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MEETING	COMMUNITY SAFETY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE	12 APRIL 2010
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS BOWGETT (CHAIR), GILLIES (VICE-CHAIR), KING, ORRELL, B WATSON AND SUE GALLOWAY
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLOR VASSIE

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### **38. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they may have in the business on the agenda. None were declared.

### **39. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of 2 March 2010 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

### **40. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no registrations to speak under the council's Public Participation Scheme.

### **41. WINTER GRITTING POLICY - INTERIM REPORT**

Members received an Interim Report on City of York Council Winter Gritting Policy.

Members focussed on the following objectives:

- Review of current policy in regard to cycle ways
- Review of current policy in regard to council funded salt bins

#### Cycle Paths

Councillor D'Agorne, in his role as Cycling Champion, expressed concern that the current policy did not give sufficient priority to off-road cycle ways. As a cycling city, this was an issue that needed to be addressed. Discussions should take place with Sustrans and other parties in order to improve the situation. It was also important that consideration was given to ways of addressing the problems in respect of Millennium Bridge. Whilst it may be inappropriate to use salt, other European countries had found alternative materials that could be used in these circumstances. Managing people's expectations and ensuring that cyclists were given the same detail of information as motorists was another factor to be considered.

Officers gave details of the current arrangements that were in place in respect of cycle routes and circulated information regarding a new machine that had recently been purchased for the maintenance of off-road cycle ways.

Details were given of the issues in respect of the maintenance of Millennium Bridge, as outlined in paragraphs 12 to 14 of the report. It was noted that when the bridge had been commissioned it had been designated as an ancillary route and it had been understood that the materials used were corrosive. Officers advised that it was important that the protective covering lasted as long as possible, as the cost of repainting the bridge would be substantial. As the bridge was designated for pedestrians, it was not possible to use vehicles on the bridge to clear the snow as this posed the risk of structural damage.

Members commented on the following issues in respect of the treatment of cycle ways:

- Concerns were expressed that to improve the clearing of cycle ways would necessitate the diverting of resources away from other areas which may be more of a priority.
- Even if the cycle ways were safe to use, cyclists could find difficulty in travelling safely to them.
- The priority for clearing cycle ways should continue to be to clear those which were used by commuters travelling to work rather than those which were primarily used for leisure purposes.
- In some circumstances there may not be alternative modes of transport – for example bus services may not be available for people who started work early.
- York had been designated as a Cycling City and hence it was important that the issue of ensuring that cycle ways could be used in adverse weather conditions was tackled. It was important to continue to persuade people to use alternatives to travelling by car.

The Travel Co-ordinator from York Hospital circulated responses that had been received from hospital staff arising from consultation on the current policy in regard to cycle ways (attached as a minute annex). The general view was that the council had carried out a good job during the recent prolonged spell of bad weather but that there was a need to publicise which of the routes would be gritted.

A map of all on-road and off-road cycleways had been included as Annex A to the report. Members were asked to give consideration as to whether there were any omissions or suggestions as to revised priorities.

Members suggested that a key issue was the need to raise public understanding of the arrangements that would be in place in respect of treating cycleways, including the priorities in terms of which routes would be treated. It was noted that this issue was due to be considered at the next meeting of the committee.

## Salt bins

Officers gave details of the present arrangements in respect of salt bins and the costs involved, as outlined in the report.

Members gave consideration to alternative ways of working that the council could adopt, as detailed in paragraphs 25 – 26 of the report. It was noted that it would be possible for the council to purchase salt bags, which could be used to enhance the provision currently offered by salt bins during periods of extreme weather. The committee recognised that the use of these bags would enable the council to respond more rapidly when severe weather conditions occurred and this arrangement would be more cost effective than increasing the number of salt bins.

Members reiterated that the review of the gritting policy was in no way a reflection on the work that staff had carried out during what had been very difficult circumstances.

- RESOLVED: (i) That the contents of the report and the views of those present at the meeting be noted.
- (ii) That the following recommendations be included in the final report:
- That the current levels of supply of council funded salt bins be maintained
  - That in times of severe and prolonged bad weather the council also provide self-help bags at various locations across the city.
  - That a list of sites be identified for locating the self help bags – this list to be drawn up in consultation with Ward Committees and Parish Councils
  - That criteria for the provision of the self-help bags and the list of sites be included within the Winter Gritting Policy.

REASON: To progress the review in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols.

Councillor D Bowgett, Chair

[The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 12.00 pm].

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**York Hospitals Foundation Trust – Summary of  
Views From Staff That Cycle**

1. The views are from a very wide cross section of all the staff that cycle to work at the hospital.
2. There is great support for the purchase of the special vehicle for use in winter and the fact that greater attention is going to be paid to the maintenance of cycle ways at other times is warmly welcomed.
3. A wide cross-section of staff think that the Council did well under very difficult circumstances, but that a little more attention to certain areas would pay dividends, although some thought it was an impossible task anyway.
4. There is likely to be support for the Council trying to keep a reasonable network of routes open and advertise and concentrate activities on them. Already some staff use different routes in winter because they recognise that they are more trafficked and therefore likely to be safer.
5. The summary lists lots of locations where a more targeted approach would be welcomed.
6. Better efforts to clear snow from cycle lanes as well as the adjacent busy sections of highway where it is particularly narrow would be appreciated. At the moment there seems to be a tendency to use the cycle lane as the place to deposit cleared snow.
7. Certain sections of joint cycleway and pedestrian route and some shared bridges are considered of high importance to both groups of users and would benefit from greater attention. For example, there are quite strongly held views that Bridge Lane between Bootham Park Hospital and York Hospital was not dealt with effectively despite being on listed sections. In addition, the adjacent footbridge over the Scarborough railway line appears to be missed off.
8. There appears to be some doubt – confirmed in the printed list – that the new sections of cycleway along Water End to Clifton Green were not treated effectively.
9. The opportunity given by the request for winter maintenance feedback has resulted in a few other cycling related suggestions, some of which are separated out at the end of the note.

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