

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET - 14th NOVEMBER 2007

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

WINTER MAINTENANCE ARRANGEMENTS 2007 / 2008

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To advise Members of the proposed Winter Maintenance Arrangements for 2007 / 2008
- 1.2 Members are asked to approve the proposed arrangements.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Winter Maintenance Arrangements document details proposals of the extent and manner in which winter maintenance operations will be carried this next winter. Minor alterations to routes may be required from time to time due to highway improvements, statutory undertakers works etc.
- 2.2 Following a change in legislation on 10th July 2003 (reported to Environment and Transportation Select Committee on 11th November 2003) and a meeting with the Council's insurers, a Policy Statement has been included in the Winter Maintenance Arrangements explaining how the Council decides when and in the manner in which roads and footways are treated during freezing weather.

3.0 PROPOSALS

- 3.1 A copy of the Winter Maintenance Arrangements, which are currently being reviewed following requests for additional highways to be treated, will be placed in the Members' Room. Appendices A to E will give details of the gritting arrangements and routes. Appendices F, G, and H will give information relating to problem locations, grit bin locations and treatment to car parks in severe weather. The plans involved gritting some 40% of the highway network.
- 3.2 Problem locations are considered for gritting or snow removal in cases of extreme weather conditions. They cover hills and other locations where severe inconvenience or danger to the public would occur should they remain untreated.

4.0 FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The budget allocation for 2007 / 2008 is £237,300. The actual spend for an average winter of 33 call outs is likely to be in the order of £450,000.

4.2 In previous years compensatory savings have been made within the Department to cover any overspends. It is highly unlikely that this can continue given the level of service re-engineering savings previously identified. Regular financial monitoring will enable the situation to be assessed on an ongoing basis and to identify should an overspend occur.

4.3 Should it not be possible to contain the expenditure within the budget, options would be presented to Members in terms of funding the additional expenditure. In the event of an extreme winter it may be that a call would be made on the Council's reserves/balances.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no specific ethnic minority implications.

5.2 The Winter Maintenance Arrangements will increase accessibility for all highway users, particularly the elderly and persons with disabilities who may find that winter conditions present particular problems.

6.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no planning implications arising directly from this report.

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no specific implications under this heading.

8.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

8.1 I am not aware of any specific human rights implications arising directly from this report.

9.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The volume of salt spread on highways is commensurate with achieving a satisfactory road surface condition on those roads treated and complies with the recommendations of the Department for Transport.

10.0 ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT

10.1 A copy of the Winter Maintenance Arrangements document has been placed.

11.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION

12.1 That the Winter Maintenance Arrangements for 2007 / 2008, detailed in this report be approved.