

REPORT FOR INFORMATION

agenda item: 11c

WINTER MAINTENANCE

Chiltern Local Committee

17 October 2001

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1 Purpose Of Report

- a To provide the Local Committee with detailed background information concerning winter maintenance activities carried out by the County Council during the winter period, October 2001 to April 2002.

2 Proposed Action

- b The Committee is invited to NOTE this report.

3 Resources appraisal

- c There are no resource implications arising from this report which directly affect the Committee.

4 Supporting Information

- d Winter Maintenance, together with routine and structural maintenance operations are managed and procured from the three Area Offices at Beaconsfield, High Wycombe and Winslow – under the direction of the Area Managers. Central support for these activities is provided by the Contracts Section based at County Hall.
- e All physical winter maintenance works are carried out by Raynesway Construction Southern (RCS) under the current Term Maintenance Contract. Other specialist contractors may be employed, if required, using the Councils Annual Tender list.
- f RCS operate from depots based at Amersham, Aylesbury, Gawcott and Handy Cross.
- g The current Term Maintenance Contract expires in March 2002. A new Term Contractor will be appointed from April 2002 with similar operational requirements.

n Statutory Framework and Policy

- i. Snow and ice clearance is mandatory under the Highways Act 1980. Precautionary salting is discretionary.
- ii. The foundation for Winter Maintenance standards are set out in the Association of County Councils 'Winter Maintenance Code'. This document has formed the basis of the objectives contained within the County Councils 'Winter Maintenance Plan', which is updated annually. Winter Maintenance comprises of three main activities:
 - ◆ Precautionary salting – discretionary service
 - ◆ Snow clearing – mandatory service
 - ◆ Post Ice formation salting – mandatory service
- iii. The County Councils objectives are to make the county road network safer and reduce accidents and delays caused by ice and snow.
- iv. The Meteorological Office is contracted to provide the County Council with weather forecast information. The County Council owns and maintains strategically sited roadside weather stations, which are accessed by Area Office staff and the Met. Office. County Council standby officers use real time data from these stations via computer links in conjunction with forecasts to monitor weather conditions and temperature changes at the sites. This data assists in the timely decisions to pre-salt the priority road network.
- v. Once forecasts indicate that road temperatures will fall below +1°C and ice is expected to form, standby officers will instruct the Term Contractor to carry out salting on the precautionary route network. The network is reviewed annually by County Council Members and officers and widely publicised in the 'Safer Winter Driving' leaflet and press releases.
- vi. Approximately 44% of the highway network is salted on the precautionary routes at an annual cost exceeding £1,000,000. (Countywide figures)
- vii. During prolonged adverse weather conditions (usually after 24 hours continuous heavy frost and/or snow) secondary routes will be treated. These routes will include shopping area footways, minor roads, steep gradients and unclassified roads serving small communities. Where necessary 24 hour working will be ordered and in times of snow, roads will be treated and snow ploughed in priority order commencing with the A roads.

i Standby Service

i. The County Council provides a 24 hour 7 day per week standby service to respond to incidents or defects which affect the public highway or highway users. The service is operated locally from each Area Office with co-ordination and backup from the Contracts Section at County Hall. The Standby telephone numbers of the three Area Offices are:

- Chiltern and South Bucks - 01494 586600
- Aylesbury Vale - 01296 383400
- High Wycombe - 01494 475315

ii. The service is carried out in conjunction with the Councils Term Contractor, RCS, who are required under the contract to provide immediate response to deal with such incidents. Other specialist contractors may be called if necessary.