
Meeting: Traffic Management Meeting

Date: 5 April 2011

Subject: Petition – Gritting of Church Road, Aspley Heath

Report of: Basil Jackson

Summary: The purpose of this report is to present a petition received from residents of Aspley Heath requesting that Central Bedfordshire Council add Church Road to its Priority One salting network.

Contact Officer: Martin Freeman
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Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: Woburn and Harlington

Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Financial:

Approximately £10,000 would be required to purchase a small towable salt spreader.

Approximately £2,000 per annum would be required for standby payments for extra labour required to drive vehicle

Approximately £4,000 per annum would be required in overtime payments for extra labour required to undertake salting, based on an average of 40 salt actions per annum.

Legal:

None as a result of this report.

Risk Management:

None as a result of this report.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None as a result of this report.

Equalities/Human Rights:

None as a result of this report.

Community Safety:

None as a result of this report

Sustainability:

None as a result of this report

RECOMMENDATION(S):

The Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities and Healthier Lifestyles is requested to note the contents of the report.

Background and Information.

1. A petition of nearly 250 signatures has been received from Aspley Heath Parish Council requesting that Church Road be added to the Priority One salting network when frost and ice is forecast.
2. The Priority One network is our day to day salting network, and has been devised, revised and fine tuned over the years and includes all A and B roads, most C roads and some UC roads. It also provides for a route in/out of rural settlements, hills, roads past all middle and upper schools, and some lower schools. It also covers a majority of, but obviously not all, main public and school bus routes. This network is 47% of our whole road network and is one of the largest in the eastern region.
3. Church Road is an unclassified non-through narrow road, relatively steep in places, with a school at the top, serves approximately 140 properties, and under normal circumstances it would be form part of our Priority One salting network.
4. We have had problems with Church Road Aspley Heath for some years, particularly with the level of parked cars on the road, especially in the evening and overnight which is when we normally undertake Priority One salting. It is impossible to get one of our standard gritters up this road, and even when we can, it is impossible to turn it around at the end of the road, making it very dangerous to reverse the vehicle back along the entire length of approximately 1.1kms.
5. When heavy prolonged snow is experienced, additional roads are salted and ploughed once the Priority One network is running relatively freely. These additional roads as identified within the Winter Service Operational Plan as the Priority Two network. Church Road has always been included as part of this network of roads, however it is still sometimes impossible to undertake this due to parked vehicles.
6. Due to these difficulties experienced over numerous years, three salt bins were provided for residents to use. These are located outside No.15A Church Road, opposite the church, and outside Fernwood School.
7. To add Church Road to our Priority One salting network would involve the purchase of a small towable gritter at approximately £10,000. This would also involve providing additional labour for which standby payments for the 5 month winter season would be required, plus overtime payments every time we undertook a Priority One treatment.

8. If Church Road was added to the Priority One network then this would involve a year 1 cost of £16,000, and thereafter approximately £6,000 per annum based on an average of 40 salting actions per annum.

Conclusion and The Way Forward

9. Given the topographical constraints with Church Road and the ensuing problems with parked vehicles, it is recommended that it remains on our Priority 2 network, is visited as now each time we implement this salting regime, and if possible it is salted and ploughed.
10. Additionally, given the agreement by Central Bedfordshire in the autumn of 2010 for Parish Councils to provide salt bins on the public highway if Aspley Heath Parish Council considers there is a local community need, they have the opportunity of doing this in addition to the 3 that Central Bedfordshire have provided.