

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

PORTFOLIO HOLDER DELEGATED DECISION

by

COUNTY COUNCILLOR PHYL DAVIES

PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HIGHWAYS

December 2018

REPORT AUTHOR: Shaun James, Senior Manager Highways Technical

SUBJECT: Winter Service Plan

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Summary

- 1.1 The Council as highway authority are under a duty under section 41(A) of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice.
- 1.2 This report outlines proposals for delivery of the service commencing with the winter period 2018/2019 within a budget of £1.444 million.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 To approve the recommendations and Winter Service Plan 2018/2019 included as Attachment 1 to this report.

3. Options Considered / Available

- 3.1 Option 1 - No change, continue to operate under the 2017/2018 Winter Service Plan. The Winter Service Plan has evolved over many years and has seen small incremental changes year on year to improve and clarify the service. The Plan for 2017/2018 would continue to provide an appropriate level of service. The plan makes provision for all County highways (roads, footways, etc.) across Powys. Requirements for Trunk Roads are set by Welsh Government and are outside the scope of the plan but outline details of the provision made are included for information.
- 3.2 Option 2 – Update the 2017/2018 Winter Service Plan
Update the 2017/2018 Winter Service Plan to incorporate minor changes to ensure that the plan accurately reflects the service provided. The purpose of these changes is to aid clarity rather than vary service provision. The largest amendment proposed is the inclusion of a Snow Plan at Section C.

- 3.3 Option 3 – Extend the scope of the Winter Service
The Winter Service could be extended in two ways:
1. Increase the quantity of highway within each treatment regime;
 2. Enhance the level of service.
- 3.4 Option 4 - Reduce the scope of the Winter Service
The Winter Service could be reduced in two ways:
1. Decrease the quantity of highway within each treatment regime;
 2. Decrease the level of service.
- 3.5 Fleet – The move to a single supplier hire arrangement for 28 front-line vehicles in 2016/2017 has proved beneficial in reducing operating costs and improving vehicle availability and thus service reliability. These arrangements will continue for 2018/2019. Four strategic reserve vehicles will continue to be provided within the arrangement to cover routine safety inspections and breakdowns. The strategic reserve vehicles will also be available at standard daily hire rates to cover vehicles disabled by accident damage, or for use in extreme situations where additional resilience is required. The council will also continue to operate some of its own vehicles in a second-line role. These are multifunctional vehicles that have a gritting and snow-ploughing capability, though they do not have all/multi-wheel drive capability.
- 3.6 Salt Storage – Salt stores for pre-planned treatment operations incur operating costs associated with the facility as well as for loading and wash-down. Depots at Presteigne and Crickhowell (Dan-y-Parc) became non-operational from 2016/2017 but will continue to have stored at both sites in order to maintain salt stock levels available across Powys.

Welsh Government has a strategic salt store at Parc Hafren, Llanidloes which stores approximately 7,500 tonnes. An arrangement agreed with Welsh Government to enable the rotation of salt stocks will see the Parc Hafren facility used from 2018/2019 to supply the front line service. The Powys salt store at Llanidloes Depot which holds approximately 2,500 tonnes will become the strategic salt storage for Welsh Government until stocks have been depleted at Parc Hafren.

- 3.7 The Council currently has storage for around 23,000 tonnes of salt. After a decade of relatively mild conditions the UK experienced a number of colder winters. The severe winter of 2008/2009 together with the coldest and most extended winter to hit the UK for thirty years in 2009/2010 lead to a number of reviews across the Country. Welsh Authorities and the Welsh Government agreed that salt stock should be 1.5 times the average usage over the fixed 6 year period. This would suggest that salt storage capability in Powys should be in the order of 33,000 tonnes.
- 3.8 As well as additional provision there is a need to maintain and replace existing ageing facilities. As part of the 'Strategic Salt Storage' project,

storage facilities at Llangammarch Depot and Newtown Depot have been identified as the initial sites. It is anticipated that work to provide a new 7,500 tonne facility at Llangammarch will commence at the end of the 2018/2019 winter season.

4. Preferred Choice and Reasons

- 4.1 The preferred choice is Option 2 (item 3.2), to update the 2017/2018 Winter Service Plan. The existing provision is considered acceptable in terms of meeting statutory obligations but a number of minor amendments are proposed to aid clarity over the current approved plan (Option 1 – item 3.1).
- 4.2 With regard to Options 3 and 4 (items 3.3 & 3.4) a specific project to review elements of the winter service is currently underway. This is operating under a project board and is looking at key aspects of the service to ensure that it remains appropriate and affordable for the future. It is anticipated that key findings will be reported in time for the winter season 2019/2020.

5. Impact Assessment

- 5.1 An impact assessment is not required.

6. Corporate Improvement Plan

- 6.1 Vision 2025 - Powys County Council's vision for the future is a plan that sets out the councils priorities.

The provision of Winter Services supports a number of the key priorities within the Plan by aiming to maintain the key highway network in a safe and useable manner during periods of winter weather to ensure;

- Developing of a vibrant economy
- An effective, integrated health and care in a rural environment
- Support residents and communities

7. Local Member(s)

- 7.1 The proposed policy will apply across all areas of Powys and will be of interest to all Members. Local Members are able to feed opinions and priorities through the Highways, Grounds and Street Scene (HGSS) Managers.

8. Other Front Line Services

- 8.1 The operation of a frontline Winter Service will continue to support both directly and indirectly the delivery of other front line services.

9. Communications

Communications have made the following comment:

The report is of public interest and requires use of news release and social media to publicise the decision.

10. Support Services (Legal, Finance, Corporate Property, HR, ICT, Business Services)

- 10.1 The Highways and Enforcement Solicitor has reviewed the content and has no comment to make.
- 10.2 The Finance Manager, Place and Resources, notes the contents of the report and can confirm that the budget quoted is the budget for Winter Maintenance of County Roads.
- 10.3 Customer Services have noted the contents of the report and have no comments to make.
- 10.4 HR (if appropriate)
- 10.5 ICT (if appropriate)

11. Scrutiny

- 11.1 The plan has not been scrutinised.

12. Data Protection

- 12.1 The plan does not require the processing of personal information.

13. Statutory Officers

- 13.1 The Head of Financial Services (Deputy S151 Officer) notes the comments made by finance.
- 13.2 The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) commented as follows: "I note the legal comments and have nothing to add to the report."

14. Members' Interests

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If Members have an interest they should declare it at the start of the meeting and complete the relevant notification form.

Recommendation:	Reason for Recommendation:
That the Winter Service Plan commencing 2018/2019 as set out in Attachment 1 to the report be approved.	To enable the service to deliver its statutory duty as far as reasonably practicable.

Relevant Policy (ies):			
Within Policy:	Y	Within Budget:	Y

Relevant Local Member(s):	All Members
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Person(s) To Implement Decision:	Head of Highways, Transport and Recycling
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	Winter 2018/2019

Is a review of the impact of the decision required?	Y / N
If yes, date of review	
Person responsible for the review	
Date review to be presented to Portfolio Holder/ Cabinet for information or further action	

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Background Papers used to prepare Report:

Winter Service Plan 2017/2018

Welsh Government Trunk Road Maintenance Manual

Well-maintained Highway Infrastructure A Code of Practice (October 2016)