
HIGHWAY WINTER MAINTENANCE OPERATIONAL PLAN 2008/09

**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor David Lyonette, Transport Portfolio
Responsible Director - Cliff Brown, Director of Community Services**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide clarification on proposed modifications to the Highway Winter Maintenance Operational Plan for the winter season 2008/09.

Summary

2. The Council has a statutory duty to ensure the passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice, so far as is reasonably practicable. The Highway Winter Maintenance Plan is in place to ensure this duty is undertaken.
3. A review was carried out during the summer to ensure the plan is current and this was considered at the Cabinet meeting of 4 November 2008. Members agreed to change the type of product to treat roads but deferred a decision on routes until further clarification was provided.
4. The report has assessed issues raised on particular streets and reviewed the roads served by school buses.

Recommendation

5. It is recommended that Members:
 - (a) Approve the modifications to the Highway Winter Maintenance Plan as identified in this report.
 - (b) Note the clarifications in relation to the sections of road being removed from the schedule of gritted streets.
 - (c) Add Major Street and Chandos Street to the schedule of gritted streets.
 - (d) Approve school bus routes as valid criteria for gritting and continue to grit all school bus routes.

Reason

6. The recommendations are supported in order to ensure that the statutory duty is fulfilled and the modifications are included to ensure the plan is current and operating efficiently.

Cliff Brown
Director of Community Services

Background Papers

- (i) 'Delivering Best Value in Highway Maintenance' published by the Institution of Highways and Transportation'.
- (ii) 'The Institution of Civil Engineers Design and Practice Guide: Highway Winter Maintenance'.
- (iii) DBC Highway Winter Maintenance Operational Plan.

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S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no implications for Crime and Disorder.
Health and Well Being	There are no issues relating to Health and Well Being contained in this report.
Sustainability	The proposed modifications will reduce the amount of fuel used as part of the operation helping to reduce the carbon footprint of the Borough. The modifications will also reduce the use of rock salt, which is a natural resource.
Diversity	The content of the report impacts equally across all groups.
Wards Affected	The plan affects all the residents of Darlington.
Groups Affected	The content of the report impacts equally across all groups.
Budget and Policy Framework	The modifications proposed assist in reducing the cost of the service and achieving the reduction in budget provision in the MTFP.
Key Decision	The modifications to the Highway Winter Services Operational Plan are a key decision as it affects all the residents of Darlington.
Urgent Decision	For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The objective of the winter maintenance service is to try and maintain communications and reasonable travel certainty during adverse weather conditions. These align to the following themes: Prosperous: ensuring Darlington is accessible, particularly in periods of adverse weather, to ensure business continuity. Greener: the plan has a priority to cover the bus network and thus ensure sustainable modes are given priority access and reliability. Greener: managing the service effectively and efficiently to minimise the use of natural resources (rock salt and fuel) contributing to a low carbon Borough. Safer: reducing the potential for road traffic accidents in adverse weather and providing public reassurance of a safer highway network.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

7. The main criteria used in determining routes are as follows:
 - (a) Links to the national road network, industry, commercial and business centres.
 - (b) Maintain public transport and access by emergency services.
 - (c) Journeys to and from work and education.
8. At the meeting of Cabinet on 4 November 2008 Members raised a number of queries relating to the planned changes to specific routes and deferred the decision on the route review until further investigation was undertaken.
9. The original report was based on the July 2008 bus network plan. Some minor changes have taken place since then. The report has also taken into account these modifications and has been based on a new bus route plan produced in November 2008.
10. Specific clarification was asked on certain roads. Investigations have identified that parts of these roads are still bus routes, whilst other parts are not. The table below identifies the roads queried and confirms the section that is no longer bus route and is thus proposed to be removed from the schedule:

Road Name	Section Proposed to be Removed
Baydale Road	Coniscliffe Road to Salutation Road
Eggleston View	Bylands Way to Whitby Way
Burnside Road	Geneva Road to Carlton Moor

11. Following the last Cabinet meeting there have been other requests for additional clarification. Some of these have not been included as there are treated alternative routes in very close proximity. However, Major Street has been included as it is a direct link for emergency services to the hospital and Chandos Street, which is a bus route.
12. Members also requested clarification on school bus routes. An assessment has been undertaken to identify if any of the roads proposed to be removed are school bus routes. It could be considered that school bus routes meet the criteria "Journeys to and from work and education" and should not be removed from the schedule of roads treated. The roads affected are:

Urban	Rural
Emley Moor Road (Burnside to Edgemoor Road)	C39 Carlbury Crossing Road
Estoril Road	
Stooperdale Avenue	
The Headlands	
Harris Street (Estoril Road to Hewitson Road)	

13. **Appendix 1** shows a revised list of roads that are proposed for removal from the gritting plan subject to the decision taken by Cabinet.

Financial Implications

14. The operational budget for the service this winter (2008/09) is £309k, which includes an efficiency target agreed as part of the latest MTFP review.
15. It is difficult to set a budget for a statutory service that is dependant upon weather conditions. There is always a risk of overspend depending on the nature of weather experienced in the season.
16. There has been a historical overspend for the last five years in this service area. The budget pressure has been highlighted for this service area and is part of the ongoing budget setting process.
17. The following table shows the financial implications of two options:
- (a) Option 1 - Remove roads that are no longer bus routes and do not meet other criteria.
- (b) Option 2 - Remove roads that are no longer bus routes but retain roads that are still used by school buses.

	Present level of Service 2007/08	OPTION 1 Remove former bus routes from gritting list	OPTION 2 Remove former bus routes but include school bus routes
Miles of Road Treated	212.5	195.93	198.03
% of Road Network Treated	64%	59%	60%
% Salt Savings	-	7.8%	6.8%
Salt Savings (tonnes)	-	298	260
Salt Savings (£)	-	£7051	£6151
Mileage Savings	-	2254	1967
Fuel Savings (£)	-	£721	£630
Total Savings		£7772	£6781

Note:

1. The table above takes into account additional roads which have been added due to bus route changes (Chandos Street, 236m included) and the DETC, 5464m (double treated due to its width).
2. Figures based on an average of the last eight years Winter Service Costs.
3. These are full year savings and for 2008/09, approximately 50% will be achieved as gritting has already commenced and some time will be required to re-programme the routes.

18. The difference between Option 1 and 2 is marginal. However, Option 2 ensures all routes to school used by school buses are treated. It could be considered that school bus routes meet the criteria “Journeys to and from work and education” and should not be removed. It is recommended that Members approve school bus routes as valid criteria for gritting and approve Option 2.

Outcome of Consultation

19. The Highway Winter Maintenance Operational Plan is a management document used to demonstrate a statutory duty. The plan has not been subject to external consultation.

URBAN AREA

Route P1	Route P2	Route P3
*Baydale Road (Coniscliffe Rd to Salutation)	Banks Road	Arthur Street
Bedford Street	Brankin Road (North)	Chesnut Street
Borough Road South	Bourne Avenue	*Eggleston View (West)Bylands Way to Whitby Way
Brunswick Street	*Burnside Road (Geneva Road to Carlton Moor)	*Greenbank Road (Salisbury Rd to Widdowfield St)
Carroll Road	Claremont Road	Malvern Crescent (South)
Clare Avenue	**Emley Moor Road (North)	McNay Street
Cleveland Avenue	**Estoril Road	Nickstream Lane (South)
Clifton Avenue	Estoril Road South	Pierremont Road(Willow Rd to Woodlands Rd)
Elton Parade	Firthmoor Crescent	Rosedale Crescent
Elton Road	Glebe Road	**Stooperdale Avenue
Greenmount Road	Holgate Moor	Valley Street
Hargreave Terrace	Ingleby Moor Crescent	Widdowfield Street (Greenbank Rd to Salisbury Tce)
Hartford Road	Laburnum Road	
Hill Close Avenue	Littlebeck Drive	
Leaffield Road	Mayfair Road	
Leith Road	Martindale Road (West)	
Lunedale Road (North)	Worton Drive	
Manor Road		
Pierremont Crescent		
Swaledale Avenue (North)		
**The Headland		
Waverley Terrace		

Note:

- * denotes clarification requested by Members.
- ** denotes school bus route (final inclusion on list dependant upon agreed option)

RURAL AREA

C37 Bishopton to Whinney Hill
C46 Bishopton to Whitton
C37 Bishopton to C92
C40 Highside Road, Heighington
Unc South View, Heighington
Unc East Green Church Road, Heighington
Unc Church View, Heighington
Unc Hopelands Heighington
C45 Bolam Road
**C39 Carlbury Crossing Road
C55 Throstle Nest Road, Walworth
C144 Over Dinsdale
C54 Low Dinsdale

Note:

- * denotes clarification requested by Members.
- ** denotes school bus route (final inclusion on list dependant upon agreed option)