



WINTER & ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY 2020

Policy: Winter and Adverse Weather Service

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Statutory Responsibility

The statutory basis for winter service in England and Wales is Section 41 (1A) of the Highways Act 1980, which was modified on 31st October 2003, by Section 111 of the Railways and Transport Act 2003.

This duty is not absolute given its qualification of reasonableness and practicability. It is not considered reasonably practicable or affordable to carry out planned precautionary treatment of the entire network, or that the treated network is kept free from snow and ice at all times. In addition, the Traffic Management Act 2004 placed a network management duty on all local traffic authorities in England. It requires authorities to do all that is reasonably practicable to manage the network effectively to keep traffic moving. In meeting the duty, authorities should establish contingency plans for dealing promptly and effectively with unplanned events, such as unforeseen weather conditions, as far as is reasonable and practicable.

1.2 National Guidance

Well Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice 2016 (WMHI), although not statutory, provides guidance to Highway Authorities on highways management. It promotes the adoption of an integrated asset management approach and establishment of local levels of service through risk-based assessment.

2.0 Aims

2.1 Subject to available resources, and as far as is reasonably practicable, The Council aims to:

- Safeguard the travelling public from the hazardous effects of snow and protect the public from adverse weather conditions such as extreme winds, flooding etc.
- Consider integrating its winter and adverse weather response with wider objectives such as transport provision, network resilience, including access to key public service locations and emergency planning.
- During periods of prolonged severe weather events, monitor, review and deliver additional services.

2.2 Winter and adverse weather service should integrate with wider objectives such as transport, network resilience and emergency planning.

3.0 Policy

- 3.1 The Council will produce an annual Adverse Weather Plan (AWP), adopting the principles of WMHI. The AWP will include details of the systems, resilience, resources and processes that will be utilised in responding to individual weather events including winter service.
- 3.2 Proactive winter service and other emergency operations will normally be undertaken based upon available weather forecast information, knowledge of prevailing local weather conditions and resource availability.
- 3.3 The Council will, where reasonably practicable, carry out gritting of carriageway surfaces prior to the formation of ice on routes defined in the AWP (pre-treatment). These routes will be designed in accordance with WMHI, adopting a risk-based approach using the network hierarchy and other local factors.
- 3.4 The Council may carry out treatments including gritting and ploughing, to address the formation of ice and/or fallen snow (post treatment).
- 3.5 The routine precautionary treatment of footways and footway cycleways will not be carried out.
- 3.6 During prolonged severe winter weather conditions, all available resources may be continuously employed in maintaining the predefined road network. However, where possible, the Council will work in partnership with the Town and Parish Councils, and supply chain partners to arrange for snow clearance work on local roads and in town centre areas.
- 3.7 Consideration will be given to addressing winter conditions on areas of the public highway which are not included on the treated network. This may include the provision of grit bins and salt piles to facilitate community self-help.
- 3.8 Details of all planned winter service actions will be communicated via the Council's website and social media accounts. Information relating to actions planned in response to weather warnings and during snow and adverse weather events will also be provided.