


Haringey Council

Report for:	Cabinet 4 th October 2011	Item number	
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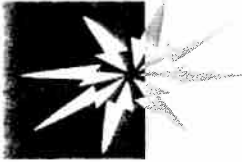
Title:	Winter Service Review 2011/12
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Report authorised by :	Lyn Garner, Director of Place and Sustainability  20.09.11
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Lead Officer:	Michael McNicholas, Client and Performance Manager michael.mcnicholas@haringey.gov.uk Tel: 020 8489 5655
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Ward(s) affected: All	Report for Key Decision:
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1. **Describe the issue under consideration**
 - 1.1 The Council as a Highways Authority has an obligation to keep highways free of snow and ice as far as reasonably practicable. This report seeks approval for our 2011/12 Winter Service Plan which details the Council's policies and operational procedures for dealing with snow and ice on the highway.
2. **Cabinet Member Introduction**
 - 2.1 The weather during the past two winters has been severe and has tested the winter service plan arrangements to the full. The severe weather last winter led to a national shortage of grit for the second year in succession. In Haringey this had an impact on gritting of carriageways and pavements not within the Priority 1 categories.
 - 2.2 This review of the Winter Service Plan is intended to take account of the need to ensure that the agreed minimum stock levels and arrangements for in-season replenishment of the salt store are as robust as possible to help sustain gritting activities in accordance with the plan. It is also



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intended to take account of feedback and suggestions about the service delivered last winter where these can help improve the service we provide this winter.

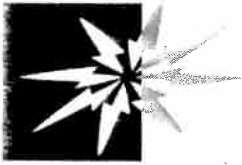
- 2.3 Finally, to promote a self help culture at times of severe weather, we will encourage residents to follow the self-help advice issued by the Government last winter. We will supply shovels upon request to recognised resident groups, Neighbourhood Watch groups and people nominated by these groups, to enable our residents to help clear snow for others who are less able to do this for themselves.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That Cabinet approves and adopts the Winter Service Plan 2011/12 attached to this report as Appendix 1 incorporating the proposed changes to Pavement and Carriageway Priority levels as detailed in section 4 below.
- 3.2 That Cabinet approves the extension of the grit bin network to include 4 new sites (see paragraph 4.8).
- 3.3 That Cabinet approves the amended minimum salt stock levels and in-season salt stock review arrangements (see Table 1 in paragraph 4.14.3).
- 3.4 That Cabinet approves the promotion the Government's self-help advice for residents and businesses who want to clear snow from the pavements outside their premises and the provision of snow shovels upon request to recognised resident groups (see paragraph 4.15 and Appendix 3).
- 3.5 That the Winter Service Operation Plan be reviewed annually.

4. Other options considered

- 4.1 Based on the feedback and suggestions received in relation to the Winter Service provided last year, it is proposed that a number of changes to the priority status of carriageways and pavements are made and also that changes are made to the network of grit bin locations. These changes are summarised as follows.
 - 4.2 Carriageway Frost Patrol
 - 4.2.1 There are no proposed changes to the Carriageway Frost Patrol schedule.
 - 4.3 Carriageway Priority 1
 - 4.3.1 It is proposed that seven roads or part-roads are added to the Carriageway Priority 1 schedule. These additions are proposed in recognition of the gradient/level of traffic on those roads or because of



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the presence of hospital facilities that are regarded as meeting the established criteria for Priority 1 status. These additions will result in an increase in the length of Carriageway Priority 1 gritting from 125.1 kms to 127.4 kms.

4.4 Carriageway Priority 1A (schools)

4.4.1 It is proposed that three roads or part-roads are removed from the Carriageway Priority 1A (schools) schedule. The Carriageway Priority 1A (schools) schedule consists of carriageways usually at the lower Priority 2 or 3 levels, but which are gritted as a higher priority when snow falls during term time to help keep schools open. The reason for the proposed removal of three roads from the Carriageway Priority 1A (schools) schedule is because they are amongst the roads added to the Carriageway Priority 1 schedule, as referred to in paragraph 4.3 above. These removals will result in a decrease in the length of Carriageway Priority 1A (schools) gritting from 24 kms to 22.9 kms.

4.5 Carriageway Priority 2

4.5.1 It is proposed that five roads or part-roads are removed and two roads added to the Carriageway Priority 2 schedule. The proposed removals are due to those roads moving to Carriageway Priority 1. The additions are from the Carriageway Priority 3 schedule in recognition of the gradient/level of traffic on those roads requiring them to be treated at a higher priority level. The net effect of these changes will result in a decrease in the length of Carriageway Priority 2 gritting from 68.8 kms to 67.4 kms.

4.6 Carriageway Priority 3

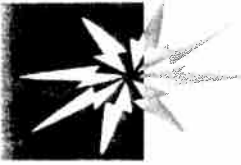
4.6.1 It is proposed that four roads are removed from the Carriageway Priority 3 schedule. The proposed removals are due to those roads moving to Carriageway Priority 1 or 2. These removals will result in a decrease in the length of Carriageway Priority 3 gritting from 147.1 kms to 146 kms.

4.7 Carriageway Resilience Network

4.7.1 There are no proposed changes to the Carriageway Resilience Network schedule.

4.8 Grit bins

4.8.1 It is proposed that one grit bin location is removed and four new grit bin locations are added. The grit bin location to be removed is from a non-public highway location in Western Road, N22. The grit bin locations to be added are in response to suggestions from the public to aid gritting of pavements with steep gradients that do not form part of the Pavement Priority 1 and 2 schedules. The net effect of the proposed changes is an increase from 150 to 153 grit bins on street.



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4.8.2 It should be noted that under the new Waste and Environmental Services Contract with Veolia, grit bins are now being removed from the street in April each year for cleaning and servicing. They are returned to the street in October each year ready for the coming winter season. They will all be in place by the first week of November.

4.9 Pavement Frost Patrol

4.9.1 There are no proposed changes to the Pavement Frost Patrol schedule.

4.10 Pavement Priority 1

4.10.1 Pavement Priority 1 gritting is based on 15 Town Centre locations and includes pavement gritting requirements outside residential care homes, transport hubs and other locations with high pedestrian footfall or where there are buildings where it is important for the public and others to gain pedestrian access safely.

4.10.2 It is proposed that two roads or part-roads are added to the Bounds Green Town Centre, one road or part-road is added to the Muswell Hill Town Centre and four roads or part-roads are added to the Wood Green Town Centre. There are no proposed changes to the remaining 12 Town Centre locations.

4.11 Pavement Priority 1B

4.11.1 Pavement Priority 1B provides for localised gritting at main road locations beyond the Town Centre areas. Gritting is carried out on pavements at bus stops, crossings and outside heavily used or public buildings on pavement Priority 1B roads. It is proposed that one road is added to the Pavement Priority 1B schedule.

4.12 Pavement Priority 2 (schools)

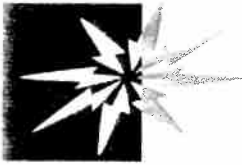
4.12.1 Pavement Priority 2 (schools) gritting is provided only when there is a snow fall event during term time and would be provided at the same time as Carriageway Priority 1A (schools) gritting to help keep schools open. There are no proposed changes to the Pavement Priority 2 (schools) schedule.

4.13 Details of Changes to schedules

4.13.1 The details of the proposed changes to the gritting schedules as summarised above are provided in Appendix 2, Suggested Amendments and Points for Review for the Winter Service Plan 2011/12, which is attached to this report.

4.14 Salt Store

4.14.1 It should be noted that responsibility for replenishment of the salt store has passed to Veolia as part of the new Waste and Environmental Services Contract. The Council's salt store holds a maximum of



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approximately 1,500 tonnes of salt. This level of stock has been sufficient for Haringey's winter service requirements for normal winters. But over the last two severe-weather winters when in-season replenishment of stock has been difficult to obtain, gritting activities have been reduced to ensure the continuation of the top priority gritting work.

4.14.2 The salt store has been surveyed to determine the feasibility of increasing the volume of salt held at the start of the winter season on 1st November. It has been determined that it will not be possible to increase the maximum salt stock level within the existing facility. The feasibility of increasing the maximum stock level in other ways will continue to be examined.

4.14.3 As it is not possible to increase maximum salt stocks in the short term, the in-season salt replenishment arrangements need to be as responsive as possible to the current and forecast conditions at any given time. Therefore, it is proposed to increase the in-season minimum salt stock levels, increase the frequency of stock level reviews and include weather forecasts within these reviews. These measures are designed to bring forward in-season replenishment orders so that in another severe winter there is a better chance that normal gritting arrangements can continue as new supplies arrive more quickly. The proposed stock level and review arrangements are as detailed in the table below;

Table 1

Arrangements for In-season Minimum Salt Stock Levels and Salt Stock Review

- 1st November, review stock, minimum of 1,500 tonnes required;
- 15th November, review stock, minimum of 1,350 tonnes required;

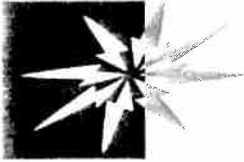
- 1st December, review stock, minimum of 1,500 tonnes required;
- 15th December, review stock, minimum of 1,350 tonnes required;

- 1st January, review stock, minimum of 1,500 tonnes required;
- 15th January, review stock, minimum of 1,350 tonnes required;

- 1st February, review stock, minimum of 1,200 tonnes required;
- 15th February, review stock, minimum of 900 tonnes required;

- 1st March, review stock, minimum of 900 tonnes required.

If minimum required stock levels required are not met, orders are to be placed to replenish the stock to the minimum stock level. On or around the 7th and 22nd of each month the stock levels are to be reviewed alongside the short term (5 day) and medium term (15 day) weather forecasts to determine whether minimum stock levels are at risk of not being maintained due to the possibility



of severe weather. In the event that severe weather has been forecast a decision may be taken to place orders for salt stock replenishment even though salt stock levels may be above the required minimums.

4.15 Self-Help

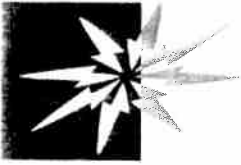
4.15.1 During last year's Winter Service season the Government issued official self-help advice designed to encourage people to clear the pavements of snow outside their homes or businesses. This advice was issued after the Winter Service Plan 2010/11 had been approved and adopted in Haringey and self-help advice was not included in the plan itself. Nevertheless, the self-help advice was publicised in Haringey during the last Winter Service Season. It is proposed that the Government's self-help advice is recognised and encouraged within the Winter Service Plan 2011/12. A copy of the Governments self-help advice is provided as Appendix 3, Self-Help Advice Issued by Government, attached to this report.

4.15.2 The Council wants to promote the self-help culture and support residents who want to help less able neighbours to clear snow from their front paths and pavements. It is proposed that the Council supplies snow shovels upon request to recognised resident groups, Neighbourhood Watch groups and people nominated by these groups on the basis that these are used by fit and able people to help other less able people in the community clear snow from their front paths and pavements. Each person receiving a snow shovel under this arrangement will be issued with a copy of the Government's self-help advice to ensure they are aware of the way this work should be safely carried out.

5. Background information

5.1 The Council has an obligation to keep highways free of snow and ice as far as reasonably practicable. This does not mean that every carriageway and pavement surface has to be gritted and made safe. It does require there to be policies and operational procedures for dealing with snow and ice on the highway and that these are linked to risk factors with priorities clearly set out and followed in any given severe weather event. This is the purpose of the Winter Service Plan.

5.2 The last two winters have been particularly severe by comparison with the previous 20 years or so. Despite the problems last winter caused by difficulty of securing in-season salt stock replenishment, the Winter Service Plan worked reasonably well. For example, almost every school in Haringey remained open through the worst of the weather, whereas many schools in neighbouring boroughs closed.



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5.3 The Winter Service Plan does not cover gritting arrangements for Homes for Haringey land, Parks or land within school or Council Building boundaries. Officers from the Single Frontline Service will work with officers and staff responsible for these areas to ensure they have advice and assistance in making their winter service arrangements.

6. Comments of the Chief Financial Officer and Financial Implications

6.1 It is expected that the measures within this report can be contained within existing budgets including the budget for the Veolia contract.

7. Comments of the Head of Legal Services and Legal Implications

7.1 Corporate Legal services have no comments to make on this report.

8. Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments

8.1 The Winter Service Plan recognises that vulnerable people are placed at potentially greater increased risk and so require more help than other people to cope with severe weather. For this reason Residential Care Homes and schools have been given special consideration in the establishment of pavement and carriageway gritting priorities.

8.2 It is not possible to produce a Winter Service Plan that addresses the needs of every vulnerable person in a pre-determined set of schedules. The Council will always endeavour to respond to an urgent call for gritting in isolated locations that are of a lower priority level where there are vulnerable people who need help. Similarly, we will respond to calls for urgent gritting where they are received from the emergency services. The Winter Service Plan makes specific reference to this commitment.

8.3 Community cohesion is promoted through the ability of people to be able to conduct their normal activities during severe weather. The Winter Service Plan contributes to this through the priority gritting work focussed on keeping schools open and by treating bus routes in and through the borough as part of the set of Priority 1 schedules.

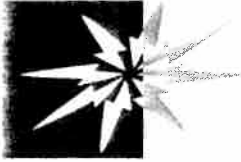
9. Head of Procurement Comments

n/a

10. Policy Implications

10.1 The policies and priorities in the Winter Service Plan 2011/12 remain largely unchanged from last year. The only notable policy change is the promotion of self-help advice as issued by the Government.

10.2 A low number of pavements and carriageways are being proposed to move to higher priority levels. These are based on risk factors and priority treatment policies set out in the Winter Service Plan. It is important to control the number of carriageways and pavements that are



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placed within the Priority 1 schedules otherwise salt usage could be higher than the salt store can bear. It is for this reason that some suggested amendments for increased priority treatment, as described in Appendix 2, are not being included in proposals for higher priority treatment in this report.

11. Use of Appendices

Appendix 1 - Proposed Winter Service Plan 2011/12

Appendix 2 - Suggested Amendments and Points for Review for the Winter Service Plan 2011/12

Appendix 3 – Self Help Guidance Issued by Government

12. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Highways Act, 1980

Well Maintained Highways – Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management

Highway Winter Maintenance Guide

Pollution Prevention Guidelines Highway Depots: PPG10

The Resilience of England's Transport Systems – An Independent Review, July 2010 – DfT Report undertaken by David Quarmby

The Resilience of England's Transport Systems In December 2010 – DfT audit undertaken by David Quarmby

Appendix 2
 Winter Service Plan Cabinet Report 4.10.11
 Suggested Amendments and Points for Review for the Winter Service Plan 2011/12

Suggested amendments and points for review for the Winter Service Plan 2011/12		Suggested response, changes in bold
	Suggested amendment, feedback received	Source
1	Blake Road N11, carriageway, quite steep from railway bridge down to Bounds Green Road and cars are having to reverse into Bounds Green Road to get out which the resident is saying is very dangerous. Please review priority status.	Resident
		<p>Agreed</p> <p>Blake Road forms part of a fairly busy traffic route from Durnsford Road to Bounds Green Road which in parts is quite steep. The following changes are proposed.</p> <p>Blake Road N11, move from carriageway Priority 2 to Priority 1.</p> <p>Winton Avenue N11, move from carriageway Priority 2 to Priority 1.</p> <p>Bidwell Gardens N11 from Wroxham Gardens to Blake Road, move from carriageway Priority 2 to Priority 1.</p>
2	Gritting is required to provide access to Highgate hospital in View Road N6.	Resident
		<p>Agreed</p> <p>The following changes are proposed to ensure access to Highgate Hospital is maintained.</p> <p>Stormont Road N6, moved from carriageway Priority 3 to Priority 1.</p> <p>View Road N6, moved from carriageway Priority 3 to Priority 1.</p> <p>Denewood Road N6, from Stormont Road to View Road carriageway Priority 3 to Priority 1 (remainder of Denewood Road remains at Priority 3).</p>

3	Claremont Road N8, Carriageway Priority 2 request to be placed on higher priority – It's a hill and sees very little sunlight so get very iced when not gritted.	Member	Not agreed, but local change to Winter Service proposed as follows Claremont Road is sloped but Northwood Road leading to it from Archway Road is steeper and narrower. Claremont Road to remain on Carriageway Priority 2, Northwood Road N6 to move from Carriageway Priority 2 to Priority 1.
4	Shanklin Road N8, Russell Road N8. To be considered for Carriageway Priority 1 as roads are heavily used and have steeper gradients.	Resident	Partly Agreed Shanklin Road and Russell Road are both Carriageway Priority 3 and will be moved to Priority 2. In a normal winter Priority 2 would be gritted in the event of snow if required.
5	Roslyn Road N15, was not gritted as a priority. Priority level should be reviewed.	Resident	Not agreed. Roslyn Road is Priority 3 for pavement and carriageway. There is no priority basis for placing Roslyn Road in a higher priority.
6	The Avenue N10 j/w Vallance Road. Install a new grit bin.	Resident	Agreed. Install two new grit bins, one at The Avenue N10 j/w Vallance Road, the other at Vallance Road N10 opposite No.82.
7	Talbot Road N6. Concerns about lack of gritting of the carriageway.	Resident	No action required Talbot Road N6 is carriageway Priority 2 and in a normal winter would be gritted in the event of snow if required.
8	Sperling Road N17, pavements, no specific location but a report from a resident to say there are a lot of OAPs there who can't get out.	Member	No action required Sperling Road is a flat residential road with little traffic and as such is classified at Priority 3 for both the carriageway and pavement. There is no priority reason for changing the current priority level. The Council would respond to specific requests to assist vulnerable people in Sperling Road as and when required through the arrangements as set out in the Winter Service Plan which are designed to assist

			<p>vulnerable people in areas with low gritting priority levels.</p> <p>If severe weather occurs during school term time, Sperling Road would be gritted to support school opening.</p>
9	<p>Muswell Hill N10, Crouch End Hill N8, Crouch Hill N8 and Ferme Park Road N8/N4. Grit bins would help keep buses going until a grit spreader got through.</p>	Member	<p>Not agreed, but treatment of these carriageways to be fast-tracked with heavier spread rates, also proposed addition of Ferme Park Road to Pavement Priority 1B.</p> <p>All of these roads are Priority 1 for carriageway gritting. This should ensure that carriageways are kept clear of snow and ice in all but the most severe or sudden downfall of snow.</p> <p>However, the point about keeping buses moving on these particularly steep roads is valid. Veolia will be required to fast-track the treatment of these carriageways, and Alexandra Palace Way, and increase the operational spread rate to ensure that safely passable carriageways are achieved during a snow event.</p> <p>Muswell Hill, Crouch End Hill and Crouch Hill are all Priority 1 for pavement gritting. Ferme Park Road is not currently proposed for priority pavement gritting. It is proposed to add Ferme Park Road to Priority 1B pavement gritting. This will provide for gritting around bus stops, crossings and outside well-used or public buildings.</p>
10	<p>Beresford Road N8. The present positioning of the grit bin in Beresford Rd. near the junction with Wightman Rd. is not very helpful. A more suitable position would be at the junction with Harringay Passage where the road is steep & where in previous winters serious problems have arisen.</p>	Resident	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>When grit bins are re-installed for the winter this grit bin will be relocated as suggested.</p>

11	Markfield Park N15. Install a grit bin near the entrance to the park to help Markfield Project as it is used by vulnerable adults and children.	Officer from Markfield Project	No change to Winter Service Plan, work with on site staff It is not clear that installing a grit bin near to the entrance to Markfield Park will resolve the issues of accessing the Markfield Project within Markfield Park in severe winter weather. Officers will work with staff on site at Markfield Project to determine the best local solution to their gritting needs.
12	Glebe Road N8 and Hillfield Avenue N8 in Hornsey Ward have had particular difficult problems with the roads being very steep, icy and some of the last to thaw out. Could both roads be assessed urgently for grit bins. Also Midhurst Avenue N10, Southern Road N10 and Lauradale Road N10, grit bin requests.	Member	Agreed Install grit bin in Glebe Road opposite no. 55 by utility box against fence. Install grit bin in Hillfield Avenue N8, o/s no. 122a, Carleton Court. Not agreed Midhurst Avenue, Southern Road and Lauradale Road are all quite flat with low pedestrian footfall.
13	Wolseley Road N22 j/w Park Avenue, suggestion for new grit bin.	Resident	Not agreed, but local change to Winter Service Plan is proposed as follows. There is a heavily used pathway from Park Avenue through to Station Road. The following pavements to be added to Pavement Priority 1. Wolseley Road N22, south side pavement including footpath to Cumberland Road. Cumberland Road N22, north side footpath.
14	Warberry Road, N22. Request pavement to be placed as priority as road is steep.	Resident	Not agreed, but local change to Winter Service Plan is proposed as follows As per Wolseley Road/Cumberland Road proposal, see 13 above.

15	Dukes Avenue, N10. Extend Town Centre pavement gritting to include some of Dukes Avenue due to the presence of various regularly used facilities.	Resident	Agreed. Add gritting of Dukes Avenue pavements from Muswell Hill Broadway to Elms Avenue, both sides to Pavement Priority 1 gritting.
16	Ewart Grove, N22. Gritting needed as road leads up to Stewart Grove Health Centre	Health Centre member of staff	Agreed. Add gritting of Ewart Grove from High Road to Stuart Crescent both sides and Stuart Crescent from Ewart Grove to White Hart Lane, east side only, to pavement Priority 1 gritting.
17	Durnsford Road N11. Can some thought be given though to including the rather steep alleyway that runs from DR to Park Road (via Springfield Park) to the pavement gritting schedules? This is a significant cut through for many residents and much used by parents going to and from Bounds Green School.	Member	Agreed. Three Oaks Path from Durnsford Road to Park Grove added to Pavement Priority 1 gritting.
18	Cecile Park N8. I am very concerned with the lack of salt on the pavements of Crouch End. My road, Cecile Park, has treacherous pavements today.	Resident	No action required Cecile Park is flat and is Priority 3 for pavement and carriageway gritting. There is no priority basis for increasing the priority level or installing grit bins.
19	Park Road N8. Outside Health Centre, gritting required.	Member	No action required The pavement outside the Health Centre on Park Road will be gritted in accordance with Pavement Priority 1B arrangements which provide for gritting of bus stops, crossings and outside well used or public buildings of this type all along Park Road.
20	Promote self-help culture, especially for pavements on roads lower down on priority lists.	Members	Agree. The Winter Service Plan has been amended to incorporate self help advice. Self help will also be promoted through communications where appropriate and on the web-site.

21	<p>Maps are almost illegible, interactive maps are almost as bad. They only show what your plans are, there is no real time information about what roads have been gritted and are driveable.</p>	Resident	<p>To be kept under review</p> <p>The mapping system on the Council web-site provides details of the level of priority for carriageways and pavements in the borough.</p> <p>During severe weather events the web-site is updated daily to provide details of the gritting work undertaken and planned.</p> <p>The council is working with the service provider, Veolia, on the potential for providing real time information on gritting activity.</p>
22	<p>Duckett's Road. Near the Wightman Road end of Duckett's Road, there is a home for vulnerable adults. The warden told me that the residents had experienced difficulty during the recent bad weather.</p> <p>If the needs of this road could, in future, be given greater priority than at present, I would be much obliged.</p>	Member	<p>No change to Winter Service Plan, work with on site staff</p> <p>This is a small home. Officers will work with staff on site at Ducketts Road to determine the best local solution to their gritting needs.</p>
23	<p>Has anyone thought of requesting help from the TA centre in Hornsey to assist with pavement snow clearing in the area? If not why not?</p>	Member	<p>No change to Winter Service Plan.</p> <p>A letter has been written to the TA centre in Holloway to determine whether assistance could be provided in severe weather. A response is awaited.</p>
24	<p>Further questions: How much would a snow plough attachment cost for one of the gritters? It struck me that spreading grit and salt on top of deep snow would not be as effective as being spread on a snow ploughed road.</p>	Member	<p>No change to Winter Service Plan.</p> <p>The question of cost in relation to snow ploughs is not really the issue. The issue in regard to snow ploughs is whether they are appropriate for use in an urban environment. They are certainly of use on major routes through the country where there are no buildings, side turnings and parked cars because the snow heaped to the side by them would not cause any problems in these respects, whereas in the urban environment heaped snow would block parked cars in and create obstructive snow heaps at cross-road junctions. There may be very limited applications for snow</p>

			<p>ploughs on Haringey's main roads to deal with the very worst snow events. The use of snow ploughs will be reviewed with Veolia.</p>
25	<p>In another borough every pavement I saw had a clear walking strip, the strip was too symmetrical to have been hand cleared. Do little pavement snow ploughs exist with a small grit spreader or some sort of heater that melts the snow? If they do exist, why doesn't Haringey have one that works around the clock?</p>	Member	<p>No change to Winter Service Plan.</p> <p>Veolia has a fleet of 8 HAKO mechanical pavement sweepers. These have demountable pavement grit spreading bodies. These will be available to aid our pavement grit spreading programme from this coming winter.</p>
26	<p>Another borough issued residents who wanted to help with clearing snow and ice, with snow shovels.</p>	Member	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Snow clearing shovels will be issued upon request to recognised resident groups and Neighbourhood Watch groups to encourage neighbours to help each other out. A copy of the Government's self-help guidance will be issued with each snow shovel.</p>
27	<p>A further thought many youngsters and adults serve community sentences for soft crimes. Has the Council been in contact to muster community service volunteers to help with snow and ice clearance.</p>	Member	<p>No change to Winter Service Plan.</p> <p>Historically, Community Payback has happened on one dedicated day per week with work at particular sites planned in advance.</p> <p>It may be possible to switch from planned Community Payback work to gritting activity, depending on the timing of any severe weather event. This will be reviewed on a case by case basis and where it is practical, appropriate and can be agreed with the other participating parties, the work of the Community Payback Team will be temporarily switched to gritting.</p>

CLEARING SNOW AND ICE FROM PAVEMENTS AND PUBLIC SPACES

This guide is designed to help you to act in a neighbourly way by safely clearing snow and ice from pavements and public spaces.

Will I be held liable if someone falls on a path I have cleared?

There is no law preventing you from clearing snow and ice on the pavement outside your property, pathways to your property or public spaces.

It is very unlikely that you would face any legal liability, as long as you are careful, and use common sense to ensure that you do not make the pavement or pathway clearly more dangerous than before. People using areas affected by snow and ice also have responsibility to be careful themselves.

What can I do to help clear snow and ice from pavements and public spaces?

Practical advice from highway engineers is given below. This is not a comprehensive list.

- Start early: it is much easier to remove fresh, loose snow compared to compacted ice that has been compressed by people walking on it.
- **Do not use hot water.** This will melt the snow, but may replace it with black ice, increasing the risk of injury.
- Be a good neighbour: some people may be unable to clear snow and ice on paths leading to their property or indeed the footway fronting their property. Snowfall and cold weather pose particular difficulties for them gaining access to and from their property or walking to the shops.
- If shovelling snow, consider where you are going to put it, so that it does not block people's paths, or block drainage channels. This could shift the problem elsewhere.
- Make a pathway down the middle of the area to be cleared first, so you have a clear surface to walk on. Then you can shovel the snow from the centre to the sides.
- Spreading some salt on the area you have cleared will help to prevent any ice forming. Table salt or dishwasher salt will work, but avoid spreading on plants or grass as they may be damaged by it. A few grams (a tablespoon) for each square metre you clear should work. The salt found in salting bins will be needed for keeping roads clear.

Particular care and attention should be given to steps and steep gradients to ensure snow and ice is removed. You might need to apply additional salt to these areas.

- Use the sun to your advantage. Removing the top layer of snow will allow the sun to melt any ice beneath; however you will need to cover any ice with salt to stop it refreezing overnight.
- If there is no salt available, then a little sand or ash is a reasonable substitute. It will not have the same de-icing properties as salt but should offer grip under foot.

Where can I find out more information about what I can do in an emergency?

The Preparing for Emergencies web pages on DirectGov contain useful information on how you can prepare for the impacts of all emergencies. The pages can be found at www.direct.gov.uk/preparingforemergencies

Why is the Government publishing this information?

During the severe winter in 2009/10, many people across the country worked very hard to keep our transport network open. This included many members of the public who cleared pavements and public spaces around their homes. Some people, however, were deterred from taking action to clear pavements and other public spaces because they feared that they might be sued.

An independent review of the transport sector's response to the severe weather of 2009/10 recommended that the Department for Transport should publish this note on good practice for members of the public in clearing snow and ice from footways and other public spaces. The Local Government Association published a report on behalf of Councils which reached the same conclusion. The Government is committed, as a key part of the Big Society agenda, to remove the barriers which may unnecessarily prevent people from helping themselves and those around them.