

In regards to the Winter Service Plan, I have now looked at the plan and have no issues with it.

I can confirm that as per 3.17 the council did supply grit to the fire stations in the city and our own crews used this for the main routes in and out of the premises.

I can also confirm that as per 4.1 we were invited to appropriate meetings and were kept informed at all times.

We are able to fit snow chains to our fire appliances and therefore we had virtually unrestricted access to all parts of the city. We did restrict the movement of the fire appliances and generally they only went out for emergency incidents. Normally they would have been undertaking a whole range of other activities so did have some spare capacity. There is a possibility that the appliances could be used for other purposes to assist the other emergency services or council departments with regard to moving resources around the city. Appliances would have to remain available for emergency calls but I am confident that further discussion could be had to explore this further.

We also had four wheel drive capability available for moving staff around and for providing assistance at emergency incidents. Similarly more use could have been made of this resource as above.

We are very experienced at co-ordinating a large amount of resources at operational incidents and we could use this skill to assist with co-ordination of any city resource. For example if you are looking at community engagement and self help we could assist with this type of co-ordination.

Our fire alliance drivers are trained to a very high standard and although the city uses its waste disposal vehicle drivers for gritting Lorries etc there could be an opportunity to utilise our staff for such purposes. I must re-iterate this is not suggested as an alternative to your current drivers but I understand that during the last bad weather there was a great drain on your resources. If we had a really prolonged spell of such weather this is a possibility that may be worth exploring further?

At any one time we do have approximately 25 firefighters on duty. There is the possibility of utilising these staff if there is an urgent need for a quick response to clear an area of snow etc for any reason, or for any such task as deemed appropriate.

These are just a few of my early thoughts, they will need further investigation but, in the current and forthcoming climate, we do have to look at how we can make better use of our pooled resources.

Area Manager Keith Ring

