




Haringey Council

Report for:	Cabinet 15.10.13	Item Number:	
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Title:	Winter Service Plan Review 2013/14
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Report Authorised by:	Lyn Garner, Director of Place and Sustainability 
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Lead Officer:	Graham Beattie, Assistant Director, Single Frontline
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Ward(s) affected: All	Report for Key/Non Key Decisions: Key
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1. Describe the issue under consideration

1.1 The Council as a Highways Authority has a statutory duty to keep highways free of snow and ice as far as reasonably practicable. This report seeks approval for the revised Winter Service Plan for 2013/14 which details the council's policies and operational procedures for dealing with snow and ice on the highway.

2. Cabinet Member introduction

2.1 This review of the Winter Service Plan is 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. The publication and yearly updates to the Winter Service Plan have been welcomed by other members and residents as a proven way of improving the service year-on-year based on direct feedback from residents.

2.2 We will continue to promote a self-help culture and encourage residents to follow the self-help advice issued by the Government three years ago. We will continue to 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 2013/14 attached to this report as Appendix 1 incorporating the proposed changes to Pavement and Carriageway Priority levels, and amendment to the grit bin network, as summarised in section 5 below.

3.2 That the Winter Service Operation Plan be reviewed annually.

4. Alternative options considered

4.1 The option to incorporate all of the winter service suggestions and feedback into the Winter Service Plan 2013/14 was considered. This option was not chosen because the plan is designed to deal with snow and ice on a priority basis linked to heightened levels of risk, the need to keep public transport moving, footfall levels and the presence of important public buildings. Some of the feedback and suggestions received could not be given priority because they do not meet at least one of these criteria.

4.2 The option to make no change to the Winter Service Plan 2012/13 was considered. This option was not chosen because the opportunity to improve the council's response during severe winter weather would be lost and could lead to avoidable injuries and damage at untreated locations.

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 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. The Winter Service Plan does not cover gritting arrangements for Red Route carriageways and pavements as these roads are the responsibility of TfL.

5.3 Carriageway Priority 1

5.3.1 It is proposed that two roads are added to the Carriageway Priority 1 schedule, one from the Priority 2 schedule and one from the Priority 3 schedule. These additions are proposed in recognition of the gradient and/or level of traffic on



those roads or because of the presence of 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 128.3kms to 129kms

5.4 Carriageway Priority 1A (schools)

5.4.1 It is proposed that two roads are added to the Carriageway Priority 1A (schools) schedule. This schedule consists of carriageways usually gritted at the lower Priority 2 or 3 levels, but which are gritted as a higher priority to help keep schools open when snow falls during term time. This addition will result in an increase in the length of Carriageway Priority 1A (schools) gritting from 23.2kms to 24.7kms.

5.5 Carriageway Priority 2

5.5.1 It is proposed that two roads are moved into the Carriageway Priority 2 schedule from the Priority 3 schedule and that one road is removed from the Carriageway Priority 2 schedule into the Priority 1 schedule. The proposed changes are due to those roads requiring them to be treated at a higher priority level. This will result in there being virtually no change to the length of Carriageway Priority 2 gritting.

5.6 Carriageway Priority 3

5.6.1 It is proposed that three roads are moved out of the Carriageway Priority 3 schedule, two of these roads to be placed into the Priority 2 schedule and one into the Priority 1 schedule. The proposed changes are due to those roads requiring them to be treated at a higher priority level. This will result in there being a decrease to the length of Carriageway Priority 3 gritting from 145.4kms to 144.5kms.

5.7 Carriageway Resilience Network

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

5.8 Grit bins

5.8.1 Following last winter we received nineteen suggestions for new grit bins. Based on the principles for placing grit bins at places with heightened risk during snow fall - that are not routinely gritted by the council's own priority gritting schedules - it would be appropriate install new grit bins at ten of the suggested sites. Where new bins are installed, we will liaise with the local community to ensure that they are aware of the additional provision and how they can best use it to work with the council in the delivery of the winter maintenance service.

5.8.2 We currently have a network of one hundred and fifty five grit bins. During the coming winter we propose to review these sites, together with the ten new sites, to both monitor their use and assess how effectively they contribute to the winter maintenance service. We will also take into account salt bin sites provided by TfL on their network. In so doing we will also encourage feedback



from the local communities served by the salt bins. The results from this review will help to inform the 2014/15 Winter Service Plan.

5.9 Pavement Frost Patrol

5.9.1 It is proposed to add three locations to the Pavement Frost Patrol schedule, These are steps, footbridges and very steeply sloped footpaths where there is extremely high risk from slipping on ice and frost. It is proposed to remove one location from the Pavement Frost Patrol schedule, this being the footbridge and steps over the A10 Great Cambridge Road, TfL is responsible for gritting this road.

5.10 Pavement Priority 1

5.10.1 It is proposed to add twelve locations to the Pavement Priority 1 schedule. These additions arise from feedback and suggestions from the public and also the addition of footbridges and steps for consistency with the Pavement Frost Patrol schedule.

5.11 Pavement Priority 1B

5.11.1 There are no proposed changes to the Pavement Priority 1B schedule.

5.12 Pavement Priority 2 (schools)

5.12.1 Pavement Priority 2 (schools) gritting is provided only when there is a snow fall event during term time. This gritting would happen at the same time as Carriageway Priority 1A (schools) gritting to help keep schools open. There are two proposed changes to the Pavement Priority 2 (schools) schedules.

5.13 Details of Changes to schedules

5.13.1 The details of the proposed changes to the gritting schedules as summarised above are provided in Appendix 2, Proposed Amendments and Points for Review for the Winter Service Plan 2013/14, which is attached to this report. Where suggested amendments were not considered justified or only agreed in part, details and supporting explanations are also provided in Appendix 2.

5.14 Salt Store

5.14.1 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 approximately 1,500 tonnes of salt which was easily sufficient for last winter's requirements. There are no proposed changes to salt store stock and in-season re-stocking arrangements.

6. Comments of the Chief Finance Officer and financial implications

6.1 This service is provided under the Veolia contract. There may be a small additional cost for increased gritting where roads have moved to a different priority, but it is expected that this can be contained within existing budgets.



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7. Head of Legal Services and legal implications

7.1 Section 41(1A) Highways Act 1980 provides that a highway authority is under a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice. The duty is to take such steps as are, "reasonably practicable" taking into account finite financial resources and extreme or unprecedented weather conditions. There is no duty to eliminate all risk of danger on highways during winter or to ensure a level of activity that offered maximum protection at all times.

7.2 Section 150 of the 1980 Act imposes a duty on highway authorities to remove any obstruction on the highway resulting from, "accumulation of snow or from falling down of banks on the side of the highway or from any other cause."

8. Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments

8.1 The Winter Service Plan recognises that vulnerable people are placed at greater increased risk during snow and ice events and so require more help to cope than other people. 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 at 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. Community cohesion is also promoted by able people helping less able people and the council encourages this by promoting the Snow Code and providing free snow shovels.

8.4 Informing and empowering our communities is central to the success of the council's Winter Service Plan. By keeping residents up-to-date on grit bin locations, gritting routes and scheduling, and other emerging issues, we can help them to help us keep the borough safe and moving during winter weather. Communications in previous years has included:

- Haringey People news and features
- Press releases – including at the launch of the plan and throughout anticipated periods of bad weather
- Use of the council website – with a Winter Service page where residents can get information about grit, shovels and gritting, etc



8.5 In addition, this year we can use the following channels:

- Twitter – to offer instant updates on stick levels, grit locations and links to more detailed information for residents
- Facebook – to run campaigns as necessary through the corporate Facebook account – including encouraging community involvement and posting relevant information, as well as celebrating community participation through posts and pictures of local residents clearing their own pavements, etc.
- Website – using the Winter Service Plan as a “feature” item on the home page of the website so that information is easily visible and accessible
- Community groups – contacting community groups and websites (such as Harringay Online, etc) directly to encourage greater community awareness of grit locations and participation in the service plan.

9. Head of Procurement Comments

9.1 Not applicable.

10. Policy Implication

10.1 The policies and priorities in the Winter Service Plan 2013/14 remain unchanged from last year.

10.2 A low number of changes to the Winter Service Plan are being proposed. These proposals 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 placed within the Priority 1 schedules. This is because we must ensure that we are able to treat the most important locations and routes in a timely fashion and also because salt usage could be higher than the salt store could bear. It is for this reason that some suggested amendments for increased priority treatment and new grit bins, as described in Appendix 2, are not being included in the proposed changes set out in this report.

11. Reasons for Decision

During severe weather it is not practicable for snow and ice on every carriageway and pavement surface to be treated and made safe. Therefore, it is important to explain where we grit, when we grit and why we grit in any given severe weather event, the Winter Service Plan does this. The approval and adoption of the Winter Service Plan provides a mechanism to demonstrate that the policies, priorities and schedules for gritting have been given due consideration and approved at a level appropriate to the importance of the function. It is also designed to minimise the number of accidents related to snow and ice on the highway and forms part of the council’s defence when claims are received for injuries and damage linked to snow and ice.

12. Use of Appendices

Appendix 1 - Proposed Winter Service Plan 2013/14



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Appendix 2 – Proposed Amendments and Points for Review for the Winter Service Plan 2013/14

**13. 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