

**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.**

**CABINET EXECUTIVE  
16<sup>th</sup> October 2017**

**REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Liam Fitzpatrick  
Portfolio Holder for Highways**

**SUBJECT: Winter Service Plan 2017 / 2018**

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**REPORT FOR: Decision**

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**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 for the forthcoming winter period 2017/2018 within a budget of £1.363 million.

**2. Proposal**

2.1 To approve the recommendations and Winter Service Plan for 2017/2018 included as Attachment 1 to this report.

**3. Options Considered / Available**

3.1 Option 1 - No change, continue to operate under the 2016/2017 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 2016/2017 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 – 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.

3.3 Option 3 - 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.

3.4 Fleet – The move to a single supplier hire arrangement for 28 front-line vehicles for 2016/2017 has proved beneficial in reducing operating

costs and improving vehicle availability and thus service reliability. These arrangements will continue for 2017/2018. Four strategic reserve vehicles will continue to be provided within the arrangement to cover routine safety inspections and breakdowns. The contractor also provides an on-demand 24-hour technical support service, whilst both Fleet workshops will each provide a Fitter on Standby. 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.

- 3.5 **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. Salt will continue to be stored at both sites so as to maintain salt stock levels available across Powys.
- 3.6 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. It should also be noted that Welsh Government stocks 7,500 tonnes at Parc Hafren, Llanidloes and that for the 2017/2018 winter period stock rotation will be employed making salt available to Powys Council.
- 3.7 As well as additional provision there is a need to maintain and replace existing ageing facilities. The project established to consider options produced a feasibility report on “Strategic Salt Storage” in September 2017 and this is to be considered by the Infrastructure Project Board.

#### **4. Preferred Choice and Reasons**

- 4.1 The preferred choice is option 3.1, “No change, continue to operate under the 2016/2017 Winter Service Plan”. The existing provision is considered acceptable in terms of meeting statutory obligations and therefore no extension of service is necessary.

#### **5. Impact Assessment**

- 5.1 Is an impact assessment required? Yes/No

#### **6. Corporate Improvement Plan**

6.1 Powys 2020 – Powys County Council’s vision for the future is a plan for change between Powys County Council and the Powys Teaching Health Board. The provision of Winter Services supports the following key priorities within the Plan by aiming to maintain the key highway network in a safe and useable manner during periods of winter weather. This is fundamental to the following 3 of the 4 plan priorities:

- Services delivered for less – remodelling council services to respond to reduced funding.
- Supporting people in the community to live fulfilled lives.
- Developing the economy.

**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**

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

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

10.1 Legal have no specific comments on the plan.

10.2 The Capital and Financial Planning Accountant confirms that the budget for phase 1 of the Strategic Salt Reserve project is in the Capital Programme.

10.3 The Finance Business Partner notes the content of the report and confirms the budget of £1.363k for delivery of the service for the forthcoming winter period 2017/2018.

**11. Scrutiny**

The plan has not been scrutinised.

**12. Statutory Officers**

12.1 The Strategic Director Resources (S151 Officer) notes the comments made by finance.

12.2 The Deputy Monitoring Officer has not made any comment in relation to this report.

**13. Members’ Interests**

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If the portfolio holder has an interest he should declare it, complete the relevant notification form and refer the matter to Cabinet for decision.

**14. Future Status of the Report**

Members are invited to consider the future status of this report and whether it can be made available to the press and public either immediately following the meeting or at some specified point in the future.

The Monitoring Officer has not made any comment.

<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation:</b>
<b>That the Winter Service Plan for 2017/2018 as set out in Attachment 1 to the report be approved.</b>	To enable the service to deliver its statutory duty as far as reasonably practicable.

<b>Relevant Policy (ies):</b>	
<b>Within Policy:</b>	<b>Y / N</b>
<b>Within Budget:</b>	<b>Y / N</b>

<b>Relevant Local Member(s):</b>	<b>All</b>
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<b>Person(s) To Implement Decision:</b>	<b>Head of Highways, Transport and Recycling</b>
<b>Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:</b>	<b>Winter 2017/2018</b>

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**Background Papers used to prepare Report:**

- Winter Service Plan 2016/2017
- Welsh Government Trunk Road Maintenance Manual 2015/2016
- Well-maintained Highways (UK Roads Board)