

# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

## Agenda Item 16

Brighton & Hove City Council

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Update on the Scrutiny Review of the Winter Service Plan</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>5 September 2011</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Strategic Director Place</b>		
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<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

### FOR GENERAL RELEASE

#### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

1.1 This report enables the Environment and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee to monitor and track progress on the scrutiny recommendations on the Winter Service Plan. The recommendations and update appears as appendix 1 to this report.

1.2 The report will help the Committee to assess the impact and consequences of the scrutiny recommendations.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) That Members consider the action taken against these recommendations, and provide feedback.
- (2) That the Committee determines whether a further tracking report relating to this scrutiny review is required.

#### 3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

##### 3.1 The Scrutiny Review

The Scrutiny Review of the Winter Service Plan was established, following extensive disruption after severe weather over the Christmas and New Year period 2009 – 2010.

- 3.2 Chaired by Councillor Warren Morgan the cross-party panel consisted of Councillors Tony Janio, Sven Rufus and David Watkins. Unlike most previous scrutiny panels, the panel was set up as a one-off meeting. It

was agreed at Environment & Community Safety Overview & Scrutiny Committee (ECSOSC) on 8 February 2010 to supplement the extensive report and discussion undertaken at that meeting with a one-day scrutiny panel. The 8 February 2010 ECSOSC meeting agreed the Panels terms of reference relating to:

- The council's Highways Winter Service Plan
- The predicted regularity of severe winter weather
- The council's response to the initial snowfall
- Changes to the council's response at the time of the second snowfall
- Suggestions for alterations to service provision
- Comparative information available from other local authorities
- Financial implications of any service modifications.

3.4 The Panel's completed report was formally endorsed by ECSOSC 21 June 2010 and referred to the Council's Executive.

3.5 The 26 July Environment CMM considered and agreed the actions in reply to the scrutiny report. Full Council on 21 October received both the Scrutiny report and cabinet response for noting.

### 3.6 **Monitoring Scrutiny Reviews**

The usual arrangements for monitoring the outcome of scrutiny recommendations are:

- a) The decision-makers to whom the recommendations are addressed, are asked to submit a formal response to the recommendations normally within two months, including an action plan and timetable for implementation with named contact officers to action the recommendations.
- b) The report of the scrutiny review and response from the decision-makers are then reported together to full Council for information.
- c) The parent Overview and Scrutiny Committee normally receives a report of progress against the agreed recommendations, six months after the decisions are made.
- d) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will at that stage determine if any further monitoring is required; whether a progress report is required after a further six months or one year. Otherwise the Committee may resolve that no more monitoring is necessary.

3.7 A summary of the Scrutiny Recommendations and replies plus progress in implementation appears at Appendix 1 to this report.

## 4. **CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 The scrutiny panel heard verbal evidence from a wide range of contributors during one public meeting. Members received information from council officers and various public services, members of the public and other local authorities.

## **5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

### Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The costs of providing the Winter Maintenance Service are covered by a revenue budget of £338,330. Any underspend in the revenue budget is carried over into the Winter Maintenance Reserve as contingency for periods of extreme weather. This fund is used to provide operatives, gritter fuel, gritter maintenance, contractors and other costs associated with an ongoing major operation. The balance on this reserve is currently £430,297.

Finance Officer Consulted: Karen Brookshaw Date: 27/07/2011

### Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The Council as highway authority has a statutory duty to maintain publicly adopted highways. Since October 2003 this statutory duty has included a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice (s41.(1A) Highways Act 1980 as amended by the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003). The actions detailed in Appendix 1 to this Report will assist in demonstrating that the Council will be in a position to comply with its statutory duty.

Lawyer consulted: Carl Hearsom

Date: 27/07/2011

### Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 The Winter Maintenance service covers main routes and all bus routes. It is not logistically or economically feasible to cover all roads in the city, so by treating bus routes and pavements on a priority basis we ensure that most areas of the city have some accessible options for travel and target areas of highest usage first. However to balance this, grit drops and grit bins prioritise more residential areas in the outlying areas of the city.

### Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 Salt has a negative environmental impact e.g. on the water table or vegetation. Sharp sand (grit) does not dissolve into solution and can have a negative impact on drainage and appearance. Therefore resources are carefully deployed in order to provide a balance between network usability and detriment to the local environment.

### Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 There are no crime or disorder implications.

### Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 The objective is to provide a winter service, which will permit, as far as is reasonably possible, the safe movement of traffic on designated roads throughout Brighton and Hove and to keep to a minimum delays and accidents brought about by adverse weather conditions.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 The winter service is an essential support service for the city's economy by helping to provide an accessible road network.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

1. Recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of the Winter Service Plan, the CMM response and progress against the recommendations.
2. Attachments 1 – 11: supporting evidence of progress against the recommendations

[Attachment 1 – Contact Centre statistics for October, November and December 2009 and 2010](#)

Attachments 2 – 5 Brighton & Hove City Council website links

[Attachment 2 – Gritting Information video](#)

Full url: <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1238234>

[Attachment 3 – Severe weather page](#)

Full url: <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1159891>

[Attachment 4 – Cold weather update](#)

Full url: <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=b1157184>

[Attachment 5 – City News November 2010](#)

See front page and page 7

Full url:

<http://content.yudu.com/Library/A1pipn/BrightonCouncil/resources/index.htm?referrerUrl=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.yudu.com%2Fitem%2Fdetails%2F232553%2FBrighton-Council>

[Attachment 6](#) – Directgov website link [Clearing snow and ice from pavements yourself](#)

Full url [http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/NI1/Newsroom/DG\\_191868](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/NI1/Newsroom/DG_191868)

[Attachment 7](#) – City Infrastructure Members’ briefing 17 Dec 2010

[Attachment 8](#) – Highways and City Infrastructure Winter Service Feedback on snow event

[Attachment 9](#) – Response from partner agencies on review of Highways’ Performance Winter 2010 - 2011

[Attachment 10](#) – LGA review: photos July 2010

[Attachment 11](#)– LGA review: photos November 2010

### **Documents In Members’ Rooms/ Background Documents**

None.

