

To: Ashford Joint Transportation Board

By: **Andrew Loosemore** – Head of Highway Operations

Date: 9th December 2014

Subject: Local Winter Service Plan

Classification: Information only

Summary: This report outlines the arrangements that have been made by Kent County Council to provide a local winter service in the event of an operational snow alert in the district

Introduction

1. Kent County Council Highways, Transportation & Waste (KCC HTW) takes its winter service responsibilities very seriously and is proactive as well as reactive to winter weather conditions. Winter service costs KCC in the region of £3.2m every winter and needs careful management to achieve safety for the travelling public and to be efficient. The Highways Operations teams in HTW work to ensure that the winter service standards and decisions made are consistent across the whole county.

HTW prepares an annual Winter Service policy and plan which are used to determine actions that will be taken to manage its winter service operations. The policy was discussed at the Environment, Highways and Waste Cabinet Committee on 17 September 2014.

District based winter service plans

2. The Local Winter Service Plan for the Ashford District is a working document. It will evolve and be revised as necessary throughout the year. This document complements the KCC Winter Service Policy and Plan 2014-15 which is available on the KCC website. The local plan comes into effect when a snow operational alert is declared that affects the district of Canterbury.

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/what-we-look-after/winter-service>

Pavement clearance

3. Areas for clearing pavements have been identified in the local plan. These are the areas where local knowledge has indicated that people are concerned and would most like to be kept clear when there is snow and ice.

Farmers

4. The work that our contracted farmers have done in recent years is greatly appreciated and has made a big difference in keeping rural areas clear on snow days. Again this year farmers will have predetermined local routes and will use their own tractor and KCC ploughs for clearing snow. The ploughs supplied are serviced by KCC each year. Each farmer will have plans detailing the roads that they are responsible for ploughing. When snow reaches a depth of 50mm on roads in their areas the farmers will commence ploughing notifying KCC as agreed in their contract.

Conclusion

5. Working with the district councils will enable HTW to provide an effective winter service across the county.

Recommendations

6. Members are asked to note this report.

<p>Background documents: Kent County Council Winter Service Policy and Plan 2014/15 via the web link</p>
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Winter Service Handbook

2014/15

Ashford District



Winter Service Handbook for Ashford District

Contents

1. KCC Highways and Transportation Winter Service Policy Statement and Plan

This handbook supplements Kent County Council Highways and Transportation's Winter Service Policy Statement which is endorsed and adopted by Kent County Council's (KCC) Growth Environment and Transport.

2. Winter service procedure

The winter service operational period 2014-15 will run from 17 October 2014 to 10 April 2015.

Routine salting decisions for primary precautionary salting activities across Kent are managed by a dedicated team of senior staff acting as Winter Duty Officers (WDO). The WDOs are also responsible for producing the daily Kent Road Weather Forecasts and for issuing weather updates as required.

A snow/ice emergency can only be declared by a Highway Manager (HM).

Secondary routes will be treated in snow and ice emergencies only.

During normal working hours, the District Manager and Operations Engineer for Ashford will manage local action in Winter Service snow/ice emergencies excluding primary and secondary salting route decisions.

In a declared snow emergency the priorities are primary routes. It is unlikely that any other actions, save safety critical issues, will be taken initially until KCC Highways is on top of keeping primary treated.

All requests for additional salt bins (save those from County Members under the Combined Members Grant scheme) will be rejected and will instead be considered during the following Summer.

Similarly, salting routes will not be reviewed or changed until the following Summer.

Any requests to spot salt locations will be sifted to identify any that are priorities to visit and assess. Given the volume of requests, those that relate to residential areas are unlikely to be visited until resources allow.

3. Farmer Snow Plough Agreements.

Farmers local to the area are under contract to plough snow on the more rural routes when necessary. Each farmer will have details of the roads to be ploughed. The farmer uses his own tractor, often with a KCC plough, which is serviced every year and maintained by KCC. When snow reaches a depth of 50mm on roads in their areas the farmers will commence ploughing.

4. Snow clearance priorities, Hand clearance and salting of key pedestrian areas and routes.

Priority pedestrian areas and routes including bridges and underpasses for hand clearance and salting, either using Amey operatives or Ashford Borough Council operatives during snow emergencies have been identified. Their inclusion does not guarantee that action will be taken at these locations as, during a snow/ice emergency, primary routes will always be actioned first.

5. Plans of Gritting Routes

Gritting routes are shown on <http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/what-we-look-after/winter-service>

6. Salt bin locations

Salt bins will be filled once at the beginning of the winter season and further refills if there is severe weather, time and resources permitting. During the Winter period, no additional salt bins will be deployed (unless funded through the Combined Members Grant). Any other requests/locations will be considered during the following Summer. Salt bin locations are shown on on <http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/what-we-look-after/winter-service>