

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	Herefordshire Council's 2026/27 Winter Service Plan
Date of decision:	22 nd October 2026
Decision maker:	Group Manager – Highway Asset Management
Authority for delegated decision:	Economy and Environment Scheme of Delegation 75, to act on behalf of the legislation specified in the Highways Act 1980.
Ward:	Countywide
Consultation:	None
Decision made:	To adopt and implement the 2026/27 Winter Service Plan (Appendix A)
Reasons for decision:	Under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980, the council has a duty to maintain the highway. 4. The Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003 amended the Highways Act 1980 by adding a Statutory Duty Clause 41(1A) concerning dealing with snow and ice: <i>"In particular a Highway Authority are under a duty to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice."</i> The Winter Service Plan explains the arrangements for dealing with ice and snow on the county's roads. It outlines the procedures and resources used, provides information on key personnel and sets out how the authority will manage periods of severe weather to ensure network resilience. The plan builds upon tried and tested operational standards developed to meet the needs of Herefordshire to set out what is "reasonably practicable" for the county. The severe and prolonged weather experienced in past winters has had a significant impact on our community and tested the resilience of our services. The Winter Service Plan for the 2026/27 winter period has built on lessons learnt through the delivery of previous plans. It has been developed with consideration of developments in national best practice guidance and 'Well-managed highway infrastructure – A Code of Practice' and publications and advice from the 'National Winter Service Research Group'.
Equality Considerations	Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows: A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to – (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

	(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The winter service plan sets out the Council's aims to keep road users safe through effectively managing the risk to the travelling public from the hazardous effects of ice and snow on highway surfaces for all users. The plan ensures resources are available to react to the circumstances and enable access, where possible, to key services such as hospitals, health care, schools, transport, shopping areas, etc. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. Our providers will be made aware of their contractual requirements in regard to equality legislation.
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	Under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980, the council has a duty to maintain the highway. 4. The Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003 amended the Highways Act 1980 by adding a Statutory Duty Clause 41(1A) concerning dealing with snow and ice. This states: <i>"In particular a Highway Authority are under a duty to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice."</i> The budget for the resources is identified and provided in the Council's Public Realm Contract Annual Plan, the service is managed through the Public Realm Contract. Risks with the service are identified and managed in the plan. The key risks associated with the delivery of the Winter Service are set out below: ▪ National and local salt stock levels: Monitored, restocked as per plan and other measures implemented if trigger points as set out in the plan are realised. ▪ Plant and fleet breakdowns: Regular service, spare fleet, procurement of new fleet in 2024, option to commission resources. ▪ The impact during severe weather is usually managed through a Tactical Coordinating Group which involves key partners such as the police, fire and ambulance services, this ensures all eventualities are considered and mitigated as the weather and resources require. ▪ Fuel: Fuel supplies to be maintained and monitored.
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	Not to adopt the plan. This option has been dismissed as this doesn't address the Council's statutory duties, severe weather impacts on road users, businesses and our communities.
Details of any declarations of interest made:	None.

Signed M. Lewis

Date: 22nd October 2026