

# Minutes



To: All Members of the Highways Cabinet Panel, Chief Executive, Chief Officers, All officers named for 'actions'

From: Legal, Democratic & Statutory Services  
Ask for: Theresa Baker  
Ext: 26545

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## HIGHWAYS AND ENVIRONMENT CABINET PANEL 12 July 2018

### ATTENDANCE

### MEMBERS OF THE PANEL

P Bibby (Chairman), M Bright (Vice Chairman), S B A F H Giles-Medhurst, S K Jarvis, J R Jones, J G L King, N Bell (substituting for R Mills), S J Boulton (substituting for M B J Mills-Bishop), M D M Muir, R G Parker, R H Smith, S Gordon (substituting for J A West), C B Woodward

Upon consideration of the agenda for the Highways and Environment Cabinet Panel meeting on 12 July 2018 as circulated, copy annexed, conclusions were reached and are recorded below:

### PART I ('OPEN') BUSINESS

- | <b>1.</b> | <b>MEMBERSHIP AND REMIT OF THE PANEL</b>   | <b>ACTIONS</b> |
|-----------|--|----------------|
|           | The chairman welcomed the members of the panel and noted the membership and remit. Simon Aries (Assistant Director Transport, Waste and Environment Management) was introduced as the lead officer in relation to the 'Countryside management and rights of way' element of the panel's remit. |                |
| <b>2.</b> | <b>MINUTES</b>   |                |
| 2.1       | The Minutes of the Cabinet Panel meeting held on 9 May 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.   |                |
| <b>3.</b> | <b>PUBLIC PETITIONS</b>  |                |
| 3.1       | There were no public petitions   |                |
| <b>4.</b> | <b>WINTER SERVICE OPERATIONAL PLAN (WSOP)</b>  |                |

[Officer Contact: Richard Stacey, Assistant Network Manager  
(Strategy) (Tel: 01992 658115)]

- 4.1 The panel received a report which detailed the operation of the 2017/18 Winter Service Operational Plan (WSOP); provided the outline development of the 2018/19 season WSOP for the panel's comments prior to publication and outlined an indicative 10 year winter service review and development programme.
- 4.2 Members noted the record 90 precautionary salting outings in 2017/18; that the 2018/19 WSOP included new routes which met the new criteria agreed by cabinet and complied with "Well-Managed Highways Infrastructure - A Code of Practice" (WMHI) (agreed for adoption by October 2018) with some minor changes and improvements for the coming season; also that as part of the 10 year winter service development programme the precautionary salting routes, high priority footway routes and secondary routes would be reviewed every 4 years and the review start dates.
- 4.3 During discussion of the Winter Self Help Scheme Members heard that although there was a data base of requests from Town/Parish Councils and recognised resident groups (including applications from recognised resident groups and recognised community associations via the Local Member), as some groups still had bags remaining at the end of the season those requiring self-help gritting salt had to apply annually. Better communication to Local Members on which groups / organisations had applied for self-help gritting salt was requested.
- 4.4 Officers clarified that videos and Facebook were being considered to publicise the Scheme and to promote the message that gritting salt was for use only on the highway. The Schools Bulletin was used to communicate with all schools on applying for self-help gritting salt and this would be sent out in September 2018 to ensure that none missed the application window.
- 4.5 A Member observed that, in addition to the Council's website, social media could be used to communicate gritting information.
- 4.6 Regarding constituent complaints to Members that there was little salting of footways, officers advised that salting of footpaths would be reviewed as part of the 10 year plan. It would also look at any requirements to meet the special needs of disabled or older people under the revised WMH code of practice. Regular discussions were also undertaken with the insurance team and currently no 'falls' cases related to snow / ice for 2017/18 season.
- 4.7 The Panel noted the difficulty that gritting lorries, which were

R Stacey

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wider than refuse lorries, had in accessing heavily parked roads. The practical and accessible check identified these roads so that appropriate adjustments could be made to the routes at the planning stage, e.g. use of smaller vehicles. If roads still proved inaccessible and impractical and had to be dropped from the route the relevant County Councillors would be informed.

4.8 Members had been offered the opportunity to go through the new routes on the WSOP 2018-19, and at their request some had been met with. Nonetheless, the Panel emphasised that Members must be notified, prior to the 2018-19 Plan's publication, of any changes to the proposed precautionary gritting network following completion of the accessible and practical check. R Stacey

4.9 In terms of cycle way treatment officers clarified that off road paved designated cycle-ways underwent precautionary salting (Priority 2(b)) however these were all located in Stevenage.

4.10 Members requested the following corrections/changes to the WSOP and Hertfordshire County Council Website (gritting page): R Stacey

1. Correct references to '2017-18' to read '2018-19' on page 58 of the WSOP 2018-19.
2. Clarify on the County Council website:
  - a. that precautionary gritting (i.e. pre-treatment of the network when the risk of snow and ice was forecast) was always carried out on Priority 1, 2a and 2b Routes (Primary);
  - b. that Priority 3 Routes (Secondary) routes were not on the precautionary gritted route and were gritted only in extreme circumstances (i.e. after prolonged periods of sub-zero temperatures of snow).
3. On the Gritting & Salting area of the website, under 'Can I grit my road myself?' correct 'schools on a primary gritting route **can't** apply' to 'schools on primary gritting routes **can** apply'- as had been agreed in 2017.
4. Publish on the website 'Hertfordshire's road Priority description'.

The panel highlighted the ambiguity in the title of Appendix 1 to the report (Winter Service Precautionary (Primary) Salting Network Criteria) as the table also included secondary routes.

4.11 During discussion of the 10 year development programme to evolve the winter service Members noted that a report would come to panel on a review of Secondary Routes. Officers agreed to check if these routes had ever been salted and if so when. R Stacey

4.12 The panel were advised that discussions were ongoing with the Development Management Team on engaging with developers of

new housing to provide salt bins for new roads with steep inclines.

**Conclusions:**

- 4.13 The Highways & Environment Cabinet Panel:
1. Commented on the Winter Service Operational Plan 2018/19 prior to its publication on the County Council's website (with personal data redacted);
  2. Noted that Hertfordshire County Council will adopt the Winter Service Operational Plan 2018/19;
  3. Considered any potential developments, initiatives and efficiencies for future winter seasons;
  4. Noted the proposed review and the programme of activities.

**5. TRANSPORT ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN, ASSET PERFORMANCE REPORT 2017/18**

[Officer Contact: Chris Allen-Smith, Head of Profession, Asset Management & Maintenance (Tel: 01992 658167)]

- 5.1 The Panel received a report which provided an annual update on the progress of transport asset management in both Hertfordshire and nationally; outlined the work to align with the requirements of the 'Incentive' element of revised DfT Highways Maintenance capital funding and, following a review of current practices provided an update on progress with the implementation of the new Code of Practice (CoP) 'Well-managed highways infrastructure'.
- 5.2 Members noted the continued achievement of the top level of funding for DfT capital allocation for local highways maintenance (level 3) and ongoing work to ensure retention of this level for continued funding maximisation. As the Council had established a risk based approach prior to the new CoP a review of the 36 overarching CoP recommendations had been undertaken for each major asset class; the Service broadly complied with no areas where substantial work was required to avoid significant risk, along with the need to formalise and document current operational approaches to evidence the risk based approach.

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- 5.3 During discussion of road treatment selection and assessment of value for money Members heard that Hertfordshire took a life cycle planning approach which, for example, assumed that a 'plane and inlay' treatment could last up to 25 years whilst a road surface treatment would last for around 10 years (national guidance suggested 8-15 years. Micro treatment was used for early intervention and repaired cracks and limited defects whilst sealing the surface to prevent further deterioration by water ingress and cost around £10/m<sup>2</sup>. Plane and inlay type surfacing cost around £25/m<sup>2</sup> while full replacement of a road or footway cost approximately £40-50/m<sup>2</sup>. Therefore it was important to intervene with the most appropriate treatment at the best time to get the best value for money.
  
- 5.4 Members variously expressed concern that the stone chippings did not bed down and that public perception of micro surfaced roads was poor as they expected them to be smooth and shiny, when in fact they initially looked brown and coarse with any unrolled chippings remaining loose on the surface. Officers highlighted that contractors had to wait 2 weeks before sweeping up loose chippings mechanically to avoid damaging the newly laid surface and that they would charge more for hand sweeping; it was also in this time period that most complaints about the process were received. Although contractors could have parked cars moved when micro surfacing, cars could however obstruct retrospective sweeping. Leaflets were distributed advising residents to avoid walking on the newly laid surface, however, if either bitumen or chippings entered residents' property residents should approach the contractor who would arrange cleaning or deal with any resulting damage as an insurance claim.
  
- 5.5 Officers clarified that weed growth through resurfaced roads or pavements was a consequence of contractors being permitted to use only contact weed killers as opposed to persistent weed killers. Weed killing was a routine part of many maintenance operations with several treatments used where necessary but, while it could reduce weed growth, it could not eliminate it.
  
- 5.6 To the observation that synergy of pavement / road drainage and maintenance of the drainage system was necessary for well-managed highways infrastructure, e.g. for rural networks where water played a major part in damage, officers highlighted that the introduction of Cat 6 should improve maintenance of drainage and hence roads.
  
- 5.7 Members heard that the number of blocked gullies had decreased due to various initiatives and that, from October 2018 any reported blocked gullies would be dug out within 12 months. Efforts were made to clean gullies in tandem with any resurfacing

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operation and to prevent blockage by chippings contractors were expected to place a sheet over the gullies. Nonetheless a few loose stones did enter gullies which only appeared visibly full if already full of detritus.

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| 5.8  | Officers agreed to check whether Ringway’s electronic system utilising GIS data to enable efficient collection of data at a gully drain asset level was on target to be operational by 1 October ‘18.   | C Allen-Smith |
| 5.9  | In relation to ponding caused by water company pipes which were too small to accommodate the volume of water entering from gullies, officers clarified that the companies would not respond to road flooding and only responded where there was the likelihood of a property flooding. As the County Council lacked the powers to force them to change their pipes, officers engaging with them could only encourage them to act and Members and constituents were encouraged to contact the water authorities on this issue. |               |
| 5.10 | Officers agreed to look into the following issues:<br><ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Belisha Beacons being installed without LED lighting;</li> <li>2. Whether the orange globe of Belisha Beacons should be LED;</li> <li>3. Information missing from the report on whether or not subway lighting was to be upgraded to LED.</li> </ol>  | C Allen-Smith |
| 5.11 | Members were advised that as part of the LED conversion project the narrower spread of light from LED units and concomitant poor illumination of cycle ways and footways which ran parallel to but not right next to roads would be investigated.   | C Allen-Smith |
| 5.12 | As the physical position of sodium street light columns was suitable only for sodium lighting, Members suggested that location of the replacement LED street light columns could be addressed via the Project Team’s LED Illumination Strategy.   |               |
| 5.13 | Officers agreed to investigate the reason for the long time-lag observed for replacement of knocked down non-illuminated reflective bollards.   | C Allen-Smith |
| 5.14 | As Members varied in their perception of dark levels of LED lighting, the Panel would be invited to attend when Hertfordshire and Essex County Council’s collaborative trial of using the CMS to integrate various applications and consolidate existing systems (including dynamic dimming of street lighting based on traffic flow) was rolled out.   | C Allen-Smith |
| 5.15 | Officers clarified that although footways and cycle ways were part of the same programmes, capital allocations had been separated and were already part of separate funding bids; they agreed to  | C Allen-Smith |

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clarify the reasons for reduction in expenditure on cycle ways and footways from £5,101,000 in 2016/17 to £4,023,000 in 2017/18.

- 5.16 In light of LTP4 and its focus on encouraging modal shift Members highlighted a lack of emphasis on footways in the TAMP, requested that more information on cycleway maintenance was presented in future reports and expressed disappointment that statistics had not been included. Officers concurred that encouragement of modal shift could be assisted via the 'One and Done Model' i.e. where footway/roadway repairs were being undertaken other issues could be addressed e.g. overhanging hedges which made cycle paths unusable and ponding which discouraged use of associated assets. Members heard that the new Asset Management Plan due for finalisation in the autumn included a daughter document on active travel. Some of the issues raised had fallen within Cat 2 and as such had not been a priority for Ringway but could now be addressed via Cat 6.
- 5.17 To the possibility of providing a progress report on inclusion of Modal Shift in the TAMP, officers emphasised the annual nature of the TAMP APR and that as not all the information would be available by autumn it would be more appropriate to present it in the next annual report. As the best source of information on local Modal Shift issues Members were encouraged to provide intelligence to Assistant Highway Managers.
- 5.18 Officers clarified that where the Highways Service was aware of redundant dropped crossings and kerbs installed by developers to improve access during development, Development Management colleagues would aim to ensure the developer removed them by including such provisions in legal agreements that usually govern larger developments. Frequently no legal agreement was required for more minor infill developments so the removal of redundant crossings could not be enforced; such crossings would need to be removed when resurfacing or via 'One and Done'.
- 5.19 Members heard that approximately 1000 residents had been involved the National Highways and Transport Network Survey (NHT) and the results had been included in the TAMP APR as they were taken into consideration by the Authority.

C Allen-Smith

**Conclusions:**

- 5.20 The panel noted the Asset Performance Report and the points to be taken forward

**6. HIGHWAYS PERFORMANCE MONITOR**

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[Officer Contact: Jonathan Knapman, , Service Development & Efficiencies Manager (Tel: 01992 555381)]

- 6.1 The Panel received the Highways Service Q4 report for January-March 2018 comprising 60 individual measures grouped under 10 themes demonstrating overall performance, each theme having an overall score for health and performance being evaluated via the Red, Amber or Green (RAG) system. Overall performance was up, with a score of 2.10 compared to 2.05 in Q3.
- 6.2 Members heard that as there was now 1 years' worth of data in the new performance monitor format, enabling the regime to effectively benchmark the service against its own performance a year prior. This, along with a broader set of measures to reflect the panel's new Highways & Environment remit would be reflected in the Q1 report for 2018/19.
- 6.3 The Panel were pleased to note that ability to construct vehicle crossovers within 8 weeks had achieved 95% by January 2018.
- 6.4 In view of low attendance Members discussed the usefulness of the 'Member attendance at Highways Liaison Meetings' measure. Officers clarified that attendance amongst County Councillors was 53%, however when District and Town Councillors were taken into account attendance dropped to 24%. Members requested that officers improve their organisation of such meetings as some divisions had not had one for two years. J Knapman  
S Johnson
- 6.5 Noting the mismatch between reporting timeframes for ITCC network interventions and average journey time during morning peak, officers agreed that measurement of the latter over a shorter period could allow correlation of the two measures. Officers clarified that journey time in minutes/mile was measured on specific roads representative of the county as a whole. J Knapman  
S Johnson
- 6.6 Officers confirmed that street light performance would be separated out from that of other illuminated assets and a breakdown provided in the Q1 2018/19 report. J Knapman  
S Johnson
- 6.7 Although there had been a steady increase in faults reported online Members expressed concern about the time taken for phone calls reporting faults to be answered, including operator time to access the maps and potential abandoned calls. Officers clarified that a new mobile-friendly fault reporting system had been launched on which it was quicker and easier to report faults and agreed to investigate fault reporting phone call performance. J Knapman  
S Johnson

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6.8 The usefulness of the 'Staff Turnover' measure was queried as it did not reflect the skill set remaining; officers clarified that it assisted in identifying when turnover was getting too high and potentially impacting on service delivery.

6.9 Formatting limitations permitting, officers agreed to provide as many numbers as possible on the performance regime's graphs.

J Knapman  
S Johnson

6.10 Officers clarified that under the 'Operational Delivery' theme for carriageway and footway defects reported 'attended' meant had looked at the defect on site but not necessarily fixed the defect.

6.11 In relation to 'Grass cutting performance to spec' officers clarified that the grass cutting season was typically March to October (in 2017 it extended into December). Officers further clarified that the grass cutting audit was carried out on a random basis to ensure that the length of grass did not exceed specification.

**Conclusions:**

6.12 The Cabinet Panel noted the report and commented on the performance monitor for the Highways service for Q4 2017-18.

**7. OTHER PART I BUSINESS**

7.1 There was no other business.

**KATHRYN PETTITT  
CHIEF LEGAL OFFICER**

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