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Meeting Business Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date 11 July 2011

**Subject Task and Finish Groups – Recommendation Tracking**

Report of Scrutiny Office

Summary This report provides the Committee with an update on the implementation of recommendations made by Overview & Scrutiny Task & Finish Group accepted by Cabinet.

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Officer Contributors Andrew Charlwood, Overview & Scrutiny Manager

Status (public or exempt) Public

Wards affected All

Enclosures Appendix A – Task & Finish Group Recommendations  
Appendix B – Winter Gritting Pilot Scheme Summary

For decision by Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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## **1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 That the Committee are requested to consider and comment on the progress made in implementing Task & Finish Group recommendations accepted by Cabinet, as set out in Appendix A.**

## **2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Panels and Task and Finish Groups must ensure that the work of Scrutiny is reflective of the Council's priorities.**
- 2.2 The three priority outcomes set out in the 2011-13 Corporate Plan are: –**
- Better services with less money**
  - Sharing opportunities, sharing responsibilities**
  - A successful London suburb**
- 2.3 In relation to the recommendation made by the Council's Response to Cold Weather Task and Finish Group relating to a Winter Gritting Pilot Scheme, the following Corporate Plan priority, strategic objectives, initiatives and delivery milestones are applicable:**
- Corporate Plan priority: Sharing opportunities, sharing responsibilities**
  - Strategic Objective: Support the development of the Big Society**
  - Initiative: Pilot winter gritting scheme with schools and residents that empower the community to make immediate surroundings safe during adverse weather**
  - Delivery milestones: Achieve a target of seven participating schools and two residential roads for the pilot by winter 2012**

## **3. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS**

- 3.1 Cabinet, 20 October 2010, Decision 5 (Reference from Business Management Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee: Task and Finish Group Review: Remodelling Older Peoples Housing with Support)**
- 3.2 Cabinet, 20 October 2010, Decision 8 (Reference from Business Management Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee: Task and Finish Group Review: Council's Response to Cold Weather)**
- 3.3 Cabinet, 10 January 2011, Decision 6 (Report of the Housing Allocations Overview and Scrutiny Panel)**

#### **4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

- 4.1 Failure to monitor the progress made by Cabinet/Officers in implementing recommendations made by Task & Finish Groups and Overview & Scrutiny Panels which have been accepted by Cabinet carries a reputational risk to the authority through a failure to demonstrate the outcomes from overview and scrutiny work.

#### **5. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 5.1 Pursuant to the Equality Act 2010 (“the Act”), the council has a legislative duty to have ‘due regard’ to eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality and fostering good relations in the contexts of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy, and maternity, religion or belief and sexual orientation.
- 5.2 In addition to the Terms of Reference of the Committee, and in so far as relating to matters within its remit, the responsibility of the Committee is to perform the Overview and Scrutiny role in relation to:
- The Council’s leadership role in relation to diversity and inclusiveness; and
  - The fulfilment of the Council’s duties as employer including recruitment and retention, personnel, pensions and payroll services, staff development, equalities and health and safety.

#### **6. USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (Finance, Procurement, Performance & Value for Money, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

- 6.1 Task and Finish Group reviews have the scope to consider value for money issues which identify how well the Council is managing and using its resources to deliver value for money and better and more sustainable outcomes for local people.

#### **7. LEGAL ISSUES**

- 7.1 Under Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council’s executive arrangements are required to include provision for appointment of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee with specified powers, including the power to make recommendations in respect of council functions. In respect of the exercise of the Sub-Committee’s powers to coordinate and monitor the work of overview and scrutiny task and finish groups, it is good practice to monitor the progress and impact of recommendations made.

#### **8. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS**

- 8.1 The scope of the Overview & Scrutiny Committees is contained within Part 2, Article 6 of the Council’s Constitution.

8.2 The Terms of Reference of the Overview & Scrutiny Committees are set out in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules (Part 4 of the Constitution).

8.3 Item 6 of Business Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference states that its role is to:

“To coordinate and monitor the work of scrutiny panels and task and finish groups, including considering reports and recommendations and referring to the relevant decision-making body.”

## **9. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

9.1 Revised overview and scrutiny arrangements were introduced following the Council meeting in May 2009.

9.2 As part of the revised arrangements, Council adopted a ‘Task & Finish’ group approach to some of their overview and scrutiny work. Council agreed that task and finish groups would be time-limited to ensure that recommendations were made to the relevant decision-making body in a timely manner. On the whole, task & finish groups have completed their work over a three-month period. However, this timescale is flexible where circumstances mean that a review should be run over a shorter or extended period.

9.3 Since May 2009, a total of ten task and finish groups and scrutiny panels have concluded their work on the following topics:-

- Enterprise in the Borough (3<sup>rd</sup> February 2010)
- School Places Planning (3<sup>rd</sup> February 2010)
- Advice Provision in the Borough (22<sup>nd</sup> February 2010)
- Homelessness and Young People (12<sup>th</sup> April 2010)
- Road Resurfacing (12<sup>th</sup> April 2010)
- Recycling and Waste Minimisation (6<sup>th</sup> September 2010)
- Remodelling Older People’s Housing with Support (20<sup>th</sup> October 2010)
- Council’s Response to Cold Weather (20<sup>th</sup> October 2010)
- Housing Allocations Overview and Scrutiny Panel (10<sup>th</sup> January 2011)
- Domestic Violence (7<sup>th</sup> March 2011)

Dates that these groups reported their findings to Cabinet are detailed in brackets.

9.4 Further task and finish groups have recently completed their work or are ongoing on the following topics:-

- Early Intervention and Prevention Services (Children’s Services)
- Fostering and Adoption Recruitment
- Contract Monitoring and Community Benefit
- Safeguarding in Organisations Working with Children
- Carbon Footprint
- Secondary School Places Overview and Scrutiny Panel

- 9.5 In order for the Committee to have an effective oversight of the work of task and finish groups, it is important for council services (or external bodies) to evidence the extent to which recommendations accepted by the Cabinet (or external agency) have been implemented. To this end, the Scrutiny Office requested that services provide an update on the implementation of accepted recommendations at six-monthly intervals (from the date of reporting to Cabinet or external agency).
- 9.6 The Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee received reports at their meetings on 1<sup>st</sup> November and 16<sup>th</sup> December 2010, and on 28<sup>th</sup> February and 11<sup>th</sup> April 2011 which provided the six and 12 month updates on progress made in implementing task and finish recommendations from the following task and finish groups:-
- Enterprise in the Borough;
  - School Places Planning;
  - Advice Provision in the Borough;
  - Homelessness and Young People;
  - Road Resurfacing; and
  - Recycling and Waste Minimisation
- 9.7 Updates are now due in relation to the following task and finish groups and overview and scrutiny panel:
- Remodelling Older Peoples Housing with Support;
  - Council's Response to Cold Weather; and
  - Housing Allocations Overview and Scrutiny Panel;
- 9.9 An update from services is set out at **Appendix A**. The Committee are requested to consider the information provided in the update report and make any comments/recommendations to the Cabinet/Officers as appropriate.
- 9.10 The recommendation made by the Council's Response to Cold Weather Task and Finish Group in relation to a Winter Gritting Pilot Scheme, Environment & Operations have provided a summary of the scheme to date and this is attached at **Appendix B**. Reference has also been made to the Winter Gritting Pilot Scheme in the recently approved Corporate Plan 2011-13, the detail of which is set out in paragraph 2.3 above.

## 10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 None.

**Legal: SS**  
**CFO: JH/MC**



Key:

Green = fully implemented

Amber = partially implemented

Red = no progress or significant delay in implementation

<b>Remodelling Older Peoples Housing with Support Task and Finish Group – Cabinet, 20 October 2010</b>			
<b>Recommendation to Cabinet (accepted)</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Information</b>	<b>Contact Officers</b>
That any proposal to remodel the service ensure that due regard be given to equalities implications, and that a record of this is kept.	<b>Green</b>	<p><u>Cabinet resolution:</u> “That the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group be approved as submitted.”</p> <p><u>Update June 2011:</u> The recommendations of TFG were contained in the 14 February 2011 Cabinet report in paragraphs 9.6 to 9.8.</p> <p>A full Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out on the proposals put to Cabinet on 14 February 2011 and is contained in Appendix 4 of the Cabinet report.</p> <p>Equality and Legal duties of the Council are contained in paragraphs 5 and 7 respectively of the Cabinet report.</p> <p>Link to Cabinet report 14 February 2011: <a href="http://committeepapers.barnet.gov.uk/democracy/meetings/meetingdetail.asp?meetingid=6151">http://committeepapers.barnet.gov.uk/democracy/meetings/meetingdetail.asp?meetingid=6151</a></p>	Mithu Ghosh, Sheltered Housing Project Manager, Strategic Commissioning Team, Adult Social Services

Recommendation to Cabinet (accepted)	Status	Information	Contact Officer
<p>That the sheltered housing service providers formulate a robust estate management strategy for sheltered accommodation, including a protocol for liaison between estate management and support services</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>	<p><u>Cabinet resolution:</u> “That the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group be approved as submitted.”</p> <p><u>Update June 2011:</u> The Council encouraged existing sheltered housing providers to consider enhanced housing management functions and details of this is contained in Para 6 of the Business Case as contained in Appendix 1 of the 14 February 2011 Cabinet report.</p> <p>As at April 2011, the majority of Providers have decided to go down the route of enhanced housing management. The remaining ‘support services’ to be funded by the Council will be the Sheltered Plus service.</p>	<p>Mithu Ghosh, Sheltered Housing Project Manager, Strategic Commissioning Team, Adult Social Services</p>
<p>That a robust programme of consultation be undertaken prior to any decision regarding service options, including proactive engagement with service users.</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>	<p><u>Cabinet resolution:</u> “That the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group be approved as submitted.”</p> <p><u>Update June 2011:</u> Appendices 2 and 3 of the 14 February 2011 Cabinet report outline the results of the public consultation process and two interactive events with older residents.</p>	<p>Mithu Ghosh, Sheltered Housing Project Manager, Strategic Commissioning Team, Adult Social Services</p>



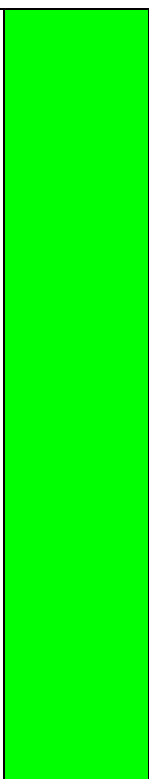
Recommendation to Cabinet (accepted)	Status	Information	Contact Officer
<p>That an alarm service be retained, and that the authority undertake, in conjunction with providers and service users, a review of alarms in sheltered accommodation for residents, including investigation of the installation of additional cords where required, and the possible provision of personal alarms.</p>	<b>Amber</b>	<p><u>Cabinet Resolution:</u> “That the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group be approved as submitted.”</p> <p><u>Update June 2011:</u> Proposals to retain the funding for alarms in sheltered schemes and proposed reviews are contained in paragraph 4 of the Business Case in Appendix 1 of the 14 February 2011 Cabinet report.</p> <p>The provision of personal alarms will be considered as part of the Menu of Charged Services.</p> <p>The investigation of the installation of additional cords where required is a matter for individual sheltered housing providers and this recommendation will be passed onto them.</p>	<p>Mithu Ghosh, Sheltered Housing Project Manager, Strategic Commissioning Team, Adult Social Services</p>
<p>That any remodelling of support ensures that the subsequent service is arranged on as local a level as possible.</p>	<b>Green</b>	<p><u>Cabinet Resolution:</u> “That the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group be approved as submitted.”</p> <p><u>Update June 2011:</u> Most sheltered housing providers have opted to retain an on-site staff presence and where possible the same member of staff as now.</p>	<p>Mithu Ghosh, Sheltered Housing Project Manager, Strategic Commissioning Team, Adult Social Services</p>

**Council's Response to Cold Weather Task and Finish Group – Cabinet, 20 October 2010**

Recommendation	Status	Information	Contact Officer
<p>That the draft Winter Service Policy and Operation Plan 2010/11 be recommended for adoption by the Council for the winter season (commencing 1st November 2010, subject to:</p> <p>*Environment &amp; Operations having regard to individual requests made by Task and Finish Groups Members for amendments to the Priority Network (subject to resource constraints);</p> <p>*An amendment to the Priority 2 Footway classification to include footways in close</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>	<p><u>Cabinet response to recommendation:</u> “That the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group be approved”</p> <p><u>Update June 2011:</u> Fully implemented in 2010/11. All recommended changes to the 2010/11 Plan have been adopted.</p> <p>Note the Winter Service Policy and Operation Plan is reviewed every year will need to be reviewed to prepare the 2011/12 Plan.</p>	<p>Chris Chrysostomou, Chief Engineer (Infrastructure), Environment &amp; Operations</p> <p>Paul Bragg, Highways Manager (Network Management), Environment &amp; Operations</p>

<p>proximity to out-of-centre railway and underground stations; and</p> <p>*Inclusion in Section 3.8 of the Policy and Operation Plan of the criteria for assessing and approving requests for additional grit bins</p>			
<p>The Group have identified that the Winter Service is fit for purpose and recommend that the existing budget should be maintained at its current level to ensure that the Council can respond appropriately to periods of cold weather and snowfall.</p>	<b>Amber</b>	<p><u>Cabinet response to recommendation:</u> "That the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group be approved"</p> <p><u>Update June 2011:</u> Partially implemented. The budget for 2010/11 was reduced from £702K the previous year (2009/10) to £599K. However, this budget was sufficient to meet the cost of providing the service.</p>	<p>Chris Chrysostomou, Chief Engineer (Infrastructure), Environment &amp; Operations</p> <p>Paul Bragg, Highways Manager (Network Management), Environment &amp; Operations</p>

Recommendation	Status	Information	Contact Officer
<p>Environment &amp; Operations be requested to undertake a pilot scheme during the 2010/11 winter season to enable the concept of a 'community keeper' (with responsibility for the equitable distribution of grit stocks amongst neighbouring residents) to be explored, with the following areas to be explored initially:</p> <p>*Golders Green – Cllr Dean Cohen to identify two roads and provide residents contact details            *Chipping Barnet – Cllr Stephen Sowerby to identify two roads and provide residents contact details            *Local Schools – Children's Services to</p>	<b>Green</b>	<p><u>Cabinet response to recommendation:</u> "That the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group be approved"</p> <p><u>Update June 2011:</u>            Fully implemented in 2010/11. We have assessed the success of the pilot scheme and the attachment (Appendix B) provides details. As per the Directorate's Service Plan, we have agreed to extend this scheme to a further two schools and a further two roads in the next 2011/12 winter season.</p>	<p>Chris Chrysostomou, Chief Engineer (Infrastructure), Environment &amp; Operations</p> <p>Paul Bragg, Highways Manager (Network Management), Environment &amp; Operations</p>

<p>provide contact details of two participating schools</p> <p>Following the first period of significant snow or ice, an assessment be undertaken by the Cabinet Member and relevant Director of the success (or otherwise) of the scheme. Subject to the scheme being successfully delivered in the initial areas, the 'community keeper' concept should be rolled-out across the borough, subject to resources being available to facilitate this.</p>			
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## Housing Allocations Overview & Scrutiny Panel – Cabinet, 10 January 2011

Recommendation	Status	Information	Contact Officer
<p>The Panel support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* the closure of the housing register and replacement with a database of 'live' cases;</li> <li>* replacing the points system with a banding system; and</li> <li>* the creation of a local lettings policy which recognises a positive community contribution (volunteering, working, in training or previously served in the armed forces).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Green</b></p>	<p><u>Cabinet response to recommendations:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the recommendations of the majority report of the Housing Allocations Overview and Scrutiny Panel be approved.</li> <li>2. That the recommendations in the minority report be not approved.</li> <li>3. That Cabinet's thanks be extended to the Panel for their work on this review.</li> </ol> <p><u>Update June 2011:</u> All of these have been implemented from April 2011</p>	<p>Paul Shipway, Strategy &amp; Performance Manager Planning, Housing and Regeneration</p>

Recommendation	Status	Information	Contact Officer
<p>The Panel recommends that residents on the current housing register should be informed that the register had been closed by:</p> <p>* Writing to all those on the register; and</p> <p>* Introducing an online self assessment tool to allow housing applicants to identify which band they would be placed in, to enable them to determine whether they are eligible for housing.</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>	<p><u>Cabinet response to recommendations:</u> As above</p> <p><u>Update June 2011:</u> An online assessment tool has been added to the Council's website.</p> <p>Letters have not been sent to all those households that were on the Housing Register. Instead, a number of actions were taken to ensure that the closure of the register and the introduction of the new allocations scheme were widely publicised, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An article in the March 2011 edition of Barnet First;</li> <li>• Article in Barnet Homes' March 2011 edition of "At Home";</li> <li>• Notices in the local press as part of Choice Based Lettings adverts throughout February, March and April 2011;</li> <li>• Direct contact by the Housing Service with existing cases identified as likely to have high priority under the new scheme;</li> <li>• Barnet Homes wrote to all council tenants registered for a transfer; and</li> <li>• Information placed on the Council's and Barnet Homes' websites and the Home Connections website</li> </ul>	<p>Paul Shipway, Strategy &amp; Performance Manager Planning, Housing and Regeneration</p>

Recommendation	Status	Information	Contact Officer
The Panel recommends that Housing Officers should give due regard to children's existing school when offering properties to housing applicants under assisted choice.	<b>Green</b>	<u>Cabinet response to recommendations:</u> As above  <u>Update June 2011</u> Officers do take account of the potential impact on school children who are at key stages in their education, along with the availability of properties, when considering the reasonableness of offers of accommodation.	Paul Shipway, Strategy & Performance Manager Planning, Housing and Regeneration
The Panel recommends that an evaluation of the new housing allocation policy be undertaken at six months with a further review after two years with the findings reported to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	<b>Green</b>	<u>Cabinet response to recommendations:</u> As above  <u>Update June 2011:</u> The policy will be evaluated after it has been in operation for six months (i.e. from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2011) and reported to the appropriate overview and scrutiny committee and Cabinet. Preparations for carrying out the evaluation are in hand.	Paul Shipway, Strategy & Performance Manager Planning, Housing and Regeneration
The Panel recommends that all future housing applicants regardless of their eligibility should be offered housing advice.	<b>Green</b>	<u>Cabinet response to recommendations:</u> As above  <u>Update June 2011:</u> This is an integral part of the Housing Allocations Scheme (paragraph 3.7 refers).	Paul Shipway, Strategy & Performance Manager Planning, Housing and Regeneration



Recommendation	Status	Information	Contact Officer
<p>The Panel recommends that the volunteering element of the community contribution should be clearly defined to remove any subjectivity.</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>	<p><u>Cabinet response to recommendations:</u> As above</p> <p><u>Update June 2011</u> The volunteering element of community contribution has been clearly defined with input from CommUNITY Barnet, who also provided training to Housing Officers. The operation of this element of the scheme will be reviewed as part of the six month evaluation.</p>	<p>Paul Shipway, Strategy &amp; Performance Manager Planning, Housing and Regeneration</p>
<p>The Panel stress the importance of effective management of the housing stock to ensure that:</p> <p>* All properties are offered in a reasonable condition; and</p> <p>*Turn around times for re-housing applicants is reduced to be in line with best practice</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>	<p><u>Cabinet response to recommendations:</u> As above</p> <p><u>Update June 2011</u> Barnet Homes have a voids standard setting out the condition that the properties need to be in before they are offered to housing applicants. They will be holding focus groups with residents to review this during July 2011.</p> <p>Barnet Homes have been implementing a plan to improve voids performance and targets have been agreed for 2011/12 that will bring performance much closer to the best in London, and we will continue to work with the Arms Length Management Organisation to improve this further.</p>	<p>Paul Shipway, Strategy &amp; Performance Manager Planning, Housing and Regeneration</p>

Recommendation	Status	Information	Contact Officer
The Panel recommends that the verification process should be streamlined, including visiting eligible applicants in their current circumstances.	<b>Green</b>	<p><u>Cabinet response to recommendations:</u> As above</p> <p><u>Update June 2011</u> The verification process has been streamlined as part of the holistic assessment that is carried out for eligible applicants, this includes home visits in many cases.</p>	Paul Shipway, Strategy & Performance Manager Planning, Housing and Regeneration

## Winter Gritting Pilot Scheme

### An overall summary

As part of the winter gritting pilot scheme involving local schools and residential roads, there were three chosen schools and two resident champions as shown below:

Bishop Douglass School, Hamilton Road N2  
 Brunswick Primary School, Osidge Lane N14  
 Martin School, High Road N2  
 Mr Emmanuel Prager, 11 Highfield Gardens, Golders Green, NW11  
 Mr Perrin, 61 Woodlands, Golders Green, NW11

The schools had raised their concerns regarding the lack of gritting in the roads leading to their premises, which also act as the main artery of goods delivery to the schools. Teaching staff also use the roads as well as the council's refuse collection service. These schools were chosen because of the strategic importance in keeping the schools open to supplies and safe for access during snow and ice. The residential roads were chosen because they are not on the Priority 1 list for gritting on the council's programme, and a resident champion identified in each road.

In December 2010 the council held meetings with these schools and resident champions to discuss the various issues involved and to ascertain what equipment and materials would need to be supplied to each location. A third residential road Sunny Garden Road NW4, has also received equipment and materials, however this took place outside of the agreed channels therefore there are no records of any meetings or subsequent follow up contact in this instance. A list of the equipment supplied and costs involved is shown below:

		shovels		spreader		barrow		salt		bags	labour	TOTAL
Bishops Douglas School	8	£72			4	£151.96	1.5	£53.13	2	£5	£272	£554.09
Brunswick Primary School	4	£36			1	£37.99	0.75	£26.57	1	£2.50	£102	£205.06
Martin School	6	£54			2	£75.98	0.75	£26.57	1	£2.50	£170	£329.05
Highfield Gardens NW11	4	£36			2	£75.98	1.5	£53.13	1	£2.50	£340	£507.61
The Woodlands NW11	4	£36	1	£380	1	£37.99	0.75	£26.57	1	£2.50	£136	£619.06
Sunny Gardens Road NW4	3	£27			1	£37.99	1.5	£53.13	1	£2.50	£255	£375.62
TOTAL	29	£261	1	£380	11	£417.89	6.75	£239.10	7	£18	£1,275	£2,590.49

Initial follow-up conversations with the schools following heavy snowfall in December indicated a positive overall response to this initiative, and the views of the individual schools are outlined below:

#### Bishop Douglass School

Although no resident volunteers took part in the gritting that took place, school staff managed to clear the majority of the road, thereby maintaining traffic movement. It would appear from the conversation had with the school that the failure to involve the resident volunteers and to completely clear the road arose

from the school disregarding the weather information sent to them, and not having a full list of resident volunteers. However, the school now has this list, and are also more willing to follow the weather advice given to them. All in all, although not a complete success on its first outing the school admit that this was not due to a fault with the scheme itself or a lack of provision or support from the Council, and feel confident that next time things will run as envisaged.

#### Brunswick Primary School

Following receipt of the weather warning, local resident volunteers were contacted and mobilised. The road was kept clear and traversable, and all parties concerned were happy. Overall, considered to be a success.

#### Martin School

As the weather warning and the snow itself arrived after the school had broken up for the Christmas break school staff did not feel the need to grit the entire road, as this provides access to the school only. However, the top of the road at its junction with High Road, including the pedestrian crossing, was gritted and it was considered that this contributed considerably to the safety of pedestrians. As yet the school have not utilised resident volunteers, so it has been agreed to contact the school again in the event of further snowfall to see how successful the engagement of the resident volunteers proves to be.

Follow-up conversations with the residents following heavy snowfall in December indicated satisfaction with the scheme. Subsequent follow-up conversations have since confirmed this, and all concerned stated their willingness to remain part of this programme. The only comment received was from Mr Perrin, who asked when the council intended to collect their equipment. He appears to be under the impression that all equipment and materials will be delivered on a seasonal basis and then removed until the following year when it would be redelivered. He was not given any indication that this was going to be the case in any of the meetings that took place or during any of the follow-up conversations held within agreed channels.

All parties contacted agreed to complete a brief questionnaire in respect of their experiences of this pilot scheme, and this questionnaire was sent to residents on 29 March 2011.

To date only three questionnaires have been returned: those from the two resident champions and one from Brunswick Primary School. Two of these three returned questionnaires contain wholly positive responses to the questions asked. The third, from Mr Prager of Highfield Gardens NW11, expressed the sentiment that clearing snow from his road was something the council should really be doing, and that he and his fellow volunteers should receive a discount to their council tax bill because they were doing the council's work. A common suggestion as a way to improve the scheme is to provide a lockable plastic container for the grit to prevent it getting wet or being stolen.

The full responses to the questionnaire received to date are shown below:

## WINTER GRITTING PILOT SCHEME - FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

### RESPONSES

<p><b>WERE THE EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS SUPPLIED BY THE COUNCIL SUITABLE FOR THE JOB?</b></p> <p>61 Woodlands NW11 9QD - Yes  11 Highfield Gardens NW11 9HD - Eventually - we started off with shovels - later you brought us a wheelbarrow  Brunswick Park Primary School N14 5DU - The snow shovels and barrow were very useful. Perhaps it would be better for the salt to be kept in a plastic container, so as not to get wet.</p>
<p><b>IF YOU REQUESTED ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT OR GRIT, WAS IT DELIVERED PROMPTLY?</b></p> <p>61 Woodlands NW11 9QD - I did not need any more grit and the number of shovels was adequate  11 Highfield Gardens NW11 9HD - Yes  Brunswick Park Primary School N14 5DU - Not requested, not needed</p>
<p><b>WAS IT DIFFICULT ENGAGING THE HELP OF OTHER LOCAL RESIDENTS?</b></p> <p>61 Woodlands NW11 9QD - Not at all, In fact the neighbours, who were as snow-bound as everyone else, joyfully assisted. The teenage boys in the street, never an energetic bunch (!) were very enthusiastic snow-shovellers.  11 Highfield Gardens NW11 9HD - Some... some were very enthusiastic - some were enjoying watching us though. Everybody praised us for doing it  Brunswick Park Primary School N14 5DU - No. Residents were enthusiastic</p>
<p><b>DO YOU FEEL YOUR VIEWS WERE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT DURING THIS PILOT SCHEME?</b></p> <p>61 Woodlands NW11 9QD - No views were sought.  11 Highfield Gardens NW11 9HD - Yes  Brunswick Park Primary School N14 5DU - Yes</p>
<p><b>IN YOUR OPINION, WAS THE DESIRED OUTCOME ACHIEVED?</b></p> <p>61 Woodlands NW11 9QD - I think the objective - to clear the snow before it compacted and froze was totally fulfilled. <span style="float: right;">11</span>  11 Highfield Gardens NW11 9HD - Yes - we cleared the road (something you should be doing, really!)  Brunswick Park Primary School N14 5DU - A severe snowfall foiled the delivery - over the weekend. Traffic on Osidge Lane 7 Russell Lane were impassable. residents were able to use this equipment and gain access to the rear of their properties along our access road</p>
<p><b>WOULD YOU BE PREPARED TO CONTINUE WITH THIS VENTURE IN THE FUTURE?</b></p> <p>61 Woodlands NW11 9QD - Certainly  11 Highfield Gardens NW11 9HD - Yes  Brunswick Park Primary School N14 5DU - Yes</p>
<p><b>DO YOU FEEL THERE ARE ANY IMPROVEMENTS WHICH COULD BE MADE?</b></p> <p>61 Woodlands NW11 9QD - None at all  11 Highfield Gardens NW11 9HD - Yes - you should provide sealed boxes (to which only a few of us have keys to - to prevent theft) filled with grit - like they do on the continent  Brunswick Park Primary School N14 5DU - Correct storage of salt in plastic bin</p>
<p><b>ANY OTHER COMMENTS</b></p> <p>61 Woodlands NW11 9QD - The unforeseen and very welcome side effect of the project was to inject a sense of neighbourliness into the residents. Shared labour to achieve a mutually beneficial objective is a wonderful leveller. If some pride in the street could be instilled in some of the peripatetic residents (high % of rented properties) then perhaps we could all keep the street clean of litter too. Perhaps a "keep your pavement and kerb clear" scheme with rubber gloves and barnet bin bags ?  11 Highfield Gardens NW11 9HD - Some people feel (rightly so!) that we (workers in the scheme) should be offered a discount in council taxes as we are doing the council's job. Stop gritting main roads - who dont need it!!  Brunswick Park Primary School N14 5DU - Thank you</p>

Overall, given the costs involved and the general satisfaction of the residents and school representatives who have taken part, it should be considered that this pilot scheme has proved a success and expanded to include others who have registered their interest in taking part.

