

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**HIGHWAYS AND NEIGHBOURHOODS
CABINET MEMBER**

REVIEW OF WINTER MAINTENANCE SEASON 2011/12

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an overview of the Winter Service during the 2011/12 winter maintenance season.
- 1.2 To promote a desktop review on the progress of the initiatives that were undertaken following the Full Review of the Winter Service as a whole, during the summer of 2011.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 According to the Met Office, the UK mean temperature for the winter 2011/12 was 4.5 °C. This was much milder than the last three winters, and comparable with several other mild winters since 2000.
- 2.2 December was generally mild, and after a mostly mild January, the last few days saw the onset of a cold spell that lasted two weeks with some sharp frosts and snowfalls. Mild weather then returned until the end of February.
- 2.3 Mean temperatures over the UK were 2.5 °C above average during March and 0.6 °C below average during April. It was the third warmest March since 1910 and the warmest since 1957. April by comparison was the coldest since 1989. Unusually, April was colder than March. The last time that occurred was 1998.
- 2.4 Throughout the season, we carried out 58 full salting operations compared to 77 for 2010/11 and 67 for 2009/10. The cost of the Winter Service was £793,004 as opposed to £1,195,499 the previous winter. We used 5,150 tonnes of salt. There are currently 1,125 tonnes in the main storage area with 780 tonnes in our emergency stockpile. Officers have placed orders to restock to our capacity during the summer, prior to expected price increases.
- 2.5 A full review of the Winter Service was undertaken during the summer of 2011, including a full public consultation exercise. A revised Winter Service Policy was produced. A number of initiatives were developed and implemented. To enable the funding of these initiatives an additional **Adverse Weather Budget** was provided and the expenditure against this amounted to £130,000.

- 2.6 A desktop review of the 2011/12 season is proposed. The Head of Better Routes will lead the review. It will be carried out during July 2012. The intention of the review is to highlight areas of success and to highlight any weaknesses that require improvement before the next winter season begins.

3. **OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 **Option 1** is to do nothing.
- 3.2 **Option 2** is to carry out a desktop review of the Winter Service Policy and the initiatives that were employed during the previous season

4. **ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

- 4.1. It is suggested that “do nothing” is not a realistic option.
- 4.2. Option 2 allows us to further develop and improve the delivery of our Winter Service arrangements.

5. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)**

5.1 Financial

There is no cost envisaged in carrying out a desktop review. Overall consideration may need to be given as to whether further investment in the Service is required

5.2 Staffing

Staffing remains a fundamental issue for the service delivery aspect. We need to consider and to learn from the issues surrounding the staffing of the previous season.

6. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)**

6.1 Statutory

6.1.1 The Highways Act 1980 states:

a) ‘The authority who are for the time being the highway authority for a highway maintainable at the public expense are under a duty, subject to subsections (2) and (3), to maintain the highway.

b) (1) In particular, a highway authority are under a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice’.

6.2 Environmental and Other

6.2.1 The spreading of salt may have an adverse effect on adjacent vegetation.

6.2.2 We must manage salt stockpiles in such a way as to not effect the local environment and watercourses.

7. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION**

7.1 We consulted widely in developing the current Winter Service Policy, taking account of any feedback received. We will consider any comments and observations received during the 2011/12 winter period as part of the proposed desktop review.

8. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 That the Cabinet Member notes the overview of the winter service provided during the 2011/12 winter maintenance season.

8.2 That the Cabinet Member approves the progress of a desktop review of the Winter Service.

8.3 That a further report is presented for consideration by the Cabinet Member making recommendations as to how we will prepare for the winter season 2012/13.

DIRECTOR OF PLACES

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: None