services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- For any disabled member that signs up Streetcar offer 2 free memberships for partners, carers etc.- All locations are picked to be fully accessible by a wheelchair user.- Although research states the majority of Streetcar members prefer driving manual vehicles, 5% of their fleet are automatics which can be used for those with mobility impairments. Streetcar confirm they will locate two automatic streetcar vehicles in Haringey.- Streetcar owns 2 steering balls. These devices enable one-handed steering so that people with limited functionality in one arm can safely and easily manoeuvre, park etc. They would also need enough movement in the impaired limb to operate the gear stick as well. These can be fitted to any car by streetcars maintenance technicians. Should Streetcar get a call from a member requiring one, (they request 24 hours notice) then the car will be blocked from being booked at either end of the person's booking to fit and then de-fit the device.- Streetcar have also partnered with Lynx (www.Lynxcontrols.com) to provide a wider range of controls for mobility impaired drivers. Lynx have qualified technicians who can fit kerbside a number of hand controls (such as the ones shown below). If Streetcar



			<p>were given 24 hours notice from a mobility impaired member, their could make a booking with Lynx to fit the relevant controls, the member would use their booking as normal and then one of Streetcars technicians would disassemble the controls and courier them back to Lynx.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Streetcar have also taken steps to provide a text service for hearing impaired members so that they can communicate with Streetcars member services team at all times and their allow all guide and hearing dogs in their vehicles for streetcar members.
9	Street Car	Would it be possible to negotiate concessions for groups, e.g. unpaid carers?	Yes. As long as there was a relatively easy way to identify these groups then Streetcar would be more than happy to oblige.
		Questions from Councillor Newton	
10	Winter maintenance: Gritting strategy	<p>Who qualifies for gritting under the definition "where vulnerable people need assistance"?</p> <p>What guidance was provided to both residents and businesses on use of grit bins and clearing pavements and roads themselves and any potential liability and how was any guidance given?</p>	<p>The Council does not define 'vulnerable people' in this context as this could be prescriptive and lack the flexibility to recognise genuine need.</p> <p>Where we have been requested to carry out gritting based on this priority we have made decisions on a case by case basis. This has included requests relating to schools and residential care homes, as well as locations not under the control of the Council.</p> <p>We have not provided any advice and guidance to residents about the use of grit bins nor the clearing of pavements and roads. This is because we cannot know the circumstances under which residents may carry out these activities and whether or not they are suitably dressed, equipped, trained or physically capable of doing so. We could be exposed to claims if, following any advice given, individuals suffered injury or damage, or indeed claims against them by others.</p>
11	Pothole repairs	<p>What additional funding has been allocated to repairing potholes?</p> <p>What is being done to monitor quality of repair? (<i>some repairs appear to be just a dollop of tarmac and some repairs</i></p>	<p>The council's reactive maintenance budget has an allocation of £200,000 for the repair of potholes as part of its pothole blitz programme.</p> <p>We monitor the quality of all '24 hour priority' pothole repair orders issued to our contractor. Some repairs are carried out temporarily as certain locations may pose traffic management</p>



		<p><i>have only lasted for a few days)</i> What is required under the contract for repairing a pothole? Why is there no bead of tar applied to seal the surfaces? What is being done to monitor value for money?</p>	<p>challenges and have to be made safe immediately. Our contractors revisit the locations as soon as traffic management is agreed and carry out the permanent repairs safely.</p> <p>The specification for repairing potholes is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove all loose materials within the area of the pothole to a minimum depth of 100mm and mechanically compact the formation. • ‘Square off’ the edges of the hole and apply coat of appropriate hot bituminous binder to formation and vertical edges • Backfill the pothole with asphalt concrete or approved material, compact/roll and finish level with the adjoining surface. • Keep the area ‘barriered’ until the reinstatement is hardened or cured. • Remove surplus materials and leave the site in a safe and clean and tidy condition <p>Tar is carcinogenic and is no longer routinely used in highway construction. Although a layer of tar on the join of the pot hole can enhance the water tightness of a joint, this method can often mask bad workmanship and motor cycling lobbyists have continuously expressed safety concerns about over banding on the public highway as it reduces skid resistance. We therefore aim to ensure that the quality of repair is good in the first instance and our contractor will only seal joints at pothole reinstatements where it is thought that water tightness may not have been achieved initially .</p> <p>A comprehensive procurement process was followed to assess value for money for our current Highways and Street Lighting contracts. Our inspectors monitor performance on a sample of completed works on a monthly basis taking into account quality of workmanship, safety, consideration to the public and delivery within the requirements. Our contractor is currently performing above target and overall the quality of work is of a good standard.</p>
12	Car Clubs	<p>If introducing 35 car club vehicles has resulted in over 800 private cars having been sold and no longer being on Haringey's streets as stated. Do you expect that the provision of a further 42 new car club bays will result in a further</p>	<p>Yes. The data collected is of all Streetcar members, nationwide. It is then applied to the number of streetcar members in Haringey. The majority of Streetcar members are London residents. This survey, conducted for TfL, continues to show that a good percentage of car club members sell their private cars to join. As a result, it follows that the more members that join, the more cars that will be taken off the road. The survey is done annually. The</p>



Haringey Council

		959 vehicles no longer being on Haringey's streets?	latest results are currently being analysed and will be presented by the Mayor's Transport adviser to the Car Clubs conference at City Hall in March.
13	General Bridge Works: Alexandra Palace Station Rail Bridge between Palace gates Road and Bridge Road N22	Please detail when any works are programmed to take place and the likely duration of works. What reassurance can you give that an effective traffic plan will be in place to minimise any traffic hold-ups as a result of any closures or diversions?	<p>The Buckingham Road Bridge strengthening works started on 8 February 2010. The estimated duration is 32 weeks.</p> <p>We have met with representatives of Network Rail to discuss their traffic management plan for this work. Officers of our Streetworks Team have approved the plan subject to identified amendments agreed at the meeting.</p>
14	General: Improving Tottenham Hale	Can you give an assurance that the staggered pedestrian crossings proposed for this scheme will be re-considered? (staggered crossings cause considerable inconvenience to pedestrians and contribute to excessive guard railing)	TfL has undertaken detailed and extensive traffic modelling of the gyratory proposals. The challenge is to provide for traffic movement through the gyratory taking into account the planned growth in the area and to provide improvements to cycle and pedestrian safety and accessibility. Overall the number of pedestrian crossing points is increased compared to the current layout. Staggered crossings provide safe pedestrian facilities but minimise delay to general traffic with associated improvements in air quality and journey times. We will be working with TfL to minimise street furniture including guard-railing within the scheme as part of the detailed design which TfL is commissioning shortly.