

**Open Report on behalf of Richard Wills,
Executive Director for Environment and Economy**

Report to:	Councillor R G Davies, Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT
Date:	Between 19 September 2017 and 25 September 2017
Subject:	Winter Maintenance Plan
Decision Reference:	I014209
Key decision?	Yes

Summary:

This report sets out proposed amendments to the existing highways Winter Maintenance Plan issued October 2016 to take into account national guidance and the recommendations from the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendation(s):

That the Winter Maintenance Plan dated August 2017 attached as Appendix A to this report is approved.

Alternatives Considered:

Not to update the Plan and continue to operate to the October 2016 version. This could potentially impede the operational decision-making process for the Network Resilience Team in charge of the Winter Service.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The Winter Maintenance Plan is periodically updated so as to:

- Develop robust standards
- Further implement proposed changes in national standards and best practice where appropriate
- Update with the current operational service as undertaken by our new Network Resilience team.
- Streamline the document to reflect current practice.

1. Background

- 1.1. The Winter Maintenance Plan should be read as a supplement to the Highways Asset Management Plan, and sets out the policy and procedures required for winter service management.
- 1.2. The statutory basis for Winter Service in England and Wales is addressed through Section 41 (1A) of the Highways Act on the 31st October 2003, by Section 111 of the Railways and Safety Transport Act 2003.
- 1.3. Lincolnshire County Council carries out precautionary and snow clearance treatments on the road network in accordance with this policy across the County. The policy only provides for roads for which the Local Authority has responsibility. Trunk roads (the A1, A52 west of Grantham and A46 County Boundary to Carholme Road Roundabout Lincoln) within Lincolnshire and their respective winter treatment are the responsibility of Highways England.
- 1.4. The revised Winter Maintenance Plan takes into account the changes suggested by the "Well Managed Highway Infrastructure – A Code of Practice" document published in October 2016. This document, commissioned by the Department for Transport, provides local authorities with guidance on how to develop a highways maintenance policy based on best practice.
- 1.5. Within the recent restructure, a specialist 'Network Resilience' Team has been set up. The Network Resilience function is comprised of three key services: Winter Maintenance, a 24 hours service raising works orders for Cat 1 defects and Major Emergency Incident Response coordination. This team will therefore monitor and coordinate every component of the winter service.
- 1.6. The Winter Maintenance Plan does not outline any Level of Service changes as this was not deemed necessary. Rather, it reflects the new decision-making processes, the procedures around operational gritting decisions and the continued alignment with national guidance where considered appropriate for Lincolnshire.
- 1.7. The Gritting routes have now been included into the Winter Maintenance Plan. These routes have been re-optimised taking into account the changes the road network has encountered over the last year. This change consisted of the inclusion of the new Lincoln East-West link roads within the routes.
- 1.8. The operation prioritises 3,008km of the Lincolnshire Road Network. This 'Precautionary Salting Network' is defined as:
 - 1,200 km Lincolnshire Local Strategic Road Network which includes the A and B road network.
 - Links to all the County's main villages, as defined in Appendix A.

- Where physically possible, treated links to within at least 500 m of all primary and secondary schools.
- Links between all main NHS hospital and the treated network.
- Links between all railway and bus stations and the treated network.

Due to resources, necessity and overall efficiency of the winter maintenance service, it is not realistic to treat the entire county's 8,769km of road network.

- 1.9. A Severe Weather Routes network is also in place to increase service resilience. This Network will only be treated during times of severe and extreme winter weather, when resources permit. This would continue to enable accessibility to important local services during extreme weather events.
- 1.10. The Authority has the capability of calling upon 43 gritters strategically placed around the county, with 4 spare gritters utilised as back-ups. Treatment time of the entirety of the Precautionary Salting Network will take a maximum of 3 hours, as dictated within the policy. This Precautionary Salting Network will be treated based on the Route Based Forecasting system. This system uses weather forecasts and measures the predicted impact on the road network, highlighting where the essential needs for salting treatment, if required, are located.
- 1.11. The Policy outlines that a minimum of 35,000 tonnes of salt should be in stock at the start of the winter season, with a minimum of 15,000 tonnes available at any time across the county. These salt stocks are kept under cover within our local highways depots.
- 1.12. Last season, the Authority carried out 63 precautionary runs, and utilised 13,374 tonnes of salt. During the 2015/2016 season, 55 precautionary runs were also carried out, but only 10,010 tonnes of salt was used. In the 2014/2015 season, 91 precautionary runs were undertaken and 24,009 tonnes of salt was used, due to the presence of 2 snow days within that season.
- 1.13. A Winter Rally is scheduled to be undertaken in the last week of September, as part of the final preparation for the Winter Season. This Winter Rally entails training and re-acquainting the Gritter drivers with the vehicles and the route, optimising the vehicles and performing final checks on the equipment used throughout the process.

2. Legal Issues:

Equality Act 2010

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- * Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the 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.

The relevant protected characteristics are age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- * Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
- * 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
- * Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low

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

Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to tackle prejudice, and promote understanding

Compliance with the duties in section 149 may involve treating some persons more favourably than others

The duty cannot be delegated and must be discharged by the decision-maker. To discharge the statutory duty the decision-maker must analyse all the relevant material with the specific statutory obligations in mind. If a risk of adverse impact is identified consideration must be given to measures to avoid that impact as part of the decision making process

The Equality Act has been taken into account in this instance and an Equality Impact Analysis is attached at Appendix C. This review of the Winter Maintenance Plan is considered to have an impact as the strategy is at a high level of generality and is positive in its impact on people with a protected characteristic when compared with people who do not share that characteristic. Please review the Equality Impact Analysis in Appendix C for more information.

Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS)

The Council must have regard to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the Joint Health & Well Being Strategy (JHWS) in coming to a decision

The effect of revisions to the Winter Maintenance Plan on the JSNA and JHWS has been considered and deemed to have a positive impact. Our salting provisions are considered to be a means by which to ensure safety and subsequent health and wellbeing.

Crime and Disorder

Under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Council must exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment), the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area and re-offending in its area

The duties under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1988 have been considered and it is deemed that the proposed changes to the Winter Maintenance Plan will have no direct impact.

3. Conclusion

4. Legal Comments:

The Council has the power to adopt the Winter Maintenance Plan in the form attached at Appendix A. The decision is consistent with the Policy Framework and within the remit of the Executive Councillor.

5. Resource Comments:

There is sufficient resource within the currently approved revenue budget for this service to undertake the activity as set out in the proposed Winter Maintenance Plan. The Council also holds sufficient resources in its reserve, to manage additional activity in the case of severe weather conditions.

6. Consultation

a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?

N/A

b) Has Executive Councillor Been Consulted?

Yes

c) Scrutiny Comments

The report will be considered by the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 18 September 2017. Any comments from the Committee will be presented to the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and I.T.

d) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?

Yes

e) Risks and Impact Analysis

An EIA has been carried out and is attached in Appendix C

7. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Winter Maintenance Plan - August 2017
Appendix B	Winter Data Report
Appendix C	Equality Impact Analysis for the Winter Maintenance Plan

8. Background Papers

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Well Managed Highways Infrastructure	http://www.ukroadsliaisongroup.org/en/codes/

This report was written by Vincent Van Doninck, who can be contacted on 01522 550625 or Vincent.VanDoninck@lincolnshire.gov.uk.